

Name of Applicant	Proposal	Expiry Date	Plan Ref.
St Modwen Developments Ltd	Proposed Employment Unit (Industrial, research and development, general industrial, storage and distribution under Use Classes E(g) (excluding Offices under E(g)(i)), B2 and B8), access, parking, service yards, landscaping and associated development infrastructure. Plot 5, The Cofton Centre, Groveley Lane, Cofton Hackett, Worcestershire, B31 4PT		21/00699/FUL

This application comes before the Planning Committee because it is for Major development

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) That planning permission be **GRANTED**
- (b) That **DELEGATED POWERS** be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to determine the planning application subject to the satisfactory views of Worcestershire County Highways and North Worcestershire Water Management.
- (c) That **DELEGATED POWERS** be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to agree the final scope and detailed wording and numbering of conditions as set out in the report.

Consultations

North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedR)

This development is proposed on designated employment land as allocated in the Bromsgrove district plan. The proposals will create investment and additional jobs in the area supporting employment growth.

NWedR support this application.

Cofton Hackett Parish Council

No Comments Received To Date

North Worcestershire Water Management

Final comments awaited.

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeological Service

No archaeological investigation required.

Highways - Bromsgrove

Final comments awaited.

WRS - Contaminated Land

No objection subject to conditions.

- 1.Tiered Investigation
- 2.Import of soil and soil forming materials
- 3.Reporting of Unexpected Contamination

WRS – Noise

No objection

WRS - Air Quality

No objection

Arboricultural Officer

No objection subject to conditions.

Birmingham City Council

No Comments Received to Date.

Publicity

11 letters were sent to adjoining properties on 17th May 2021 and expired 10th June 2021.

1 site notice was displayed on 18th May 2021 and expired 11th June 2021.

An advert was placed in the Bromsgrove Standard on 21st May 2020 and expired on 7th June 2021.

No representations had been received at the time of preparing this committee report.

Relevant Policies

Bromsgrove District Plan

- BDP1 Sustainable Development Principles
- BDP2 Settlement Hierarchy
- BDP3 Future Housing and Employment Growth
- BDP13 New Employment Development
- BDP14 Designated Employment
- BDP 16 Sustainable Transport
- BDP19 High Quality Design

BDP22 Climate Change
BDP23 Water Management

Others

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance
Longbridge Area Action Plan

Relevant Planning History

B/2007/0356	Erection of industrial/warehouse units (B1, B2 & B8) and associated works (outline)	Granted	02.08.2007
B/2007/1115	Erection of industrial/warehouse units, submission of Reserved Matters.	Granted	10.01.2008
13/0994	Non-material amendment to planning approval B/2007/1115 to allow an amended building design to accommodate a new Data Centre building.	Granted	25.03.2014

Assessment of Proposal

Site Description

The application site forms part of the existing Cofton Centre employment site, which is accessed directly from Groveley Lane and shares an existing driveway that serves a number of existing buildings. The application proposals relate to the southern most part of the Cofton Centre and a final development plot which is currently used on a temporary basis for car storage by a lease car fleet management company. It is almost entirely hard surfaced with some limited landscaping to its northern boundary.

Proposal

The planning application seeks a new employment unit which has been flexibly designed to accommodate a range of employment uses for a future occupier, whether for light industrial, more general industrial or storage and distribution purposes. The use classes relevant here for the building, reflective of the recent changes to the use classes order, are use classes E(g), B2 and B8 development. The proposals exclude offices as an employment use within use class E(g)(i) although, the building does include ancillary office accommodation associated with its main proposed uses for industrial or storage and distribution purposes.

The main elements of the proposal can be summarised as follows:

- A single employment unit to a GEA of 14,775 sq m and GIA of 14,604 sq m

- The building includes ancillary office elements as well as flexible employment space, transport office, plant areas, loading docks and other ancillary space
- Parking is provided within the site for 142 cars, 7 of which are accessible spaces. Cycle parking is also provided in secure facilities. EV charging is available for a proportion of the car parking spaces
- The building is designed to 15 m to haunch in order to meet expected occupier requirements and maximise flexibility of the space
- Separate HGV and car access points are provided into the development

With the proposed internal floor area, using recognised employment densities (Employment Density Guide 2015, HCA) for employment buildings, the proposed building has the potential to generate between 310 and 389 full time equivalent jobs.

Planning History

The proposed development benefits from an extant outline planning permission which encompasses part of the wider Cofton Centre site (Planning Ref: B/2007/0356). Following outline planning permission, reserved matters were approved and part implemented in 2012 with formation of the site access for Unit 5 (Planning Ref: B/2010/0727), with the permission allowing for an employment unit of 14,367sqm GEA, including 718sqm of offices, 109 car parking spaces and a HGV service area.

