

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	Full Planning Committee - 21/10/2014	Item No: 5.4
Report Originator	Marie Down Assistant Development Officer	Application No: KET/2014/0460
Wards Affected	Ise Lodge	
Location	Garden Centre, Warkton Lane, Kettering	
Proposal	Full Application: Erection of 6 no. polytunnels (part retrospective)	
Applicant	Mr D White C/O Agent - GC Planning Partnership Ltd	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To describe the above proposals
- To identify and report on the issues arising from it
- To state a recommendation on the application

2. RECOMMENDATION

THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER RECOMMENDS that this application be APPROVED

Officers Report for KET/2014/0460

This application is reported for Committee decision because there are unresolved, material objections to the proposal.

3.0 Information

Relevant Planning History

ENFO/2013/00235 – Erection of polytunnels – Pending

KET/2014/0110 – 5 no. non-illuminated signposts – Refused, Appeal dismissed

KET/2011/0454 – 2 no. post signs in V shape – Approved

KE/1999/0571 – Extension to front of shop area – Approved

KE/1991/0030 – Change of use from agricultural land to car park – Approved

Site Description

Officer's site inspection was carried out on 15/09/2014. The application site is located directly off Warkton Lane, a main 'C' road to the east of Kettering. The site has a long established use as a garden centre. The front boundary to Warkton Lane consists of a wire mesh fence which provides views into the site. A gravelled car park adjoins this boundary. Towards the rear of the site is the garden centre's shop. There are 4 no. polytunnels on site – one to the rear of the shop, two situated in front of the shop and one at the northern boundary. There are a range of items stored and displayed throughout the remainder of the site. The application site is bounded by open countryside to the north and east while to the south is residential development. To the west of the site, opposite the highway, is a large verge which separates a residential service road from Warkton Lane. An established hedge visually separates these residential properties to the west from the application site.

Proposed Development

This application is partly retrospective in that it seeks consent for the existing 4 no. polytunnels on site. In addition to this the application seeks consent for 2 no. additional polytunnels. The application was submitted following an enforcement investigation at the site in relation to the 4 no. existing polytunnels. A decision as to whether the Council will take enforcement action has been postponed pending the outcome of this planning application.

Any Constraints Affecting The Site

C Road

4.0 Consultation and Customer Impact

Environmental Health

No comments received to date.

Neighbours

One third party representation received from the neighbours at 96 Warkton Lane raising the following concerns:

- Inconsistencies in the application form which require further consideration, particularly in relation to public rights of way and trees.
- Visual amenity of the area will be impacted by the proposal.
- The proposal will result in loss of privacy and overlooking.

5.0 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Policy 1 – Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
Policy 7 – Requiring Good Design

Development Plan Policies

North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy

Policy 1 – Strengthening the Network of Settlements
Policy 8 – Delivering Economic Prosperity
Policy 9 – Distribution and Location of Development
Policy 13 – General Sustainable Development Principles

Local Plan

Policy 58 – Employment: Within Towns

6.0 Financial/Resource Implications

None.

7.0 Planning Considerations

The key issues for consideration in this application are:-

1. Principle of Development
2. Design and Impact on Character
3. Impact on Neighbouring Amenity
4. Comments on other points raised by proposal

1. Principle of Development

At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and paragraph 14 states that development proposals that are in accordance with the development plan should be approved without delay. Paragraphs 18

and 19 of Policy 1 of the NPPF underlines the Government's commitment to promoting sustainable economic growth and states planning should encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth.

The application site is located within the town boundary of Kettering as defined by Policy 58 of the Local Plan. Policies 1 and 9 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) direct development towards the growth town of Kettering. Policies in the development plan support the expansion of existing commercial uses subject to the satisfaction of certain criteria. Policy 13 of the CSS supports development provided there is no adverse impact on character and appearance and neighbouring amenity. The proposal seeks consent for the erection of polytunnels on a site which has an established use as a garden centre. The principle of development is therefore acceptable subject to the satisfaction of the development plan criteria as discussed below.

