

TWC/2018/0163

Land opposite Wrap Film Systems Ltd, Hortonwood 40, Hortonwood, Telford, Shropshire

Erection of 1no. industrial unit (Use Class B1(c), B2 and B8) \*\*\*Amended application form and plans received\*\*\*

**APPLICANT**

Telford & Wrekin Council

**RECEIVED**

23/02/2018

**PARISH**

Hadley and Leegomery

**WARD**

Hadley and Leegomery

**THIS APPLICATION IS BEFORE PLANNING COMMITTEE AS TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL ARE THE APPLICANT**

**1. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 It is recommended that DELEGATED AUTHORITY be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION subject to Condition(s) and Informative(s).

**2. APPLICATION SITE**

- 2.1 The application site is approximately rectangular in shape and is located within the North Telford Hortonwood, Donnington and Hadley Park Strategic Employment Area towards the north eastern edge of the urban area. The site comprises allocation E5 in the adopted local plan. It extends to approximately 2.73 hectares in area.
- 2.2 The site remains undeveloped being relatively flat open ground, containing several trees and hedges, primarily around the boundaries and centre of the site. The surrounding area is predominantly commercial, with several large-scale employment buildings to the south, west and north-east. To the north east lies Horton Lane along which are a number of dwelling houses located on its western side. Directly opposite the site lies the Cofresco cling film production facility (formerly Wrap Film Systems) and car park setback behind a landscaped boundary.
- 2.3 The site contains a line of trees/hedgerow that runs diagonally from NW-SE within the southern area. The northern and western boundaries are marked by a chain-link fence and the southern and eastern boundaries by mature trees and hedges that act as effective natural screens. The site backs on to the Crow Brook beyond the row of trees that line its banks. Horton Lane continues in a north-south direction along the eastern boundary of the site but is a footpath/cycle way only with no vehicular traffic able to use it.

**3. APPLICATION DETAILS**

- 3.1 The proposal comprises the erection of a single substantial inverted 'L-shaped' warehouse building and associated car parking and service areas to

the south west of the Furniture Link building located along Hortonwood 60. Total proposed floor space amounts to 8,477 sq. metres. Proposed access for this site is to be taken directly off the road in the north eastern corner of the site. The submitted block plan shows the building located within the western part of the site, setback from the Hortonwood 60 roadside boundary behind a landscaped margin.

- 3.2 Existing trees around the southern and eastern boundaries of the site are to be largely retained and protected during development. Those within the centre of the site are to be removed in places to facilitate the development with others to be retained. Two attenuation ponds are proposed in the south eastern area of the site creating a landscape feature. Additional landscaping around the northern and southern edges of the site is proposed.
- 3.3 The building will be dominated by open storage with ancillary ground and first floor reception and office space, meeting rooms, kitchen facilities and toilets. The floor space measures 6,827 sq. metres warehouse accommodation, and 1650sqm office accommodation. The building will be 11.17 metres in height to a flat roof. Materials include composite metal panelling in contrasting bands for the walls and roof with powder coated steel doors and powder coated aluminium windows.
- 3.4 The total number of car parking spaces to serve the development is 166, including 8 disability spaces and 6 motorcycle spaces. An additional 24 bicycle spaces would also be provided. In addition, parking for 12 HGVs would also be provided. Car parking and service vehicle parking is shown on the northern and southern areas of the site.

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

No relevant history. Neighbouring development includes the following:

- 4.1 TWC/2017/0051 - Erection of admin/amenity block with associated parking and the creation of a refuse vehicle parking area and associated skip/wheelie bin storage area on Land West of Household Recycling Centre, Hortonwood 60, Hortonwood, Telford, Shropshire - Full Granted 14/03/2017
- 4.2 TWC/2014/0181 - Construction of Integrated Waste Management Facility comprising community recycling centre and associated infrastructure - Full Granted 16/05/2014

#### **5. RELEVANT POLICY DOCUMENTS**

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 5.2 Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011-2031

#### **6. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6.1 Three letters of public objection have been received, summarised as follows:

- increased traffic using Horton Lane (particularly peak times) throughout the working day and perhaps at weekends. The Council has already determined that it is 'only suitable for local access purposes and not of the nature to be appropriate for through traffic,' use as shortcut/rat-run to avoid Hadley Park Roundabout, upcoming effects of the new Defence Fulfilment Centre and developments behind Cofresco (nee Wrap Film). May be appropriate for developers to contribute towards an integrated Traffic Management Solution for Horton Lane and Hortonwood;
- more than adequate brownfield sites across the region more appropriate to use for the intended developments, proper infrastructure for access routes from the M54;
- increased noise as a result of unknown storage use – noise has already been exacerbated by new developments;
- restricted movement of vehicles and proposed hours;
- existing litter problem – worsened by more employment and traffic;
- detrimental impact on wildlife
- impact on property values
- deficiencies of plans - no scales, no dimensions, no building heights.
- Tree Survey out of date - report states the site was visited on 03/12/2016, and the survey is only valid for 12 months.

