



PLANNING COMMITTEE: 8th April 2014
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
HEAD OF PLANNING: Susan Bridge

N/2014/0183: Proposed new 3372sqm production building (Use Class B2 - General Industrial) with access and parking at vacant industrial land end of St James Mill Road

WARD: St James Ward

APPLICANT: Cosworth
AGENT: Phil Graham, Ridge & Partners LLP

REFERRED BY: Head of Planning
REASON: Development is on Council owned land

DEPARTURE: NO

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE subject to the following:

- (1) That objections of the Environment Agency being addressed;
- (2) Planning conditions in Paragraph 9 and for the following reason:

The proposed development is in line with Government and local objectives for economic development within the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone and would allow for the expansion and development of an established business and the creation of additional employment within Northampton. The design and appearance are appropriate to the surroundings and the flood mitigation measures within the amended Flood Risk Assessment would ensure that there is no adverse impact on existing flood conditions. The proposal would not lead to any significant adverse impacts on existing highway conditions or biodiversity and is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies B1, B13, T12, E2, E20 & E40 of the

Northampton Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 17, 18-21, 32, 35, 56, 57, 99, 100, 103 & 109.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application proposes the erection of a new 3,372 sqm portal frame production building for Cosworth together with an access road and the provision of a loading/goods in and goods out area and visitor parking.
- 2.2 The land is owned by the Council and the intention is that the land and building would be leased to Cosworth by the Council, should permission be granted.
- 2.3 The proposed building would be used for the manufacture of machined engine castings and would comprise of a production area measuring 2,790 sqm at ground floor with a 582 sqm mezzanine above providing ancillary office space, staff facilities and plant rooms. The building would measure 9m to the eaves and 10m to the ridge with elevation materials comprising of grey and blue composite cladding and roof panels to match the adjacent Cosworth unit to the west of the site.
- 2.4 The existing site levels would be raised by a maximum of 1m overall to mitigate potential flood impacts. The loading area to the west of the existing unit would be extended to provide a loading area and waste compound for the new unit served by the existing vehicular access.
- 2.5 St James Mill Road would be extended for the length of the new building and a new vehicular and pedestrian access provided to the east of the proposed building providing access to a 19 space car park and the main entrance to the building. A cycle shelter for 10 bicycles would be provided to the front of the building.
- 2.6 The application is accompanied by a Design & Access Statement, Extended Phase 1 Habitat Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment, Phase 1 Ground Condition Assessment (Contamination), a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The application site is a vacant brownfield site situated at the end of St James Mill Road where the road forms a dead end and comprises of an area of open scrubland owned by the Council. The site is situated within an industrial area within the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone.
- 3.2 The site lies within Floodzones 2 & 3 and is situated at the top of the flood bank of the Kingslingbury branch of the River Nene. A public footpath/cycleway runs alongside the river with the Northampton branch of the Grand Union Canal located some 80m further south of the site.

3.3 To the west and northwest of the site are existing business and industrial units including an existing Cosworth building immediately adjacent to west of the site. The land to the immediate north is vacant scrubland also owned by the Council beyond which is further industrial development. The site is bordered to the east by a disused railway line beyond which is Nene Valley Retail Park.

3.4 The site is relatively level with a slight drop to the east with the southern boundary rising up to the flood bank of the River Nene.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 There is no relevant planning history.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The current Development Plan comprises of the saved policies of the Northampton Local Plan.

5.2 National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
17 - Core Planning Principles
18-21 - Building a strong, competitive economy
32 & 35 - Transport
56 & 57 - Design
99, 100 & 103 - Flood Risk
109 - Biodiversity

5.3 Northampton Local Plan

B1 – Sites allocated for business use
B13 – Provision of Infrastructure for Business
T12 – Development requiring servicing by commercial vehicles
E2 – Development alongside the River Nene
E20 – New Development
E40 – Design to deter crime & vandalism

5.4 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Submission Version)

Policy S7 – Provision of Jobs
Policy S8 – Distribution of Jobs
Policy E1 – Existing Employment Areas

5.5 **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Northamptonshire County Parking Standards SPG 2003

Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

6. **CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS**

Representations are summarised as follows:

6.1 **Environmental Health** – has no objection subject to contamination conditions relating to further site investigation, the approval and implementation of a remediation scheme and continual monitoring and assessment of contamination during development. In addition, it is recommended that a condition requiring appropriate mitigation measures to address air quality/carbon management and to identify external sources of noise are imposed.

