

**WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL
STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTATION**

DATE: 3rd August 2016

**FROM: Tim Townsend TO: Arun District Council
FAO: Richard Temple**

SUBJECT: P/76/16/PL - Construction of a building for the packaging, preparation & distribution of fresh foods with ancillary accommodation associated with the existing horticultural business, revisions to internal access road, car parking & hardstanding areas & landscaping & provision of a wetland. This application affects the setting of Listed Buildings.

LOCATION: Sefter Farm, Pagham Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO21 3PX.

DATE OF SITE VISIT: 28th July 2016

RECOMMENDATION:

Advice	☐	Modification	☐	More Information	☒
Objection	☐	No Objection	☐	Refusal	☐

S106 contribution total (see below for breakdown): £TBC

This is the WSCC highways and transport response to the planning application.

Summary position of WSCC as Highway Authority.

Additional information is required to enable further consideration of the proposal.

Proposal.

The proposed development is for a new food packing and preparation house, offices and associated parking, turning and loading bays. The application form states the following:

- Office facility – 1,857sqm (although 2,160sqm is quoted on Drg. No. P102 Rev. 12 provided by Curtis Leeves Technical Ltd.)
- Pack House – 5,887sqm (although 5,400sqm is quoted on Drg. No. P102 Rev. 12)
- **Total roof area of new buildings – 7,744sqm (7,560sqm if using the figures quoted from Drg. No. P102 Rev. 12)**

As part of the proposal, the applicant states that 30 new staff members will be employed taking the overall staff presence on site from 400 to 430.

Access.

Access is shown taken directly from Pagham Road (B2166) via a private access road running east-west.

Traffic impact.

Other than a short snap-shot of traffic entering and leaving the site associated with the existing activities taken in mid-late September 2015, no further assessment (TRICS or otherwise) has been carried out by the applicant. The applicant concludes that traffic flow and parking numbers have been arrived at from experience of likely demand and new more-automated ways of working, including sustainable modes of transport that they consider will minimise vehicular impact. However, it is not clear whether the time period assessed is the peak time for traffic entering and leaving the site nor what evidence is used to determine traffic figures quoted. This needs to be stated and qualified.

Turning to the specific information set out in Section 4 of the TA, it is not clear what year the census data has been taken from (2001 or 2011). This also needs to be clarified. Data should be taken from 2011.

The applicant should also state whether shifts operate for staff. If they do, are these 'controlled' for existing facilities owned/run by the applicant or would they be controlled as part of this current application (if permitted) to minimise traffic impact during normal peak periods? The TA (in paragraph 4.6.4 states that car sharing is *anticipated* to be relatively high among employees). However, again, this is not qualified with evidence.

Finally, it is not stated whether produce processed on-site is solely that grown on-site or brought in from other sites. Applicant to confirm this. If produce is brought in from other sites, where does it come from and also state how many (and type of) vehicles.

Parking.

Both existing and proposed parking and turning for cars is shown in one location east of the new building. Parking and turning for HGVs and/or delivery vehicles is shown to the rear (west) of the building. Although the applicant states that the uses proposed are sui generis, if B1 (office) and B8 (storage and distribution) planning uses are used, the WSCC Parking Guidance document suggests that the number of spaces should be as follows:

- Office use (1 space per 40m² + 5% for disabled/mobility impaired drivers) – 46 (+2 of these for disabled/mobility impaired drivers) – based on 1,857sqm floor space (54 if floor area quoted on plan used)
- Pack House (B8 storage and distribution has been used at 1 space per 100sqm + 5% for disabled/mobility impaired drivers) – 58 (+1 of these for disabled/mobility impaired drivers) - based on 5,887sqm floor space (54 if using the floor area quoted on the plan used)

Total: 104 (108 if using floor areas quoted on plan)

From both on-site observation and scrutiny of 'Google Streetview', the existing car park currently provides about 130 car parking spaces and appears to be already well-used. However, spaces are not marked out and are on gravel (or similar). The applicant does provide a plan showing the location of the proposed building and the car parking moved eastwards. However, as spaces are again not marked out, no assessment can be made as to how many spaces will be available for use following redevelopment. The applicant states that the existing provision will be adequate for the new proposal although again, this needs to be qualified by the applicant. The floor area of the existing buildings (including those consented but not built yet) should be provided by the applicant to enable further consideration of parking requirements.

The following should also be considered (again based on floor areas and using WSCC parking guidance):

- Cycle parking (1 space per 500m² for staff + 1 space per 1000m² for visitors) – 22
- Motorcycle parking (1 space + 1 per 10 car parking spaces) – based on 130 spaces - 14
- Lorry parking – 1 minimum + 1 space per 500m² – 12 spaces

Turning to the Transport Assessment (TA) provided by the applicant, this states that parking will be provided as follows:

- Car parking – Applicant states (in paragraph 7.2.1) that car parking will have the same capacity as existing given the likely take-up of the new bus service
- Cycle parking – No number quoted
- Motorcycle parking – No number quoted
- Lorry parking - No number quoted but large loading/unloading areas shown to rear of proposed building.

Taking the WSCC parking advice as a guide, office car parking provision is quoted at 1 space per 40m² with 1 space per 100m² for B8 storage and distribution uses. As it is not clear how the offices are intended to be used, the applicant should provide further evidence in support of using any lower standard, clearly setting out what function and purpose the offices (and times of operation) would serve.

In their overall assessment of all parking for the entire development, the applicants have stated that they consider that parking for the development would be catered for on land in the applicant's control. Therefore, the proposal is based on anticipated requirements. Given that it is not demonstrated in any detail what level of new activity is expected on the site, it is also not possible to establish parking numbers. As such, the applicants should provide further evidence in support of this. In addition, secure and covered cycle and motorcycle parking should also be provided based on clear evidence of likely take-up.