## 7. STATUTORY CONSULTEES

### 7.1 Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council: **Objects:**

- Inadequate access - application does not demonstrate adequate access to sustainable modes of transport or appropriate transport infrastructure, fails to satisfy Policy EC2;
- Impact on Horton Lane - failure of Transport Assessment to not consider the cumulative impact of the proposed developments on traffic volumes on Horton Lane, immediately adjacent to four of the proposed development sites, acknowledged 'rat-run' used by traffic associated with employment activities in the Hortonwood commercial area, planning ref.: TWC/2013/0315, surprising omission given the planning history of the adjacent Furniture Link UK Ltd site - Highway Officer concern about potential increase use of Horton Lane and apparent stepping back of committing to a traffic management scheme;
- Impact on local transport networks - failure of Transport Assessment to look at potential cumulative effect of the five sites on local transport networks and infrastructure by looking at four separate 'destination zones' and fails to satisfy Policy C3.

### 7.2 Ecology: **Support** subject to conditions relating to development in accordance with the protected species survey and bat survey, provision of nesting and/or roosting boxes, lighting on the site, habitat creation, securing a European Protected Species Licence, and the undertaking of a pre-commencement Badger inspection.

- 7.3 Highways Officer: **Support** subject to conditions relating to provision of visibility splays, parking and turning areas, construction of hard surface areas, a Travel Plan, means of site enclosure, and covered cycle parking/storage. Advised that the development will trigger a contribution to the Strategic Network, based on the scale of this development the contribution would be £74,565.97; with a need to provide enhanced footway/cycle linkage of £17,017 (proportion of £91,000), with highway contributions secured under the provisions in S278 Highways Act (1980).
- 7.4 Environmental Health: **Support** subject to conditions restricting demolition and construction operational hours, provision of a noise / acoustic survey prior to occupation, restriction on the hours of operation, and the submission of an external lighting plan.
- 7.5 Drainage: **Support** subject to condition necessitating the submission of a scheme of surface water drainage.
- 7.6 Arboricultural: **Support** subject to conditions requiring the submission of a landscaping design, an updated tree protection plan, service plans, tree replacements and soil levels.
- 7.7 Shropshire Fire Service: **Comment** that consideration should be given to the information contained within Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service's Fire Safety Guidance for Commercial and Domestic Planning Applications.
- 7.8 West Mercia Police: **Comment** provided around measures to design out crime from the scheme.

## 8. APPRAISAL

- 8.1 Having regard to the development plan policy and other material considerations including comments received during the consultation process, the planning application raises the following main issues:
- Principle of Development
  - Design and Visual Impact
  - Highway Safety
  - Impact upon Residential Amenity
  - Drainage and Flood Risk
  - Ecology
  - Impact on Trees
  - Other Matters

### Principle of Development

- 8.2 The majority of the site is identified as an allocated employment site – E5 in the adopted Local Plan with preferred Uses of B1b, B1c, B2 and B8 supporting the Strategic Employment Area of North Telford (Donnington, Hadley Park & Hortonwood) of T&WLP Policy EC1. A modest section of the site at the eastern edge comprises whiteland. The proposed B1(c), B2 and B8 uses (end occupier not yet known) accords with the policy designation sitting within one of the key locations for the majority of employment and jobs in

Telford, and is an important employment area which has scope for expansion. The proposals are therefore consistent with this policy position.