2. Design and Impact on Character

Policy 7 of the NPPF requires good design while Policy 13 (h) of the CSS requires development to be of a high standard of design and to respect and enhance the character of its surroundings. This application seeks retrospective consent for the existing 4 no. polytunnels on site. It also seeks consent for 2 additional tunnels.

The existing and proposed polytunnels are of a typical design. The site has a long established use as a garden centre and it is considered that development of this nature is commensurate with this use. The tunnels to the front of the shop have a height of 4 metres, while the tunnels at the northern boundary and to the rear of the shop are 3 metres in height. Each tunnel is approximately 6 metres wide. As noted above the boundary treatment to Warkton Lane consists of a wire mesh fence and as such there are open views into the site. The 2 no. polytunnels situated in front of the shop are particularly prominent from Warkton Lane but as they are set back approximately 25 metres from the front boundary their visual prominence is reduced quite considerably. The tunnel at the northern boundary is also set back sufficient distance from the front boundary and there are only limited views of the tunnel to the rear of the shop from outside the site. It is proposed to erect 2 further tunnels to the front of the shop – one either side of the existing tunnels. The 4 tunnels will have a total width of 24 metres but the scale of development is in proportion to the size of the plot. Again given the tunnels are set back from the front boundary they will not be overly dominant in the street scene. It is considered that the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on the character of the site or the surrounding area and development of this nature is in keeping with what one would expect to see at a garden centre. Therefore, it is considered the proposal complies with Policy 7 of the NPPF and Policy 13 (h) of the CSS.

3. Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Policy 13 (l) of the CSS requires development not to result in an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity by reason of noise, vibration, smell, light or other pollution, loss of light or overlooking. The site is bounded to the north and east by open countryside and is separated from residential development to the west by Warkton Lane, a large verge and a residential service road. The main potential impact of the development, therefore, will be to the neighbouring dwelling to the south, No. 96 Warkton Lane.

The 2 no. existing polytunnels to the front of the shop are located approximately 24 metres from the boundary with No. 96 Warkton Lane which consists of a 2 metre high close boarded fence. The erection of one additional tunnel to the side will reduce this separation distance to approximately 18 metres but nevertheless this is more than sufficient distance for there to be no impact on No. 96 in terms of loss of light or overbearing. An objection has been received from the occupier of No. 96 on the grounds of overlooking and loss of privacy. The polytunnels are roughly in line with the rear garden of No. 96 but, at a distance of 18 metres from the boundary, the tunnels will not impact on the amenity of the neighbours in terms of loss of privacy. The site has a long established use as a garden centre and currently materials are stored and displayed in much closer proximity to the neighbouring boundary than the polytunnels. Therefore it is considered the development does not increase the potential for privacy concerns given its distance from the boundary. As such it is considered the development complies with Policy 13 (l) of the CSS.

4. Comments on other points raised by proposal

The third party representation received contends that there are a number of inconsistencies in the application form which require further consideration, including:

- At section 6 of the application form it is stated that no new public rights of way are to be provided within or adjacent to the site. There is a large development of 5000 homes in the area with required road infrastructure which includes the proposal of a roundabout and access road in close proximity to the Garden Centre. This should be considered and noted. However, this section of the application form relates to public rights of way created as a result of the proposal under consideration and therefore this section of the form has been correctly answered in this instance.
- At section 15 of the application form it is stated that there are no trees on the proposed development site. There is a large tree which although not located where the additional polytunnels will be erected it should be noted. The presence of this tree has been noted and it is also noted that the development will not impact on this tree.

Conclusion

The proposal complies with national policy and policies in the development plan. The proposal does not result in any adverse impacts in terms of character and appearance and neighbouring amenity. There are no other material considerations which would indicate against the proposal and it is therefore recommended for approval.

Background Papers

Title of Document:

Date:

Contact Officer:

Marie Down, Assistant Development Officer on 01536
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Previous Reports/Minutes

Ref:

Date:

