

## **Member Briefing Note 4**

**Application 1421/07 : Use of land and construction of buildings and hard standings for storage, distribution (B8 uses) and general industrial (B2 uses), with associated rail sidings, structural planting, flood compensation, surface water storage areas, means of access and associated parking and manoeuvring areas, land adjoining A1120, Creeting St Peter (part in Stowmarket).**

### **Planning Application Update**

- 1) The previous Member Briefing Note dated 9<sup>th</sup> May 2008 (entitled update note for Cllr Woodley), set out the factual position following the receipt of the 'further information' requested by officers which was received in the form of an 'addendum submission' from the applicant.
- 2) The submission principally contained further transportation information (including a Rail Case), drainage, ecology and employment related information. A revised Master plan incorporating additional land in the control of Network Rail to provide for new rail sidings / points infrastructure was also submitted.

### **Consultee Responses on Addendum Submission**

- 3) Consultations were carried out and the responses of the principal consultees are summarised below;
  - East of England Regional Assembly (EERA)
    - proposals are considered to be inconsistent with the policies of the RSS, as the application fails to establish a clear & identifiable need for a multi modal distribution centre on the edge of Stowmarket;
    - Development of a green field site is not justified when alternative sites, including previously developed land, (pdl) are considered to be available for this purpose;
    - Access to the rail network has not and may not be secured;
  - East of England Development Agency (EEDA)
    - Need to await the outcome of the Felixstowe Port Logistics Study & Regional Freight Strategy for the East of England before a response can be made on the application;
    - Note: The Port Study is currently in draft form and is expected to report before Christmas 2008, and the Freight Strategy was published in early November 2008;

➤ Network Rail

- Do not support the application as the submitted Rail Case is not considered to address the economics of the operation of rail services or the investment in rail connections and associated infrastructure;

➤ Highways Agency

- Fundamental issues need to be addressed and evidence provided in relation to the definition and detail of the proposed land use, future occupiers and working practices, proposed shift patterns for a multi modal operation, methodology for trip generation and employment numbers, and 24 hour trip modelling / impacts on the network including the A1120 / B1113 junction;
- Technical concerns need to be addressed related to the justification of a 7am – 7pm shift working pattern in the absence of a specific end user – a ‘worst case’ scenario of travel patterns (incorporating the normal am / pm peak) therefore needs to be modelled including the preparation of a revised Transportation Assessment (TA) as necessary;
- Further information is needed in relation to the traffic flows and assumptions at Junction 50 of the A14 and the Creeping Road link;
- The suitability of a potential upgrade to the Westbound Off Slip at A14 (J50) needs to be drawn up for consideration;
- Further consideration needs to be given to the potential requirement for an upgrade of the Eastbound merge at A14 (J 50);
- Public transport service alignment with the proposed shift patterns needs to be provided for;

➤ Highway Authority (SCC)

- Note that the Rail Case has not been made and require confirmation as to the implications for the rail / road modal split;
- Clarification of the basis of the trip rates (TRICS) and reassessment of the trip rates and distribution based on the likely capacity of the site (and employment generation) is required;
- Consideration needs to be given to the upgrading of the Tesco roundabout and the rationale (and technical solutions) for providing a Toucan Crossing across the A1120 / Cedars Link;

- Consideration needs to be given to the preparation of an effective Travel Plan, including pedestrian, bicycle and public transport facilities;
- Environment Agency
    - Object to the application as the surface water drainage strategy is not considered to meet the requirements of PPS25 in respect of extreme rainfall events, potentially resulting in the proposed surface water drainage outfalls from the site being unable to discharge into the River Gipping when it is subject to elevated water levels;
- Anglian Water
    - Recommend conditions in relation to waste water treatment and trade effluent;
- Natural England
    - Withdraw its earlier objections based on the insufficient survey information for Great Crested Newts;
    - Raise concerns in relation to potential light spillage within the River Gipping corridor and adjoining wet pasture and requests further information in relation to the potential impact upon Badger, Water Vole and Otter interests;
- Suffolk Wildlife Trust
    - Development should be contained within existing arable fields and not encroach into the semi improved wet grassland area to the South East of the site;
    - Consider that the proposed railway siding and adjacent storage and handling area projects too close to the River Gipping and may result in light spillage into the river corridor;
    - The overall lighting for the development should be strictly controlled;
    - A Habitat Management Plan is required for the semi natural areas of the site focused on grassland areas and ditches;
    - A Water Vole survey should be undertaken prior to any development taking place;

## **Key Studies Material to the Consideration of the Application**

- 4) The following studies are likely to have a bearing on the consideration of the application proposals;
  - Felixstowe Port Logistics Study – this Study has been commissioned to assist Suffolk Coastal DC and neighbouring authorities (including Mid Suffolk), to identify the key land use issues and requirements likely to emerge from future expansion of the Port through implementation of the Felixstowe South Reconfiguration proposals;
  - The Study is expected to identify the broad land requirements needed to support the sustainable growth and competitiveness of the Port and related port and logistics uses, and propose a spatial strategy based on the identification of key trunk route locations and land use/transportation criteria which would guide the potential locations for B8 related development;
  - The Western Suffolk Employment Land Study – this Study has been commissioned to assist Suffolk CC, Mid Suffolk DC, St Edmundsbury BC and Forest Heath DC to devise a spatial strategy for allocating land and distributing the job growth targets for the ‘Rest of Suffolk Area’ as set out in the East of England Plan (RSS);
  - The Western Suffolk Study is expected to report its findings in March 2009;
  - The Regional Freight Strategy for the East of England – this Study provides a broad policy context for securing the efficient and sustainable movement of freight to maximise the competitiveness and productivity of the regional economy;

## **Timetable for the Determination of the Application**

- 5) The timetable for the assessment and determination of the planning application is considered below;
  - The strategic nature of the proposal indicates that regard should be had to the findings of relevant background studies which are considering the expansion of Felixstowe Port, the spatial implications for accommodating the job growth needs of the RSS and freight related strategies;
  - At this stage it is considered that the likely determination period for the application would be related to the reporting period for the Western Suffolk Employment Land Study which is currently expected to be published in March 2009;

### **Inspection of the Applicant's Addendum Submission**

- 6) The applicant's April 2008 Addendum Submission (including the Drainage Statement Addendum dated June 2008), can be inspected on the District Council's website and is accessed in the normal way for other planning applications using the route via the MSDC website ([www.midsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk)), then navigate to planning & building information / planning services / planning application search / 1421/07 / documents tab - click on the respective tabs to inspect the documents.

### **Status of the Update Note**

- 7) This is a 'without prejudice' factual update on the application and is for information only - no inference should be drawn from this note in relation to the due process associated with the consideration of the merits of the application.
- 8) Further Member update notes (and/or factual briefings) are likely at future key stages and following the publication of the studies referred to above.

Mid Suffolk DC Case Officer Team  
6 November 2008