Sustainable provision (including Travel Plan).

Walking – Access on foot to the site is limited and provided in the form of a narrow private footpath within the site boundary leading from the site and emerging to Pagham Road almost opposite its junction with Sefter Road. It is not known whether this path is a recent addition. However, it does not appear to be a formal Public Right of Way (PRoW). From site observation, the path is narrow and unmade. Also, visibility at the point it joins Pagham Road for both users and drivers on Pagham Road is very limited. Although it has the potential to be used, it does need to be improved – particularly at the point it joins Pagham Road and with regard to connectivity with other walking and bus infrastructure. Both the path and any other walking improvements proposed on or close to the public highway should also be Safety Audited.

Cycling – Access provided between Bognor Regis and the site is possible for the most-part using the local road network. However, both Pagham Road and Sefter Road in the vicinity of the site are subject to a 60mph speed limit, are unlit and rural in nature and as such, might discourage some people from cycling to and from the site. Again, this is an area the applicant should look at closer alongside this application. With regards cycle parking, this should be located in a secure, overlooked and covered area, with showers provided for staff on-site. The use of 'Sheffield' Stands (or similar) is recommended. A 'Cycle to Work' Scheme is welcomed and should be secured in the Travel Plan required for this site.

Bus provision –The 600 service by Stagecoach PLC provides for 20 minute frequency Monday-Saturday (other than evening when frequency reduces to hourly, finishing at 21:00pm). Services on Sunday are also hourly during shopping hours. The service runs between Bognor and Chichester. A southbound bus stop can be found just south of the junction of Sefter Road and Pagham Road – about a 6-7 minute walk from the centre of the site using the aforementioned footpath, approximately 400m from the centre of the site. However, it requires users to step into Pagham Road where no footway exists, is unlit and at a point where visibility is very limited. Also, the bus stop does not have a shelter nor footway or hardstanding for users, requiring them to walk either in the road or on verge. For northbound users, a bus stop (again with no shelter but with footway) can be found about 1km south of the entrance to Sefter Farm along Pagham Road opposite the junction with Hook Lane. Like the southbound one, it requires those on-foot to walk within the carriageway of Pagham Road from the site where it is unlit and subject to a 60mph speed limit. A further southbound stop is found opposite the northbound one. Consideration of ways to improve this is required to be put forward by the applicant.

In addition to the public service, the TA states that a new bus service is currently being discussed with Stagecoach PLC, operating between Chichester and Bognor Regis, operating between 05:30am to 17:00pm. The applicant proposes to subsidise this for a short period of time (6 weeks). After that, they have assumed that the service will then be self-funding and that its impact would result in an anticipated take-up by staff of 50%. However, none of this is qualified. Furthermore, the use of mini-buses is referred to but again, limited (or no) information about frequencies and where services run is given. Finally, do bus times (private and public) coincide with shift timetables? Applicant to provide more information.

Travel Plan – A Travel Plan should be provided for the entire development site (for both existing and proposed activities on-site).

Road Safety.

Interrogation of latest 5-years of personal injury (PIA) accident records shows that four (4) accidents have occurred close to the site. No PIAs appear to have occurred at the site entrance. Examining the access in detail, the access to Pagham Road provides visibility for traffic emerging looking in the leading traffic direction (i.e. looking south from the entrance). Looking in the trailing direction (north), again visibility is provided for emerging traffic. However, no dimensions are quoted on the submitted drawings for the available splays. This will be considered further in the light of any access alterations to be considered and following Safety Audit review. Looking at forward visibility for drivers approaching from both directions across the 'inside' of the bend opposite the access, this is limited by foliage. Taking this alongside the speed limit of Pagham Road, the main road flow and the number of vehicles using the Barcrofts' entrance on a daily basis and the likely increase in traffic as a result of this application, the Highway Authority considers that the applicant should consider improvements to the access. In addition, a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) is required for the access - whether or not any changes are forthcoming. In addition, a Designer's Response (DR) is also required – all to be signed and dated. Accident records, as submitted with the application, should also be made available to the Audit Team.

Fire and Rescue Service Requirements.

Access by fire appliance appears to be available. However, further detailed comments are awaited from the Fire and Rescue (Water and Access Officer). These will be forwarded when available.

Public Rights Of Way (PROW).

Comments are awaited and will be forwarded when available.

S106/highways contributions.

To be determined depending on outcomes of further highways information and discussions.

Other information.

If not done so already, the Planning Case Officer should consult Highways England (HE) given the proximity of the site and possible traffic impact of the development on the A27 Trunk Road.

Conclusion.

Further information is required, the detail of which can be found in the main text of this report and summarised below:

1. Consideration of improvements to the access (forward visibility splays and right hand turning lane) to be shown at the junction of the access road with Pagham Road.
2. Provision of a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit for B2166 and site access (including Designer's Response).
3. Further information in support of proposed traffic generation.
4. Further information in support of bus and mini-bus provision to and from the site and improvements considered for existing stops and access thereto.
5. Further information about shift patterns and how these fit in with bus services.
6. Further information about creation and use of footpath between site and Pagham Road and details of visibility and surfacing. In addition to the main site entrance, the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit should also consider this from a road safety perspective too.
7. Further information in support of parking provision.
8. Provision of cycle and motorcycle parking provision (in secure and covered parking areas).
9. Confirmation that showers and changing facilities will be provided on-site for staff.
10. Provision of a Travel Plan (or confirmation that one will be produced for the development).
11. Confirmation that census data is up-to-date.
12. Further information about the office use proposed to be on-site.

Please re-consult when additional information is available, at which time the Highway Authority will consider the proposal further.

Thank you.

Tim Townsend
Strategic Planning