

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

15th August 2012

PLANNING APPLICATION 2012/169/FUL

PROPOSED STORAGE / WAREHOUSE (CLASS B8) EXTENSION

THORLUX LIGHTING, MERSE ROAD, REDDITCH

APPLICANT: MR T COOPER
EXPIRY DATE: 26TH SEPTEMBER 2012

WARD: CHURCH HILL

The author of this report is Steven Edden, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on extension 3206 (e-mail: steve.edden@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) for more information.

(See additional papers for Site Plan)

Site Description

The site comprises a number of buildings all joined as one block used for manufacturing, storage and office space. Existing floor space totals 13,970 square metres in area. Thorlux lighting is a major employer in Redditch, employing 345 full time persons.

The site of the proposed warehouse extension is to the north of the existing buildings. It is a grassed area and is not used for any commercial purposes at present. Trees bound the perimeter of the site and the area is covered by 'blanket' Tree Preservation Order 7 (TPO 7) which covers a much wider area than that of the application site.

The primary access to the site is via Merse Road to the east. A secondary access serving only the car park to the south of the site is formed from Moons Moat Drive. This access was implemented under application 2010/025/FUL (see site planning history below).

Proposal Description

Permission is sought to erect a new warehouse facility to provide a total of 2,386 square metres of new floor space. The building would be of steel portal frame construction with a goosewing grey insulated panel hipped roof with steel clad insulated panel walls to match those of the existing development. The building would measure 72.3 metres in length by 33 metres in width. Its height to eaves would be 10 metres, rising to a height of 11.4 metres to ridge.

A 3 metre wide corridor / walkway would be provided around the warehouse which would also act as a route for maintenance of guttering.

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Six loading bays would be provided to the east elevation of the building from which vehicular access would be gained through the existing yard area further to the east. Five personnel doors are to be provided as fire exits.

The car parking area which is located further to the south and east of the Thorlux lighting curtilage would be unaffected by the proposed development. This provides for a total of 248 car parking spaces.

The applicant states that the granting of planning permission for this development would create a further 7 full time jobs.

The application is supported by a Design & Access Statement which explains that the existing unit operates at full capacity and the company currently rent additional storage space off site. This has introduced various inefficiencies and additional costs into the operation of the business. The proposal will allow the company to operate from a single site and will rationalise their delivery and despatch. The size of the extension has been determined by the need to provide an efficient internal racking layout.

Relevant Key Policies:

All planning applications must be considered in terms of the planning policy framework and all other relevant material considerations (as set out in the legislative framework). The planning policies noted below can be found on the following websites:

www.communities.gov.uk

www.wmra.gov.uk

www.worcestershire.gov.uk

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and Worcestershire County Structure Plan (WCSP)

Whilst the RSS and WCSP still exist and form part of the Development Plan for Redditch, they do not contain any policies that are directly related to or relevant to this application proposal. Therefore, in light of recent indications at national level that Regional Spatial Strategies and Structure Plans are likely to be abolished in the near future, it is not considered necessary to provide any detail at this point in relation to the RSS, or the WCSP.

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

S.1	Designing Out Crime
B(BE).13	Qualities of Good Design
E(EMP).2	Design of Employment Development
E(EMP).3	Primarily Employment Areas
E(EMP).3a	Development Affecting Primarily Employment Areas

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C(T).2 Road Hierarchy
C(T).12 Parking Standards

Supplementary Planning Guidance /Supplementary Planning Documents
Encouraging Good Design
Designing for Community Safety

The site is situated within a Primarily Employment Area as designated on the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 Proposals Map.

Relevant Site Planning History

Appn. no	Proposal	Decision	Date
2009/143/FUL	Internal alterations to form mezzanine level	Approved	7th Sept 2009
2010/025/FUL	New entrance to car park from Moons Moat Drive	Approved	30th Mar 2010

Public Consultation Responses

Responses against

One letter received raising the following points which are summarised below:

- The proposal would appear to result in a loss of open space. Objections are raised to this loss and the loss of any trees or hedging

Consultee Responses

County Highway Network Control

No objection

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Environmental Health)

No objection

Police Crime Risk Manager

No objection

Severn Trent Water

No objection. Drainage details to be subject to agreement with Severn Trent

Economic Development

No comments received

Assessment of Proposal

The key issues for consideration in this case are as follows:-

Principle

The site is within an established employment area that is zoned for Primarily Employment Uses in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3. Therefore,

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the proposed warehouse facility (Class B8 use) would be acceptable, complying with policies E(EMP).3 and E(EMP).3a of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3, in addition to core planning principles identified in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The NPPF supports existing business sectors, taking account of them expanding or contracting in order to encourage sustainable development and building a strong and competitive economy. The proposal would contribute towards economic prosperity as it involves the expansion of an existing business and as such will assist towards building a strong, responsive, sustainable and competitive economy. Therefore, the proposal would comply with the relevant aims of the NPPF.

Design and Layout

The height of the proposed warehouse building would be marginally higher (approximately 1 to 1.5 metres higher) than that of the existing Thorlux lighting buildings. However, the overall height of the development is lower than that of buildings on adjacent sites. Existing perimeter trees and hedgerows would continue to provide a screen between the external walls of the proposed building and the adjoining highway / service roads. The design of the development would respect the character and appearance of the existing built form. The proposed walls of the development would be in metal profiled cladding (Wedgewood Blue and Merlin Grey) with profiled metal clad roof (Goosewing Grey). These materials and colours would match exactly with those used on the existing building and would be appropriate in their context.

The proposal would comply with Policies B(BE).13 and E(EMP).2 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.

Landscaping and Trees

Established tree planting exists to the western and northern boundaries. The site and wider area is covered by a 'blanket' Tree Preservation Order that covers this area of the borough.

No trees would need to be removed in order to accommodate the proposed warehouse development.

As the proposal would not result in the loss of open space or protected trees, there are no concerns raised in relation to them.

Highways and Access

The existing car park to the south and east of the site (containing 248 spaces) would be unaffected by the proposed development. Similarly, the existing service yard area, to the immediate east of the proposed warehouse building would remain unaltered. As a warehouse use, the proposed floorspace would generate a maximum requirement of 10 car parking spaces. It has been noted that 7 new full time staff would be employed in the event that

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permission was to be granted here. The existing car park is considered more than adequate to cater for this modest increase in demand for car parking. County Highway Network Control has no objection to the proposals in terms of their potential impact on highway safety.

Conclusion

The proposal would be an acceptable use in this location given that it is in a Primarily Employment Area and would comply with the relevant policies of Local Plan No.3 together with those of the NPPF. The design of the extension would respect that of the existing building and its surroundings and car parking and access arrangements would be satisfactory. As such, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and can be recommended for approval.

Recommendation

That having regarded to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions and informatives as summarised below:

- 1 Development to commence within 3 years.
- 2 Materials to be used as per details given within submission (Q9 on planning application form)
- 3 Plans approved specified
- 4 Boundary treatment to be submitted and approved.

Informatives

- 1 Reason for approval
- 2 Drainage

Procedural matters

This application is reported to Planning Committee for determination because the application is for major development (more than 1000 sq metres of new commercial / Industrial floorspace), and as such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.