#### Design and Visual Impact

- 8.3 Policy BE1 of the adopted Local Plan is concerned with securing high quality design in new development. It is criteria based and expects new development to be influenced by and respond positively to its context, demonstrating an integrated approach to design and layout, respecting landscape and creating a sense of place. New development should be energy efficient and promote sustainable building techniques.
- 8.4 The building has been designed to reflect similar development within the Hortonwood Employment Park. It is a substantial structure and its form follows the proposed function as an industrial or storage and distribution centre. However, in order to reduce the perceived massing of the building, it is proposed that materials are used in a series of coloured bands to emphasise its horizontality thereby reducing the perceived height of the building. It is also set back from the roadside to create a sense of greater separation from the public boundaries.
- 8.5 The layout of the site enables the building to be set behind an area of landscaping with service vehicle parking tucked into the inner corner of the L-shape and towards the back of the site, with landscaping set around the eastern edge of the car parking, including feature ponds that will also assist with sustainable drainage for the site. The proposal is considered compliant with Policy BE1.

#### Highway Safety

- 8.6 The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA) based on the Telford Strategic Transport Model (TSTM), designed to keep total associated traffic generation forecasts within values established as part of the Transport Growth Strategy. This calculates the following trips for this particular development: 78 during AM peak and 67 during the PM peak.
- 8.7 For the application site, all access to and from the development is to be provided via a new bell-mouth junction with a 15m radii, with dropped kerbs and tactile paving located on Hortonwood 60 to the west of its junction with Horton Lane and approximately 170 metres east of the junction with Hortonwood 40. Visibility splays in excess of 2.4 x 120 metres are to be provided in each direction in accordance with national standards for a 40mph speed limit.
- 8.8 All car parking, HGV parking and service bays are to be provided in front of the building (eastern façade), including some parking located off and along the access from the north eastern corner of the site and operational vehicles being accommodated within a dedicated area at the end of the access road.
- 8.9 A total of 166 car parking spaces are to be provided, including 8 disabled parking spaces representing 5% of the total number. Dedicated motorcycle parking will also be provided together with covered cycle shelters beside the

building. Six HGV service bays and 12 HGV parking bays and an appropriate turning space will also be provided.

- 8.10 Staff who opt to cycle to work will be provided with parking for 24 bicycles and changing facilities. There are cycleways, cycle paths and other traffic free routes available to and within the Hortonwood Employment Area that provide for safe and convenient routes between the site and nearby residential areas.
- 8.11 Due to the scale and location of the Hortonwood Employment Area, it is acknowledged that walking to and from work at the site is unlikely to be attractive as a mode of transport for the purposes of commuting. It is, however, likely to be used to access local food and retail outlets by employees.
- 8.12 The site is not on a bus route and the nearest bus stops are between 1.5km and 2km away from the site. Use of bus travel as a mode of transport is likely to be limited as a result.
- 8.13 The nearest rail stations are at least 4.5km away from the site. It is not likely that rail travel will feature highly as a mode of transport unless combined with taxi services or cycle travelling.
- 8.14 The traffic flows have been modelled for a number of different scenarios, depending on the make-up of B Class uses at the site, with Class B1(c) generating slightly more (86 c.f.78) trips in the AM peak and 2 less in the PM peak than the TSTM model forecasts.
- 8.15 Parking demand for the site has been calculated as being around 126 spaces for a B1c use. The scheme proposes 166 spaces to deliver over provision.
- 8.16 The TA has also calculated the cumulative impact on the highway network arising from all five proposed sites within Hortonwood, as required by Policy C3. It is forecast that the five sites will generate a total of 428 two-way trips in the AM peak and 325 two-way trips in the PM peak, equating to 47 fewer two-way trips in the AM peak and 85 fewer in the PM peak than assumed in the TSTM.
- 8.17 Assessment of localised impacts on the Hortonwood (40/30/1 and 50/30/37) roundabouts identifies that both junctions are forecast to function well within the normal design threshold for capacity with minor queuing and delays. The traffic generated by this proposal and that generated by the other four proposals should be adequately accommodated by the Transport Growth Strategy. There is unlikely to be any material impact upon the normal operation of the surrounding transport network subject to the requested input to the contribution to the Strategic Network amounting to be £74,565.97 for this site and contributing to improvements to the A442.
- 8.18 The TA has been considered by the Highways Officer, who has no objection in principle to the proposals. The only comment relates to car parking on the site. Current car parking standards set out in the adopted Local Plan only

relate to the central area of the borough. As this site is not 'central' those standards are not applicable. Application of higher rates for parking shows that the proposed parking provision is appropriate for a Class B2 use. There is under-provision of cycle parking by 89 spaces (113 according to standards but 24 provided) if the end use is B2. This would be substantially less for a B8 use (51 required).

