

3/13/0901/FP – Erection of two-storey central archive building on site of demolished buildings P8 and P10 adjacent to northern site boundary, with modifications to road layout to interior of site, landscaping, installation of proposed earth ducts and other works for GlaxoSmithKline Services Ltd, Priory Street, Ware, SG12 0DJ

Date of Receipt: 28.05.2013

Type: Full – Major

Parish: WARE

Ward: WARE – ST MARY'S

RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. Time limit (1T121)
2. Approved plans (2E103) – insert 5397/A3/201; 5397/A3/202; 5397/A0/300; 5397/A0/301; 5397 100; 5397 001; 5397 002; 5397 003; 5397 200A; GSK/S/354/1
3. Programme of archaeological work (2E025)
4. Tree and hedge retention and protection (4P055)

Directives:

1. Other legislation (01OL1)
2. Groundwater protection zone (28GP1, Musley Lane Pumping Station)

Summary of Reasons for Decision

East Herts Council has considered the applicant's proposal in a positive and proactive manner with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (Minerals Local Plan, Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD 2012 and the 'saved' policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007); the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2012 (as amended). The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

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1.0 **Background**

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. It is an area of cleared land adjacent to the north boundary of the GSK site with Park Road. Two buildings (designated P8 and P10) that stood on the site were demolished approximately 5 years ago.
- 1.2 The whole GSK site is a designated Employment Area within the Local Plan and is reserved for general industrial, research and development and employment development.
- 1.3 The proposed building would be a two-storey structure with the main roof having a ridge height of 9.5 metres high, and the tallest element being approximately 10 metres high. The walls would mainly be timber clad with areas of white render and stone construction. The pitched roofs would be aluminium with the south-facing slopes covered in photovoltaic panels. There would be a flat roof over part of the ground floor to the south which would be planted to create a green roof.
- 1.4 The building would house four, mainly storage, functions currently located in separate areas throughout the site. Samples of manufactured products would be stored in the building, as would documents relating to GSK's operations. The equipment maintenance team would be based in the new building, as would the site's emergency response team and their equipment.
- 1.5 The building would incorporate photovoltaic panels, a ground-to-air heat exchanger and be connected to the site's combined heat and power plant. The intention is to offset the CO₂ production associated with the ongoing use of the building through these means, resulting in a zero carbon building.

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 The GlaxoSmithKline site has been the subject of a considerable number of applications. There have been no recent applications specifically relating to the application site itself.

3.0 **Consultation Responses**

- 3.1 Affinity Water have advised that the application site is within the groundwater protection zone of Musley pumping station. A directive advising the applicant of their responsibilities is recommended.
- 3.2 Hertfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Unit have

reviewed the submitted documentation and have confirmed that they have no objection to the proposed development. Although there would potentially be some impact on the remains of the Roman road that crosses the site, the constraints of the site affect the overall scheme, and the building has been sited to minimise the impact. There is potential for remains that have not been fully excavated to be harmed by the development, although the depth of the remains may be sufficient that no harm would result. The Historic Environment Officer is satisfied that this can be determined prior to construction beginning on site.

4.0 Town Council Representations

4.1 Ware Town Council comments that they have no objection to the proposed development.

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 in response to the consultation.

6.0 Policy

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

ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV2	Landscaping
SD1	Sustainable Development
SD3	Renewable Energy
EDE1	Employment Areas
WA8	Employment Areas
TR7	Car Parking – Standards

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also material to the consideration of the application.

7.0 Considerations

7.1 The proposed development involves the erection of a two-storey, 10 metre high building for purposes related to the ongoing operation of the site. The site is located within a designated Employment Area as

defined in the Local Plan where such development is considered acceptable in principle. The NPPF of course also provides policy support for developments which encourage economic growth in sustainable locations and officers consider that, in principle, this is a development which would accord with the policies of the Development Plan and with the key objectives of the NPPF. Significant weight should therefore be attached to these policy considerations.

- 7.2 The other main considerations in this case are the acceptability of the design approach and the impact of the building on the surrounding area and the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Design and Appearance

- 7.3 The ground area of the application site is set approximately 1 metre lower than the ground level of Park Road to the north. Any visual impact from the proposed development would be lessened by this difference in site levels.
- 7.4 The building would be a two-storey structure with a main roof of approximately 9.5 metres in height, a lower roof over the emergency response area, and a south-facing mono-pitched roof over the lift shaft to the north-east corner of the building.
- 7.5 The design of the building is of an industrial nature which reflects the nature of surrounding buildings and the character of the GSK site. Its scale and height is compatible with adjoining buildings.
- 7.6 The building would largely be screened from view in the surrounding area by the extensive boundary planting along the northern edge of the site. As such. It is considered to have a limited impact on visual amenity in the area. Furthermore, Officers consider the extent of the sustainability benefits involved in the construction and operation of the building to be a positive factor in the development's favour.

Neighbour Amenity

- 7.7 The building would be sited to the immediate west of nos. 45 and 47 Park Road. It would be approximately 11 metres from the flank wall of no. 47. The building would be separated from no. 47 by boundary treatments and a footpath. Given these considerations, officers conclude that the building would not have a harmful impact on the amenities of the occupiers of these properties. It would also, in Officers' opinion, not materially affect the outlook from the residential properties on the north side of Park Road.

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- 7.8 Given the importance of the existing trees and other landscaping on the site in limiting the impact on neighbours and retaining an attractive street scene in Park Road, a condition is recommended requiring their protection and retention.
- 7.9 The building would not be used for manufacturing purposes. There would therefore be no additional harm arising from noise or fumes from the building. Adequate control over such matters is available through Environmental Health legislation in any event should any re-use of the building in the future necessitate any extraction equipment for example.

Other Matters

- 7.10 The development would not result in the loss of parking at the site, nor an alteration in the number of staff employed there. The internal road layout would be slightly altered in the vicinity of the building but this would have no impact outside the site. Officers consider therefore that there are no parking or highway safety concerns in relation to this proposal.
- 7.11 The site lies close to the partial remains of a Roman road, as well as some other known archaeological remains. A condition to require further archaeological investigation to ensure that the development would not result in unacceptable harm to these remains is recommended.
- 7.12 Earth ducts would be installed below the building to pre-heat or pre-cool air for internal ventilation purposes. These would be contained within the footprint of the building, and would not cause additional disruption beyond the building site.
- 7.13 Landscaping is proposed in the area around the site. This would not be particularly visible from outside the site, and so it is not considered necessary to require detailed submissions by condition. However, the retention of existing trees would safeguard the setting of the building.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 In conclusion, officers are satisfied that the proposed development would result in a sustainable form of development in compliance with the NPPF and the Local Plan and which would not be detrimental to the visual quality of the area or the amenities of neighbouring residents. It would be an appropriate development, making best use of previously developed land within this industrial site and would consolidate the economic benefits that the site brings to the town.

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- 8.2 Given that the proposed building would be used for storage purposes there will be no detrimental impacts in terms of noise, air quality or traffic impacts and the inclusion of sustainable measures such as photovoltaic panels would also weigh in favour of the development and mitigate any environmental impacts from its construction.
- 8.3 Given these matters, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, officers recommend that planning permission be granted for the proposed development subject to the conditions recommended at the head of this report.