6.2 **The Highways Agency** – has no objection.

6.3 **The Environment Agency** – objects to the proposal requesting further information regarding the proposed drainage strategy in relation to the proposed road, actions in the event of pump failure, land ownership and discharge point issues and details relating to the existing 900mm pipe crossing the site.

Note: Further details have been requested from the applicant and the final comments of the EA will be reported to Committee via an addendum.

6.4 **NCC Highway Authority** – has no objection but raise concern that the Transport Assessment has only assessed the impact of the proposal on the St James Road/ St James Mill Road junction and not the eight surrounding junctions as requested during pre-application discussions. Nor does the assessment provide a future assessment to the year 2026. The junction assessed is over capacity and any development will need to have a nil detrimental impact and may require the developer to provide mitigation. Notwithstanding these concerns the Highway Authority has no objection overall subject to conditions requiring the provision of a standard turning head and the end of the current St James Mill Road, the submission of a Construction Management Plan and that a road condition survey is carried out prior to commencement and on completion of the proposed development.

6.5 **Construction Futures** - request S106 contributions of £3,372 equivalent to 26 training weeks.

6.6 **The Council's Arboricultural Officer** – has advised that the trees within the site are of low quality and not suitable for retention. A

detailed landscaping scheme incorporating additional tree planting should be conditioned.

- 6.7 **The Canal and River Trust** - no comment.
- 6.8 **The Crime Prevention Officer** – no objection. The developer has advised that they aspire to achieve Secure By Design accreditation for the building which will contribute to the BREEAM rating.
- 6.9 **Natural England** – has no objection.
- 6.10 **NCC Development Management** – has requested a contribution of £145 per 100 sqm towards local fire and rescue infrastructure costs or alternatively the installation of a sprinkler system throughout the new development and the installation of 1 fire hydrant.

7. APPRAISAL

Principle of the Development

- 7.1 The NPPF places significant weight on the need to support sustainable economic growth encouraging Local Planning Authorities to set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth and the expansion of existing business.
- 7.2 The site is allocated for employment use in the Local Plan and lies with the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone where business and economic development is actively encouraged by the Council in line with Government objectives.
- 7.3 Cosworth has a strong established presence within Northampton with both the Head Office and a number of factories already located on the St James Mill Road industrial estate. The proposal would allow for the expansion and development of an established business within the town and provide employment for up to 70 people in line with the above policies and is therefore considered acceptable in principle subject to the issues addressed below.

Appearance & Design

- 7.4 The proposed building would be simple in form and has been designed to be in keeping with the existing Cosworth buildings on the industrial estate using the corporate grey and blue colours. Although visually prominent from the riverside footpath, the scale and appearance of the building would be viewed in the context of the surrounding large scale industrial and retail units and would reflect the character of the surrounding area. The design and appearance are considered acceptable.

- 7.5 Landscaping is proposed on the limited space surrounding the site to the front of the building and surrounding the proposed car park the details of which could be approved by condition.
- 7.6 Following comments from the Crime Prevention Design Advisor the cycle shed has been relocated to be visible from windows at the front of the building to enable surveillance from inside. The applicants aspire to achieve Secure By Design accreditation and this could be secured by condition.