- 8.19 The requirement for cycle spaces at this site, given its location and the likely nature of the end use, is likely to be less than the standards set out in the Local Plan. The proposed provision is considered adequate and there is no objection to the proposals from a Highways perspective.
- 8.20 The impact of the development on the residences of Horton Lane - through use as a shortcut and as a rat run to access both the development and forthcoming committed employment sites on Hortonwood - is cited in local representations to the proposal. Officers are aware that this is a longstanding existing known issue. The Network & Transport Management arm of the Authority have confirmed that around 2009 there was discussions about a scheme of experimental closure of Horton Lane, the evidence behind this did recognise that traffic flow had increased on the lane since 2004 and did have a tidal direction related to the industrial estate; the scheme was nonetheless rejected.
- 8.21 In the interim period this has been reviewed a few times leading to a consultation in 2016 regarding closure to through traffic or calming which did not show support for either option. In 2017, the request to close the lane was brought back to the table by the Ward member and the Parish Council, however the parish subsequently removed support and this combined with public feeling, meant that the Council did not continue to pursue a scheme. Horton Lane is not on the Council's Highways Capital Programme at this time so it is unlikely to be revisited from a highway perspective in the near future. The Local Planning Authority is mindful that the application relates to an allocated employment site where development is anticipated to come forward of such a scale to deliver the Local Plan strategy. Technical solutions have been put forward on a number of occasion to address the problem, with no consensus existing at the present time, and the application has not been objected to by the Local Highways Authority in this respect.

#### Impact upon Residential Amenity

- 8.22 Policy BE1 expects new development to respect and respond to its context and, amongst other things, demonstrates that there will be no significant adverse impact on nearby properties by noise, dust, odour or light pollution.
- 8.23 The overall site is an allocated strategic employment site (E5) and the discourse that led to its allocation considered a range of issues, including the potential impact on local residential amenity.
- 8.24 The site lies to the south of the nearest residential development along the western side of Horton Lane. The northern edge of Hortonwood 60 is marked by a row of mature trees which provides a very effective screen between the

nearest dwelling house (No. 54) and the development site. This particular dwelling is set back from the Hortonwood 60 boundary with a garden sitting to the side of the property that was granted in the knowledge of the site being committed for employment under the previous Wrekin Local Plan (2015 permission). The band of trees runs the full length of the roadside boundary and the dwelling.

- 8.25 The Public Protection Officer has considered the proposals and is mindful of the scale of the development and the presence of dwellings in the locality. There is potential for noise and disturbance arising from the development during the construction and operational phases and a number of conditions are recommended. This is attributable to the fact that operators elsewhere on Hortonwood have been the subject of noise complaints and is a justified request.
- 8.26 The suggested operating hours including deliveries set out in the representation are considered to be too restrictive (0800-1800 Monday-Sunday) for this particular development, given the predominantly commercial nature of the area and the distance that separates the site from the nearest dwellings (in the region of 54 metres from the building to No.54 on Horton Lane, and 140 metres from the HGV servicing area). It is felt that hours in line with recent commitments in the locality, again with further evidence to be necessitated for noise arising from the units and an unknown end user position, would represent a reasonable approach, that being Monday-Friday 0600-2000, Saturday 0600-1300 and no Sunday or Bank Holiday opening.
- 8.27 As referenced above, the end user of the building is unknown through this application, the ability to fully understand the potential noise generated through the development is therefore not possible. The request for an acoustic/noise survey, leading to any necessary mitigation stemming from this will ensure the protection of residential amenity by Public Protection is agreed as necessary. The building setback in the site and the HGV parking having been positioned on the southern area of the site away from residences further lessens the impact of development. The form of external lighting has not been detailed through the application, and is recommended to be conditioned to ensure the protection of residential amenity. On this basis, the Local Planning Authority is of the view that the proposed development is consistent with Policy BE1(xi) of the Local Plan.

