

Sub-Committee Update

Item 5 b)

13/03256/FULM

Rear of Linden's Sandy Lane, Stockton on the Forest

Insert Additional Paragraphs for the Report (these paragraphs do not replace any existing paragraphs)

IMPACT UPON THE OPEN CHARACTER AND PURPOSES OF DESIGNATION OF THE YORK GREEN BELT

4.3 Policy GB1 of the York Development Control Local Plan sets out a firm policy presumption that within the Green Belt planning permission will only be given for development of a scale, location and design which would not detract from the open character of the Green Belt and would not conflict with the purposes of including land within it and be for one of a number of purposes deemed to be appropriate within it. The Adopted Development Plan Context for the Green Belt which is relevant in the current context consists of saved Policies YH9C and Y1c(1) and (2) of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy which seek to define long term and sustainable inner and outer boundaries to the Green Belt.

4.4 Central Government Planning Policy in respect of the Green Belt as outlined in paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework identifies all new built development within the Green Belt as inappropriate and therefore harmful to its character unless it comes within one of a number of specified categories deemed to be appropriate including, the partial re-development of previously developed sites when redundant or in continuing use which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land within it than the existing development. In order to overcome the usual presumption against inappropriate development a clear case of "very special circumstances" would need to be forthcoming but none has been received.

4.5 The application site lies outside of, but close to the defined settlement limit of Stockton on the Forest. However, within the emerging Preferred Options Draft Local Plan the site has been excluded from the

Green Belt and incorporated within the village envelope. The formal inner boundary of the Green Belt has also not been precisely defined in this location. The appropriateness of the development within the Green Belt needs therefore to be assessed in terms of compliance with the tests for including land within the Green Belt and the impact of the proposal upon the openness of the Green Belt when set against that of the existing development.

4.6 The two tests of particular relevance in the current context are the need to safeguard the countryside from encroachment and the need to preserve the special character of historic towns and cities. In terms of the tests the proposal seeks permission to erect a building to house a range of existing activities taking place at the site in the open air. It would be of identical height and a comparable scale and massing to the two existing buildings lying at the street frontage of the site. The site is presently within a mixed storage/industrial use with a storage use taking place on the site directly to the south. To east and west lie a series of farmyards running back from the street frontage, with the site boundaries sheltered by mature landscaping to the west and a substantial range of farm buildings to the east. It is felt that the proposed building would not in view of the nature of the surroundings and the current usage of the site encroach upon the countryside with resulting harm to the character of the Green Belt to a greater extent than the existing buildings at the site. At the same time any impact upon the setting and historic character of the City arising out of the proposal would be modest.

4.7 In terms of the impact of the proposal upon the openness of the Green Belt the site comprises an established operational industrial site with substantial buildings visible from the street frontage in storage and workshop use with a large yard behind. The site has a wider linear nature stretching back from the Sandy Lane frontage with clearly defined boundaries. The yard to the rear of the site is not readily perceptible in views from outside of the site and the proposed building would match the existing in terms of its scale, massing and height. It is not felt therefore that the proposed building would have a materially greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt than the existing.

4.8 Assessing the site against the purposes of including land within the Green Belt and the contribution of the site to its open character, taking

account of the non-adopted nature of the Green Belt boundary, it is felt that the contribution of the site to the character of the Green Belt in this area is modest and that any impact arising from the proposal would be similarly modest. Taking account of the nature of the built development at the site frontage together with the nature of the boundaries it is felt that any impact arising from the development on the openness of the Green Belt would be acceptable and that the requirements of paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework have been complied with. The development is therefore felt to be acceptable in Green Belt terms.

Additional Paragraph for Conclusion

5.2 In terms of its impact upon the Green Belt, the site lies in close proximity to the edge of the defined village envelope, indeed in the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan it is within village envelope and outside of the Green Belt . Taking account of the lack of definition of the inner Green Belt boundary it is necessary to assess the site characteristics against the reasons for including land within the Green Belt along with the impact of the proposed development on openness. On the basis of that examination it is felt that the proposal would not give rise to any greater impact than the existing buildings and other activity taking place at the site. The proposal is therefore felt to be acceptable in terms of paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal is therefore felt to be acceptable in planning terms and approval is recommended.

Amended Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION: Approve after referral to the Secretary of State

Additional Condition

5. Notwithstanding the information contained on the approved plans, the height of the approved development shall not exceed 7.8 metres, as measured from existing ground level. Before any works commence on the site a means of identifying the existing ground level on the site shall be agreed in writing and any works required to mark that ground level accurately during the construction works shall be implemented prior to

any disturbance of the existing ground level. Any such physical works or marker shall be retained on site for the duration of construction works.

Reason:- To safeguard the character of the site and to secure open character of the Green Belt.