Principle of development

The application site is located within Cofton Centre which has been allocated as Designated Employment Land within the Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030 as well as within the Longbridge Area Action Plan (AAP). The existing site is an undeveloped plot within the business park, as outlined above it has an extant planning permission.

Policy BDP14 sets out that designated employment areas 'are expected to make a significant contribution towards creating jobs across Bromsgrove and meeting the employment targets identified in Policy BDP3.' Policy BDP14.1 states that 'The regeneration of the District will continue through maintaining and promoting existing employment provision in sustainable, accessible and appropriate locations (as identified on the Policies Map)'.

Within the Longbridge AAP, the site is identified within Proposal EZ3: Employment uses on the Cofton Centre site, it is considered to comply with the land use strategy for employment uses.

The NPPF states that advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.

Cofton Centre is an existing employment area situated on land designated for employment purposes. The use of the site for B1, B2 and B8 uses has also been

established on site under outline planning permission granted under planning application reference B/2007/0356. As such the principle of employment development on this site is considered to be acceptable. In addition, North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration have set out that the proposal would help Bromsgrove to achieve some of the economic priorities that were adopted in April 2017, which include: driving economic growth; supporting businesses to start and grow; and driving up and retaining skills locally.

Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development fully accords with the land use policies in the District Plan and is also supported by the NPPF.

Character and appearance

The proposed employment building is based around the likely operational practicalities required by the future occupier.

The building is designed as a propped portal to allow maximum flexibility in design for the end users operation. The treatment of rooflines and the use of colour has been carefully considered together with the careful articulation of ancillary office elements. The overall impression of the scale of the building is much reduced through definition of each building component. The use of darker cladding below the parapet line, matched to the height of the office feature surrounds, helps to draw the eye away from the overall height and reduces the perception of scale.

Different cladding materials are used to add visual interest and break up the visual building massing. Use of horizontal cladding accentuates the linear form of the warehouse to lower the perceived height of the building, incorporating louvred cladding to assist with concealing internal plant and associated intake / extract ducting. Level Access Doors / Loading Dock Doors for distribution. The use of glazing to add transparency to the facade and offer some form of natural surveillance.

Overall, the layout, scale, design and external appearance of the building reflects the commercial use. The design and scale of the building is considered to be appropriate in this commercial setting and complies with BDP19 and the NPPF.

Landscaping

There is no vegetation on the main part of the site. There are existing shrub and tree lines on the northern and eastern boundaries of the proposed development site. None of the shrub and tree stock within these boundary areas will be adversely affected by the proposed development. The proposal is supported by a Barry Chinn Associates Ltd landscape scheme which contains a wider range of species planting that is appropriate in grade to give a suitable level of immediate structure to the landscaping of the site and provide interest and value throughout the year. The proposed volume and positions of planting will allow a suitable level of longer-term sustainability for the landscaping.

Highways and Parking

Access to the new unit will be from the existing access to the Cofton Centre on Groveley Lane. The entrances to the site will be designed and managed to eliminate vehicle

queueing on the public road, particularly at the controlled entrance barriers which are proposed to allow the end user to manage and control the flow of traffic both into the site and back out onto the highway during peak periods. Separate HGV and car park entrance will eliminate a conflict between delivery vehicles and car traffic. The application seeks approval for 142 car parking spaces (including 7 accessible spaces within proximity of the ancillary office entrance).

The final highways comments have not been completed at the time of drafting this committee report. Final comments will be reported at planning committee.

Noise

With regard to residential amenity, the proposal is set a sufficient distance away from the nearest residential properties to be considered to have no significant impacts regarding noise levels.

Contamination

WRS Contamination has no objection to the planning application subject to a suitable contamination condition.

Drainage

Within the wider Cofton Centre site, drainage has been acceptable subject to a condition. North Worcestershire Water Management are still in discussion regarding drainage matters and final comments will be reported at planning committee.

Ecology

An Ecological Assessment by Ecology Solutions has been submitted with the application. The report makes a number of other recommendations for mitigation and enhancement measures to ensure there would be no adverse impact to local wildlife. Subject to a condition securing these recommendations, the proposal is compliant with Policy BDP21 of the Bromsgrove District Plan.

Conclusion

Overall it is considered that the proposed development for the new unit within the Cofton Centre accords with the policies in the Bromsgrove District Plan and the NPPF and is therefore acceptable. The proposal would enable the continued growth of an established business and provided a significant number of employment opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION:

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- (b) That **DELEGATED POWERS** be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to determine the planning application subject to the satisfactory views of Worcestershire County Highways and North Worcestershire Water Management.

