

5e 3/10/1774/FP – Erection of two-storey building for stability chambers for research and development purposes at GSK research and development site, Park Road, Ware, SG12 0AE for Glaxo Smith Kline Ltd.

Date of Receipt: 07.10.2010

Type: Full - Major

Parish: WARE

Ward: WARE – ST MARY’S

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. Three Year Time limit (1T121)
2. Unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority the external surface of the building shall be clad in powder coated metal boarding as specified in the application and all exposed steel, rainwater goods, external doors, window frames and roof sheeting shall be finished in Kingspan Goosewing Grey (RAL 080 70 05).

Reason: To ensure an appropriate appearance to the development in accordance with ‘saved’ policy ENV1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

3. Landscape design proposals (4P124)
4. Landscape works implementation (4P133 c, i, j, k, l)
5. The development hereby permitted shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) 1136729v1 dated 1st July 2010 and the following mitigation measures detailed within the FRA:
 1. Finished floor levels are set no lower than 35.57m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) as set out in the FRA.

Reason: To reduce the impact of flooding on the proposed development and future occupants in accordance with ‘saved’ policy ENV19 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

6. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted, and obtained written approval from the Local Planning Authority for, an amendment to the remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with.

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Reason: The site is located in a very sensitive location with respect to the potential contamination of groundwater and any subsequent contamination identified will need to be addressed with extreme care in accordance with 'saved' policy ENV20 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

7. Approved plans (2E102; 200361-48-DR-0030, 200361-48-DR-0031, 200361-48-DR-0032, 200361-48-DR-0034, 200361-48-DR-0070, 200361-48-DR-0080, 200361-48-DR-0081, 200361-48-DR-2000, 200361-48-DR-2100 and 200361-48-DR-2200 received on the 7th October 2010)

Directives

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

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 ENV1, ENV2, ENV19, ENV20, ENV21, EDE1, WA8 and TR7. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

_____ (177410FP.MC)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. It is an area of grass, trees and landscaping located between the existing 20m high R&D Building 5, and the GSK bowling green and Sports and Recreation Club. 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.
- 1.2 The proposed building would be a two-storey structure, approximately 11 metres high with a footprint of approximately 860m². It would be clad in powder-coated metal. It would house a series of stability chambers used for testing the shelf life of medicines as part of the research and development process. Stability chambers are presently housed in the three-storey building directly to the west of the application site. These chambers are approaching the end of their operational lifespan, and replacements are needed on site to ensure continuous operation. The proposed building would encroach into the existing adjacent car park, resulting in the direct

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loss of 20 car parking spaces.

- 1.3 In addition, the applicant proposes further landscaping outside of the application boundary that would result in the further loss of 23 parking spaces.
- 1.4 The application site is located on the south boundary of the GSK site close to the River Lea. The proposed building would be visible from the footpath/cycleway running along the south bank of the Lea which passes along the south of the site.
- 1.5 The proposal would result in the loss of 5 trees and the accompanying arboricultural report indicates that these are Category C trees (low quality and amenity). It is intended to replace these trees elsewhere on the GSK R&D site where they would help to soften views of the building from the river.

2.0 Site History

The Glaxo Smith Kline site has been the subject of a considerable number of applications. None of these applications specifically relate to the application site. The following relate to the immediate surrounding area and the provision of car parking on site:

3/92/1641/OP – Staff amenity and recreation building – Approved February 1993

3/93/1702/RP – Approval of reserved matters – Approved February 1994

3/09/0237/FP – Removal of requirement to provide car park – Approved May 2009

3/10/1235/FP – Erection of two-storey building to house stability chambers for research and development purposes – Withdrawn

3.0 Consultation Responses

- 3.0 The Environment Agency raises concerns regarding the location of the site within a flood zone and sensitive groundwater site and recommends conditions to mitigate any harm arising as a result of the development.
- 3.1 Veolia Water commented on the previous application that the site is located within the Source Protection Zone of Musley Lane Pumping Station, and development should accord with the relevant British Standards and Best Management Practises. This information is included with the recommendation on this application.

4.0 Town Council Representations

4.1 Ware Town Council has no objection

5.0 Other Representations

5.1 The applications have been advertised by way of press and site notices.

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:-

ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV2	Landscaping
ENV19	Development in Areas Liable to Flood
ENV20	Groundwater Drainage
ENV21	Surface Water Drainage
EDE1	Employment Areas
WA8	Employment Areas
TR7	Car Parking – Standards

7.0 Considerations

7.1 The proposed development involves the erection of a two-storey, 11 metre high building for research and development purposes. The site is located within a designated Employment Area where such development is considered acceptable in principle.

7.2 The main consideration in this case is therefore, the visual impact of the building on the surrounding area, and the loss of car parking.

Visual impact and landscaping

7.3 The site is located on the edge of the Green Belt, with the River Lea just beyond, and the Kings Mead nature reserve on the south side of the site.

7.4 The building would be a two-storey structure, utilitarian in appearance with a gently inverted pitched, almost flat roof. It would be a prominent feature when viewed from outside the site and particularly from the river to the south. There is limited landscaping directly to the south of the proposed site, and a number of trees would be removed as part of the development.

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- 7.5 The building would be sited around 40m from the edge of the site, and officers consider that new landscape works would be required to mitigate the impact of the development on the surrounding area. The area to the immediate south of the site is somewhat bare of landscaping, but the river bank is otherwise quite heavily landscaped with mature trees. Additional landscaping along the south of the site would reinforce this, and soften the impact of the building. A condition is therefore suggested to ensure that a suitable landscaping scheme is agreed with officers.
- 7.6 The design of the building is of an industrial nature which reflects the nature of surrounding buildings. Its scale and height is compatible with adjoining buildings. It would be finished in powder-coated metal in dark grey and white. In addition, the bulk of the plant and equipment would be contained within the first floor of the building, and would not be visible.
- 7.7 Provided that an appropriate landscaping scheme can be agreed, and notwithstanding some reservations about its appearance, Officers consider that the visual impact of the building would be acceptable in this case.

Car parking

- 7.8 Members may recall from previous committee reports that recent years have seen a significant decrease in the number of staff working at the GSK site. The proposed development would result in the direct loss of 20 spaces from the site's approved 2009 provision of 2,223. Further to this, the applicant proposes to replace a further 23 parking spaces to the east of the application site with landscaping to help screen the building. This would result in a total loss of 43 spaces.
- 7.9 This would not, in Officers' view, materially alter the overall level of parking provision. It is noted that the site is within walking distance of the town centre and is well served by public transport.
- 7.10 The loss of 43 parking spaces as a result of the development is therefore considered to be acceptable in this location.

Other matters

- 7.11 The Environment Agency has recommended conditions relating to the protection of groundwater quality in the area and guarding against the possibility of flooding. Officers consider that these conditions are fair and reasonable in the circumstances of the case.

8.0 Conclusion

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- 8.1 In conclusion, officers are satisfied that the proposed development, together with appropriate landscaping, would not be detrimental to the visual quality of the area. In addition, the loss of 43 parking spaces would not materially impact on the overall parking provision on the site and for these reasons officers recommend that planning permission be granted for the proposed development subject to the conditions recommended at the head of this report.