

SUDBURY – LAND ADJ. FIRST STEPS, NORTHERN ROAD

Erection of storage and distribution warehouse (Class B8). Construction of new vehicular access and parking.

Applicant: A C Ward and Son Ltd

Case Officer: Fiona Bradley

The application is referred to committee at the request of a Local Member.

SITE

1. The site comprises 0.35 hectares fronting onto Northern Road. It is currently vacant and covered in dense vegetation. The site abuts a children's nursery (First Steps) which is located to the north. A public footpath runs alongside the southern edge of the site but there are no other constraints which affect the site. Adjacent to the site is an area of land which is landscaped and managed as public open space by the Council.

PROPOSAL

2. The proposal seeks planning permission for the erection of a storage and distribution warehouse (Class B8) for the purposes of Cash and Carry. Retail sales from the site will be limited.
3. The applicant has submitted a Design and Access Statement which is summarised below:
 - Siting of the warehouse is dictated by the existing access.
 - Layout has been designed to provide public access and parking to the rear to reduce vehicular traffic from Northern Road.
 - The building will not have a detrimental effect of the skyline, it will be in keeping with existing development on Northern Road.
 - Area between the proposed warehouse and Northern Road will be landscaped to shield the development from noise and traffic pollution generated by traffic on Northern Road.
 - The existing buildings that face Northern Road are of varied appearance.
 - Deliveries to the warehouse are directly off Northern Road via an existing designated access.
 - Delivery vehicles will exit the site at the rear via Addison Road.
 - Public access and staff parking will mainly be from Addison Road.
 - The proposed utilises a site designated for industrial development.
4. The applicant has submitted some supporting information to clarify the intended use of the site:
 - 18 Employees (7 live in Babergh)

- 2 lorries and 1 van (One delivery in and out with each of them daily)
- Deliveries to site between 0730-1300
- Deliveries are booked in advance to avoid queuing
- Turnover £130,000 a week, of which £30,000 is cash and carry and the rest is delivered
- No more than 25 customers a day
- In the process of buying 2 more businesses which are totally delivered.

HISTORY

5. 2006 – Reserved Matters approval in connection with B/05/01602 (B/06/00566/RES refers)
6. 2005 – Outline planning permission granted for erection of building to provide new car dealership, showroom, offices, workshop, storage area, customer and staff parking area and construction of new vehicular accesses. (B/05/01602/OUT refers)
7. 1997 – Outline planning permission granted for erection of car showroom (application B/97/0049/OUT refers)
8. 1985 – Planning permission granted for two vehicular accesses to proposed filling station (application B/85/00374/FUL refers). Development commenced on site and capable of implementation in perpetuity.
9. 1984 – Planning permission granted for the installation of petrol pumps and storage tanks (application B/84/00849 refers)

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

10. **PPS1 (2005): Delivering Sustainable Development**
11. **PPS6 (2005): Planning for Town Centres**

PLANNING POLICIES

12. The following Development Plan policies are relevant to the determination of this proposal.

Suffolk Structure Plan, 2001

- ECON 2 – Employment development
- T9 - Private car parking
- T10 – Cycle parking
- ENV3 – Design standards

Babergh Local Plan, Alteration No. 2, 2006

- EM02 – General Employment Areas
- TP03 – Cycle and vehicle parking
- TP19 – Parking in new developments
- EN03 – Protected species
- CN01 – General design

OBSERVATIONS

13. TC – No objection
14. LHA – Recommend standard condition regarding the layout of the access and the parking and manoeuvring area.
15. SCC (RoW officer) – No objections
16. SWT – Provide advice to applicant regarding vegetation clearance to minimise impact on wildlife.
17. Third Party Representations – none received.

ASSESSMENT

18. The main issues to be considered are:
 - The principle of proposed development,
 - Highways and parking, and
 - The impact on surrounding area

Principle of proposed development

19. Policy EM02 identifies the Chilton Industrial Estate as an area for General Employment and states that planning permission will be granted for most forms of development that is concerned with economic activity and provides employment. The erection of a Class B8 Storage and Distribution Warehouse would therefore represent an acceptable form of development in this location.
20. The applicant proposes to use the site for the operation of a Cash and Carry warehouse and it is imperative to ensure that the site does not become an A1 retail use which would be unacceptable in this location and contrary to Planning Policy Statement 6 (Town Centres). Cash and Carry (wholesale) is defined in the Land Gazetteer as B8 use provided that sales are minimal with a major element of storage and distribution. It is therefore important to restrict the use of the premises, via a condition, to that of Cash and Carry (wholesale) within the Use Class B8.

Highways/Parking

21. Access to the site is via an existing access off Northern Road and to the rear of the site off Addison Road. Car parking and the main entrance to the building is provided to the rear of the site which is aimed to reduce the amount of traffic accessing the site off Northern Road. The access off Northern Road will provide entry only with a one-way system in operation so that vehicles exit via Addison Road.
22. Sufficient car parking spaces are provided on the site for staff and visitors. Cycle parking is also provided. The layout of the access for goods vehicles is acceptable. The LHA has recommended a condition to ensure the layout of the access and car parking area is retained.

Impact on surrounding area

23. The proposed building provides warehousing with a small retail area at ground floor level with a part 1st floor level to provide staff facilities and offices. The building is rectangular in shape and has a curved roof with overhanging eaves.
24. The site slopes steeply down from the Northern Road frontage by approximately 1.5 metres. The building is therefore set down from street level (Northern Road frontage) by approximately 1.5 metres which will reduce visibility of the proposed building from Northern Road. In addition, landscaping to the front on the sloping bank will further reduce the visual impact of the building. Existing trees to the north of the site will largely screen the building from the children's nursery on the adjacent site. Potential for landscaping on the southern boundary, adjacent to the public footpath, is limited due to the siting of the access. However, there is existing vegetation along the public footpath which provides some screening.
25. The design and scale of the building is appropriate given the site's location in a predominantly industrial area which is characterised by large scale buildings with large areas of hardstanding and limited landscaping.

REASON FOR APPROVAL

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with policies EM02 by reason of the site's location within a general employment area. The proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre and is acceptable in terms of traffic generation and road safety.

RECOMMENDATION

The Chief Planning Control Officer be authorised to grant planning permission subject to conditions –

- Alternative to planning permission B/85/00374
- As recommended by LHA
- Restriction of use to Class B8
- Landscaping
- Materials/colours
- Levels
- No storage of goods in outside air
- Hours of operation
- Boundary treatment
- Cycle parking
- Lighting

DECISION