

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: East Area **Ward:** Skelton, Rawcliffe, Clifton Without
Date: 14 December 2006 **Parish:** Clifton Without Parish Council

Reference: 06/02102/FULM
Application at: Land Adj To Concorde Park Fronting Amy Johnson Way York
For: Erection of 2 storey Eco Business Centre including 32 workshops, 40 office units, car and cycle parking, and a wind turbine
By: Helmsley Group
Application Type: Major Full Application (13 weeks)
Target Date: 26 December 2006

1.0 PROPOSAL

This application seeks permission for the erection of a two storey Eco Business Centre so as to accommodate, support and provide work space for small start up businesses within the City.

The centre will include 32 workshops with access onto a central ground floor courtyard with 40 single office units to the first floor. The application also includes details of associated car and cycle parking and a proposed wind turbine to the front of the site.

The principle of the development is intended to encourage small businesses in the city by providing purpose designed facilities to support new business formation and growth. The building is intended to relocate from current premises at Parkside Commercial Centre and the Fishergate Centre. A core value of the application is the eco rating of the building and the maximisation of energy efficiency measures to reduce the environmental impact of the building and users.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

City Boundary York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams East Area (2) 0005

2.2 Policies:

CYSP7A

The sequential approach to development

CYGP1

Design

CYSP8
Reducing dependence on the car

CYE4
Employment devt on unallocated land

CYGP5
Renewable energy

CYGP4A
Sustainability

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

Internal

Highway Network Management - Highway Network Management are still to clarify certain issues relating to a Section 38 Agreement and areas within the public Highway. Subject to satisfactory revisions and clarification the following comments are to be maintained.

The proposal is for the creation of an Eco Business Centre. The EBC provides workshop facilities for start-up/newly formed businesses. The existing centre currently operates from a site in Fishergate. The small size of the units proposed tends to attract one man operations such as artists and computer repair businesses. Once the businesses in the units have become established they leave the premises to develop further.

The application has been supported by a good Travel Plan and great emphasis has been placed upon the sustainable principles of the site and the aim to reduce the energy used in association with the site.

Access to the site is to be via an existing access road, which offers adequate levels of visibility and width. Traffic associated with the site will use existing highway around Clifton Moorgate and is not expected to have a material impact on the operation of existing junctions.

The adjacent highway is protected by waiting restrictions which will manage on-street parking.

Within the site car and cycle parking has been provided to the relevant CYC standard together with showering facilities for those who choose to arrive by foot/cycle. Adequate turning facilities have been provided with sufficient facilities to enable deliveries to be made clear of the public highway.

Conditions;
Hwy 18, Hwy 19, Hwy 21,
Hwy 29(gate), Hwy 31, Hwy 35

Economic Development Unit - The EDU have the following comments to make and illustrates the principle of the development.

Background

This proposed building has developed from the need to provide replacement accommodation for the current business centres at the Parkside Commercial Centre in Terry Avenue and the Fishergate Centre in Fishergate; a business centre providing accommodation for business people of any age and a business centre for the 18-30 age group respectively. Neither of these buildings was purpose-designed as a business centre however and have now reached the end of their economic lives, requiring considerable investment to continue in use. Such resources would certainly be better spent on a new building on a new site with better facilities, access and energy use in the modern age.

Facilities

The proposed design at Amy Johnson Way provides accommodation for 32 workshops and 40 office units including a management suite from which small business tenants may receive training, business advice and counselling in the running of their business from the on-site managing company. The intention is to build a vibrant small business community on site, encouraging professionalism and best-practice, providing support from the managing company and inter trading amongst businesses. This will be facilitated by the provision of a communal cafe at first floor level, public and exhibition areas with training and room-hire for neighbouring businesses to use in the centre.

Economic Development objectives

This new building is intended to help encourage the growth of the small business sector in the city, providing purpose-designed facilities in a supportive environment in an iconic, sustainable building which can act as a focal point for new business formation and growth. The small business sector in the city is an important one in providing opportunities for both self-employment and employment particularly at a time when many people face an uncertain employment future as large companies restructure. Individuals may wish to examine the opportunities that self-employment can offer as they examine the opportunities open to them.