Flood Risk

- 7.7 The site lies within Floodzones 2 & 3 as identified by the Environment Agency's Flood Map. Industrial development is classed as 'less vulnerable' development in accordance with the Technical Guidance for NPPF (March 2012) and therefore is an appropriate development within these floodzones.
- 7.8 NPPF advises that in determining planning applications local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere and only consider development appropriate in areas at risk of flooding where informed by a site-specific flood risk assessment following a sequential test and, if required, an exception test.
- 7.9 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted with the application which advises that from historic Environment Agency data, there is no evidence to show that the site has been flooded during the extreme events of March 1947 or Easter 1998. The FRA at Appendix E provides written confirmation from the Environment Agency that sequential and exceptions test are not required for the proposed development.
- 7.10 The FRA proposes mitigation measures which include:
- Constructing finished floor levels a minimum of 300mm above the predicted 1:200 year plus climate change allowance flood level. The southern section of the site will be infilled to approximately 60.580m AOD to reduce the flood level hazard risk on site. The overall site level will be raised by a maximum of 1m.
 - Surface water from service yard areas will be collected in a positive drainage system and passed through an oil interceptor which will discharge into an underground attenuation tank beneath the car parking area.
 - Surface water from the roof drainage will be collected in a positive drainage system and discharged into the underground attenuation tank.
 - The car park will be made of a permeable construction.

- A SUDs attenuation tank will be placed beneath the car park to store the surface water run-off from the site which will discharge to the River Nene using a flow control device.
- 7.11 The Environment Agency currently has a right of access for maintenance purposes to the top of the embankment through the site. The proposal provides an alternative access route for the Environment Agency through the car parking area to the embankment.
- 7.12 The Environment Agency has requested further information in relation to the FRA and their further comments will be reported to Committee via an addendum.

Environment

- 7.13 NPPF encourages the effective use of brownfield land and seeks to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains where possible. Policy E2 of the Local Plan resists development alongside the River Nene unless it is compatible with important wildlife habitats and includes a landscaped accessible frontage to the river, on average 12m.
- 7.14 The site is a brownfield site located approximately 30m from the riverbank with the flood embankment and an area of vegetation, scrub trees and reed beds alongside the river. The development would not affect the immediate riverbank and would maintain the existing accessible frontage to the river.
- 7.15 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Report has been submitted with the application which advises that no protected species have been identified on site although the western part of the site has potential for common reptile species to occur and a reptile survey is recommended.
- 7.16 The site has no statutory designation for wildlife and is not within the vicinity of a designated wildlife site. The proposed development would not lead to any significant impacts on biodiversity and Natural England has no objection.

Highways

- 7.17 The site is located at the end of St James Street. The application proposes increasing the service yard area to the east of the existing Cosworth building and providing goods vehicle access via the existing access. In addition, the proposals include the extension of St James Mill Road by some 120m for the length of the site along the route of the previously safeguarded corridor intended to provide a link from St James Mill Road to St James Mill Road East previously allocated under the now removed Policy T3 of the Local Plan. The road would be constructed to adoptable standards at base level with a hardcore finish to enable continuation of the route should the remainder of the link come forward in future.

- 7.18 The submitted Transport Assessment anticipates that there will be two inbound deliveries per week and one outbound delivery every three weeks in small HGVs. In addition there will regular waste collections and deliveries of non-industrial post. However, overall very few additional vehicular movements would occur as a result of the proposed development. Production staff which will form 75% of the proposed workforce will be employed in two shifts (6am to 2pm and 2pm to 10pm) and therefore the majority of staff would travel outside of the peaks periods.
- 7.19 Additional HGV movements will occur during the construction period for the transportation of materials and inert materials to increase site levels however these have been assessed as part of the Transport Assessment and will be of a temporary nature.
- 7.20 A Travel Plan has been submitted with the application with the aim of encouraging staff to be responsible for their travel habits and to promote more environmentally sustainable and less polluting methods of transport. A detailed Travel Plan and its implementation would be required by condition.
- 7.21 The Highway Authority on balance has no objection subject to the conditions proposed. A condition requiring a road condition survey is not considered to be a planning matter and could be dealt with under separate Highway legislation. In view of the limited HGV movements proposed, the proposed shift patterns which would minimise additional impacts on the highway at peak times and the implementation of a Travel Plan it is not considered that the proposal, subject to the conditions proposed, would lead to any significant adverse impact on the highway network.