#### Drainage and Flood Risk

- 8.28 The application has been accompanied by a comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). This explains how the Telford Development Corporation laid out the infrastructure for the wider employment area including a system of public foul and surface water sewers and the Hortonwood Channel (Crow Brook), which is a strategic drain serving the employment area and part of Telford to the south. Crow Brook was diverted when the Hortonwood Channel was created in the 1980s and flows in a westerly direction behind a bund.
- 8.29 The application site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of fluvial, reservoir and ground water flooding. There have been instances of

surface water flooding affecting small areas of the site, which need to be taken into account when designing the drainage system for the development. The development will incorporate SuDS, including ponds, which will provide attenuation and surface water treatment in line with the Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

- 8.30 The soil type on the site suggests that infiltration rates are low and therefore soakaways are unlikely to be effective. Accordingly, local public sewers should be regarded as the most appropriate points of surface water drainage. There are two public surface water sewers located in the vicinity of the development to which it should be possible to make a gravity connection. The sewer to the west has recorded invert levels, however no data is recorded for the system to the east. Discharge rates should be restricted to greenfield run-off rates.
- 8.31 The FRA has been assessed by the Drainage Team recommending the submission of a scheme for surface water drainage be controlled through condition, including restricting the rate of discharge. Subject to this there is no objection from a drainage and flood risk point of view and the development accords with Policies ER11 and ER12 of the adopted Local Plan.

#### Ecology

- 8.32 The application has been accompanied by an Ecological Survey Update and a Bat Survey considering the full range of biodiversity interests, including protected species and their habitats. This evidence identifies that there was a foreseeable likelihood that Great Crested Newts would be impacted by the proposed development and that a Natural England mitigation license would be required. No bats or reptiles were observed during the survey work; common and widespread birds were recorded with the need for vegetation clearance to be undertaken in a timely / controlled manner in this regard. The Ecology representation requests a series of conditions mitigating the development of the undeveloped site to ensure compliance with Policy NE1 relating to Biodiversity and geodiversity.

#### Impact on Trees

- 8.33 The development would necessitate the loss of a stretch of mature hedgerow running across the site, with a series of mature and middle aged Oaks dotted around the western half of the site. Amendment has been made to the layout of the proposal to set back the building further from T1 (a mature oak); the southern and eastern boundaries are further retained with the attenuation area moulded around a number of retained trees towards the south eastern corner. Additional landscaping is proposed adjacent to the road frontage, and the southern edge of the building to mitigate the loss entailed, provision of suitable replacements would be controlled through condition, therefore complying with Policy NE2 relating to Trees, hedgerows and woodlands.

#### Other Matters

- 8.34 Whilst the matter of the impact on property values has been raised in local representation, this is not a material planning consideration for the determination of a planning application. Deficiencies of the plans is also

identified as a concern, it is noted that the drawings are scaled (as set out in the key), and in turn, are not required to have written measurements on them. The age of the tree survey has been identified related to identification that it is only valid for 12 months which has now passed. Officers have discussed this matter with the Arboricultural arm of the Authority, whom have confirmed that it is a standard caveat included, that the report is not a safety survey where this would be more of a concern, and have not raised concern in this respect.

## 9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposed development will deliver a contemporary form of development, with a soft backdrop interspersed with new planting and water features; the unit has been further setback from the road to allow T1 suitable standoff with the HGV parking and turning area set back in the nook of the L-shape of the building and parking set across the eastern half of the site away from the nearest residences, with further controls recommended relating to protecting residents from potential noise derived from development due to the end user presently being unknown, thus ensuring protection of residential amenity. Drainage, ecology and tree mitigation will be controlled through condition, with enhancement to the pedestrian/cycle network together with improvements to the A442, secured through provisions of the S278 Highways Act to ensure highway safety is protected.
- 9.2 The proposed use and development is consistent with the character and function of this strategic employment area, and will deliver job opportunities for the local population on a designated employment site as set out in the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan and the NPPF.

## 10. RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 Based on the conclusions above, it is recommended that **DELEGATED AUTHORITY** be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to **GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to:

- (a) The following Condition(s) and Informative(s) (with authority to finalise Condition(s) to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager

### Condition(s)

Time limit Full  
Samples of materials  
Surface water drainage scheme  
Noise Report  
Landscaping Design  
Trees – protective fencing  
Trees – services root protection  
Trees – replacements  
Trees – soil levels  
Habitat Creation and Management Plan

European Protected Species Licence  
Lighting plan (ecology and residential amenity)  
Parking, Loading, Unloading and Turning  
Cycle parking / storage  
Site enclosure  
Travel Plan  
Works in accordance with ecological survey  
Erection of artificial nesting/roosting boxes  
Badger inspection  
Hours of operation including deliveries  
Hours of construction

**Informative(s)**

Highways  
Nesting wild birds  
Works to protected trees – Bats  
Site Clearance  
Fire Authority  
West Mercia Police