The application has full Economic Development support and will further the objectives for good employment prospects for local people.

City Development - No objections in principle subject to the application addressing relevant Policy context to be assessed by the Development Control Officer and Highway Regulation.

Environmental Protection Unit - EPU have no objections to this application subject to the following conditions. The site was previously used as an airfield and there are concerns regarding possible contamination that justify an environmental watching brief.

Sustainability - The application in its use of design, use, materials and technologies is supported. Officers have requested a more detailed Sustainability Statement and are awaiting further response from Sustainability Officer.

Countryside Officer - No objections in principle. A full green or 'brown' roof is considered preferable to the area provided that it is to be primarily used for occupants of the building and not wildlife, however such a feature would require fundamental changes to the design of the structure and so no objections are raised.

External

Parish/Planning Panel Response - No objections from Clifton Without Parish Council.

External Consultee Response - A single letter of objection has been received from the Clifton Moor Business Association. Whilst supporting the principle of the Eco Business Centre they have serious concerns regarding car parking and movement of vehicles. They feel that car parking numbers of 400 would be appropriate whereas Highway Standards require only around 40 spaces. Officers recommendation is based upon the satisfaction of Highway Network Management.

4.0 APPRAISAL

Key Issues -

Design

Impact Upon Traffic/Highways

Sustainability of Proposal

Site Context - The site is located approximately 4 miles from the centre of York and is currently an area of concrete and underused land that backs onto the car park of the nearby cinema on Stirling Road. The site appears to be an area left over from the World War Two Airfield that occupied the site until comprehensive redevelopment was undertaken in the 1980's 90's. The site is located amongst several other office and light industrial uses within this retail/industrial park. The site is served by Amy Johnson Way that gives access to several businesses in the locality.

Design - The locality of the site is dominated by mono functional industrial, office and leisure facilities that characterise the Clifton Moor area. There is no overall design master plan in place to accommodate such applications and as such the proposed building conforms to the existing precedent of a single two storey building with a single main entrance.

The design of the building is admirable in its use of sustainably sourced materials and the amount of active frontage that surrounds the building does represent a welcome intervention into this area of windowless shed and speculative office development. Ideally Officers would have preferred some physical link to the cinema site to the rear but the overall design of the locality and site ownerships have made this impractical. The applicants have accommodated windows to all facades and this does create some natural surveillance to all sides that creates a more welcoming appearance.

In summary the design, scale and materials of this structure are considered appropriate. There is no desirable precedent to follow and it is considered that the proposed structure will contribute more positively to this locality in design terms than many of its neighbours. The principle of the wind turbine has deliberately been encouraged to the front of the building to create a sense of identity and promote the ethos of sustainability to a wider audience. It is also felt that the location of the turbine will create a greater sense of place and is fully supported by Officers.

Impact Upon Highways - The development creates 40 new car parking spaces and 30 cycle parking spaces which meet Highway standards for parking and as such Highway Network Management have raised no objection. At time of writing revisions are being awaited clarifying the ownership of the site entrance. At present the site entrance is within an area of maintainable highway and as such clarification is being undertaken and modest revisions to the access are expected.

In principle however the units will be used by small businesses often with one worker for each unit. Based upon this, and in light of Highway recommendations, no objections are raised to the proposed amount of car parking.

Sustainability - The proposal intends to create a sustainable building that not only works upon an environmental level but also creates small scale business support thereby supporting the wider community. At the time of writing Officers are awaiting a further response from the Council's Sustainability Officer with regards to further information that has been requested but the general opinion of Officers is one of support in environmental terms.

In summary the Environmental credentials include the following;

High Quality design with longevity

Support for small business communities.

Ground Source heating. (subject to site conditions)

Solar Heated Hot water. Providing nearly 100% hot water demand in summer and 40% in winter

Wind Turbine providing energy contribution to external and communal areas.