Other Matters

- 7.22 The proposal is not subject to a S106 agreement however the Council as land owner will negotiate a construction training programme with the applicant as appropriate.
- 7.23 With regard to air quality/carbon management, the application is accompanied by a Sustainability Statement which advises that a minimum of 10% of the developments energy needs will be from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. In addition, HGV movements to and from the site are not significant and a Travel Plan is requested by condition which would promote more environmentally sustainable methods of transport for employees.
- 7.24 Further comments are awaited from the applicant regarding fire safety and will be reported as an addendum.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposed development is in line with both Government and the Council's objectives for economic development within the Enterprise Zone and would allow for the expansion and development of an established prominent business within Northampton leading to the creation of up to 70 additional jobs in line with the objectives of the Joint Core Strategy. The design and appearance are appropriate to the surroundings and the development would not adversely impact on biodiversity. Further comments in relation to flood impacts are awaited and will be reported to Committee via an addendum.

9. CONDITIONS

- (1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- (2) The development hereby approved will be constructed in accordance with the external material details as shown on drawing no. 140088-A2000 received 18 March 2014.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the building and the character of the area in accordance with the requirements of Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- (3) Prior to construction work commencing on site, an intrusive site investigation shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the submitted Peter Brett Report (PBA 26554/001) Phase 1 Ground Contamination Assessment Report date February 2012 and the results shall be used to produce a remediation scheme, which shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. Construction work shall not commence on site until confirmation of the full implementation of the approved remediation scheme has been confirmed by means of a validation report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any unexpected suspect contamination discovered during the development shall be reported to the Planning Authority forthwith and assessed and remediated by methods agreed with the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the occupation of the development.

Reason: To ensure the effective investigation and remediation of contamination land sites and in the interests of health and safety and the quality of the environment in accordance with the advice contained in NPPF.

- (4) Within three months of work commencing on site, a landscaping scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- (5) All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and which shall be maintained for a period of five years; such maintenance to include the replacement in the current or nearest planting season whichever is the sooner or shrubs that may die are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- (6) Notwithstanding the submitted details, within one month of commencement on site, details shall be submitted for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the provision of a standard turning head in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council Highway standards at the current end of St James Mill Road (the existing adopted highway) adjacent to No. 68 St James Mill Road including the provision of a 1.8m footpath. The proposed turning head shall have been implemented prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with the requirements of NPPF.

- (7) No development shall commence on site until a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include details of the management of traffic during construction to address site access, routes within site kept free from obstruction, wheel washing facilities, a travel plan for construction workers, loading and unloading, vehicle parking and turning areas and a scheme for prevention of surface water discharges onto the highway. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details for the duration of construction.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with the requirements of NPPF.

- (8) No goods or articles shall be stored on any part of the site except inside the building.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not prejudice the appearance of the locality in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- (9) The loading and unloading of all vehicles attending the premises shall at all times take place solely within the curtilage of the site.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy T12 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- (10) The parking and turning, loading and unloading space shown on the submitted plan, drawing no. 140088=A0100 rev A, shall be laid and marked out prior to the development being first brought into use and retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not prejudice the free flow of traffic or conditions of highway safety in accordance with Policy T12 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- (11) Prior to commencement on site construction details including surface treatment of the proposed access road including gradients shall be submitted for approval in writing site by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- (12) Prior to the first occupation of the premises hereby approved, a detailed Travel Plan for employees shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall be implemented at all times that the development is occupied unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To reduce the reliance on the private car for journeys to work in accordance with the advice contained in NPPF.

- (13) Full details of facilities for the secure and covered parking of bicycles shall be first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, provided prior to the development being first brought into use and retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate facilities in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- (14) Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted details of a scheme demonstrating how the development will aim to achieve

Secure By Design standards shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that appropriate consideration is given to the prevention of crime and vandalism in accordance with the requirements of Policy E40 of the Northampton.