- (c) That **DELEGATED POWERS** be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to agree the final scope and detailed wording and numbering of conditions as set out in the report.

Conditions:

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans, drawings and documents:

Site Location Plan – drawing reference 19243-P0001 Rev A
Proposed Site Layout Plan - drawing reference 19243-P0002 rev B
Proposed Building Layout - drawing reference 19243-P0003 rev B
Proposed Office Layouts - drawing reference 19243-P0004 rev C
Proposed Elevations - drawing reference 19243-P0005 rev C
Proposed Section - drawing reference 19243-P0006 rev A
Proposed Roof Layout - drawing reference 19243-P0007 rev B
External Surfacing Plan - drawing reference 19243-P0008 rev B
Proposed Fencing Details - drawing reference 19243-P0009 rev B
Proposed Cycle Shelter - drawing reference 19243-P0010 rev B
Proposed Ancillary Buildings - drawing reference 19243-P0011 rev B
Landscape Concept Plan - drawing reference 01
Landscape Design Statement by Barry Chinn Associates - 2139/21/RP01
Soft Landscape Works Maintenance and Management Proposals by Barry Chinn Associates
Construction Management Plan

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

- 3) Unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority development, other than that required to be carried out as part of an approved scheme of remediation, must not commence until conditions 1 to 5 have been complied with:

1. Previous reports submitted to the Local Authority in support of the application has identified unacceptable risk(s) exist on the site as represented in the Conceptual Site Model. A scheme for detailed site investigation must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to being undertaken to address those unacceptable risks identified. The scheme must be designed to assess the nature and extent of any contamination and must be led by the findings of the preliminary risk assessment. The investigation and risk assessment scheme must be compiled by competent persons and must be

designed in accordance with the Environment Agency's "Land Contamination: Risk Management" guidance.

2. Detailed site investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and a written report of the findings produced. This report must be approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any development taking place. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and must be conducted in accordance with the Environment Agency's "Land Contamination: Risk Management" guidance.

3. Where identified as necessary a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to identified receptors must be prepared and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority in advance of undertaking. The remediation scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as Contaminated Land under Part 2A Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

4. The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development, other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

5. Following the completion of the measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a validation report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any buildings.

6. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, these will be subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority. Following the completion of any measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a validation report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any buildings.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors

- 4) Full details of any soil or soil forming materials brought on to the site for use in soft landscaping, filling and level raising must be provided. Where the donor site is unknown or is brownfield the material must be tested for contamination and suitability for use on site. Full donor site details, proposals for contamination testing including testing schedules, sampling frequencies and allowable contaminant concentrations (as determined by appropriate risk assessment) must

be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to import on to the site. The approved testing must then be carried out and validatory evidence (such as laboratory certificates) submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any soil or soil forming materials being brought on to site.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

- 5) In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. The applicant is advised to immediately seek the advice of an independent geo-environmental consultant experienced in contaminated land risk assessment, including intrusive investigations and remediation. No further works should be undertaken in the areas of suspected contamination, other than that work required to be carried out as part of an approved remediation scheme, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority, until requirements 1 to 4 below have been complied with:

1. Detailed site investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons in accordance with the Environment Agency's 'Land Contamination: Risk Management' guidance and a written report of the findings produced. The risk assessment must be designed to assess the nature and extent of suspected contamination and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any further development taking place.

2. Where identified as necessary, a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to identified receptors must be prepared and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority in advance of undertaking. The remediation scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as Contaminated Land under Part 2A Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

3. The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the re-commencement of any site works in the areas of suspected contamination, other than that work required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

4. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced, and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any buildings on site.

Reason: To ensure that the risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecosystems, and to ensure that the development can be

carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

- 6) The landscaping scheme detailed on Landscape Concept Plan - drawing reference shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To enhance the appearance of the development in the interest of the visual amenities of the area.

- 7) All proposed works shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations as set out in the Ecological Assessment by Ecology Solutions.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal results in a net gain of biodiversity.

- 8) The approved Construction Management Plan shall be adhered to throughout the demolition/construction period.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to the protection of amenity, highway safety and managing waste throughout development works.

- 9) The development shall be used for Class E(g), Class B2 and Class B8 purposes only as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). No part of the development (not including offices ancillary to the employment use) shall be developed for use class E(a), E(b), E(c), E(d), E(e), E(f) or E(g)(i) as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020, or in any provision equivalent to that class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Amendment with or without modification, and no part of the buildings shall not be used for these use classes notwithstanding the provisions of Class E of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020, or in any provision equivalent to that class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Amendment with or without modification.

Reason: In the interests of proper planning and to maintain a supply of employment land.

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