High levels of insulation reducing energy use through generation and loss of heat.

Water saving devices on taps and cisterns.

Lighting controls linked to daylight and occupation of rooms and areas within the building.

Rainwater collection for flushing of toilets and watering of landscaped areas.

Permeable car parking areas to reduce surface water run off.

Green roof garden. (This is mainly to be used as an area for staff and not considered appropriate for a biodiversity asset.)

On site recycling provision.

Green Travel Plan highlighting and encouraging public transport and cycling to and from the site, encouraging use of communal cycle for tenant use and signing up to the City Car Club scheme.

In summary Officers support the application and it is felt that both the environmental and social aspects of sustainability have been addressed through the energy efficiency measures, high quality design and the provision of usable and positive places for small local businesses to start up.

Suitability of the site for Employment - Justification has been provided by the applicants for the relocation from their current premises in Fishergate and Terry Avenue as these premises were not purpose built for such activities and the accommodation at present would require considerable investment to accommodate the changes needed. This move therefore will create a 'community' of small businesses and entrepreneurs and is fully supported by Officers in the Economic Development Unit.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion the proposal intends to introduce to this area of the city a positive addition that encompasses Sustainability in all its forms from high quality lasting design to high levels of insulation and sustainably sourced materials. In light of this Officers feel that the proposal is acceptable and will contribute positively to the local area of Clifton Moor and the City as a whole.

As such the proposal complies with Policies GP1, SP8, GP4a, E4, GP5 and T4 of the City of York Deposit Draft Local Plan as well as overriding Policy Advice in the form of PPS, PPG4 and PPG14.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

- 1 TIME2 Development start within three years
- 2 PLANS2 Apprvd plans and other submitted details
- 3 VISQ8 Samples of exterior materials to be app
- 4 HWAY18 Cycle parking details to be agreed
- 5 HWAY19 Car and cycle parking laid out
- 6 HWAY21 Internal turning areas to be provided
- 7 HWAY29 IN No gate etc to open in highway
- 8 HWAY31 No mud on highway during construction
- 9 HWAY35 Servicing within the site
- 10 Any suspect contaminated materials detected during site works shall be reported to the local planning authority. Any remediation for this contamination shall be agreed with the local planning authority and fully implemented prior to any further development of the site.
Reason: As our in-house research has shown no obvious potential source of contamination at the site, the watching brief is recommended.

7.0 INFORMATIVES: Notes to Applicant

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal, subject to the conditions listed above, would not cause undue harm to interests of acknowledged importance, with particular reference to neighbours. As such the proposal complies with Policies GP1, SP8, GP4a, E4, GP5 and T4 of the City of York Deposit Draft Local Plan as well as overriding Policy Advice in the form of PPS, PPG4 and PPG14.

2. Demolition and Construction - Informative

The developer's attention should also be drawn to the various requirements for the control of noise on construction sites laid down in the Control of Pollution Act 1974. In order to ensure that residents are not adversely affected by air pollution and noise, the following guidance should be attached to any planning approval:

1. The work shall be carried out in such a manner so as to comply with the general recommendations of British Standards BS 5228: Part 1: 1997, a code of practice for "Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites" and in particular Section 10 of Part 1 of the code entitled "Control of noise and vibration".

2. All plant and machinery to be operated, sited and maintained in order to minimise disturbance. All items of machinery powered by internal combustion engines must be properly silenced and/or fitted with effective and well-maintained mufflers in accordance with manufacturers instructions.

3. The best practicable means, as defined by Section 72 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974, shall be employed at all times, in order to minimise noise emissions.

4. All reasonable measures shall be employed in order to control and minimise dust emissions, including sheeting of vehicles and use of water for dust suppression.

5. There shall be no bonfires on the site.

Any deviation from the above conditions shall be approved beforehand by the Environmental Protection Unit by ringing 01904 551572

3. Notwithstanding the approved plans the applicant should provide real time monitoring of the energy performance of the building and make this information publicly available in order to contribute up to date information on sustainable methods of construction and to promote best practice across the city.

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