- (15) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 140088-A0100 rev B, A2000 rev C, A1001 rev E, A1003 rev A, A1000 rev E, A4000 rev B & 5111/30 rev A 'Proposed Levels'.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the planning application.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

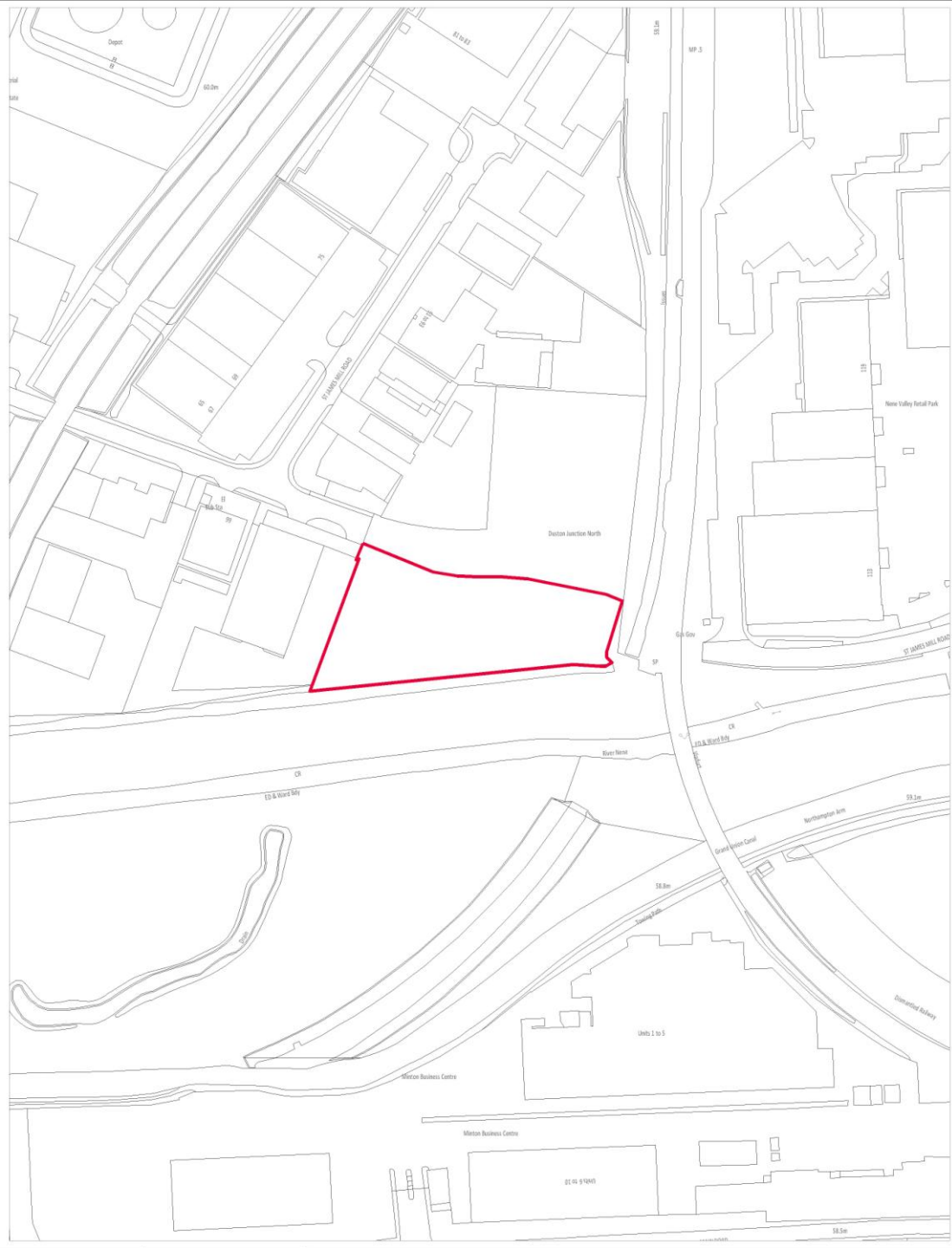
- 10.1 N/2014/0183

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Lease agreement to be dealt with by Asset Management.

12. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 12.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.



Name: **Planning**
 Date: **26th March 2014**
 Scale: **NTS**
 Dept: **Planning**
 Project: **Committee**

Title

Land at St James Mill Road

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