

Planning Committee: 01 February 2022

Item Number: 8

Application No: [W 21 / 1443](#)

Town/Parish Council: Baginton

Case Officer: Lucy Hammond

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Registration Date: 28/07/21

Expiry Date: 22/09/21

Land to The South and West of Coventry Airport, Coventry

Reserved matters application pursuant to Condition 1 of planning permission ref: W/18/0522 (Outline application including details of access for the comprehensive redevelopment of land South of Coventry Airport) for details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the primary electrical substation for the site FOR The Coventry and Warwickshire Development Partnership

This application is being presented to Planning Committee due to an objection from the Parish Council having been received.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee is recommended to grant reserved matters, subject to the conditions listed at the end of this report.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

This is a reserved matters application, pursuant to Condition 1 of the outline permission (ref: W/18/0552) for access, appearance, layout, landscaping and scale of the proposed primary electrical substation for the wider development. The outline granted permission for the comprehensive redevelopment of land South of Coventry Airport, comprising new buildings for general industrial uses (Use Class B2) and storage and distribution (Use Class B8), amongst other associated works including ground modelling works, landscaped bunds, new roads, footpaths and cycle routes, parking, servicing, infrastructure and landscaping together with the creation of open space in a Community Park.

The current application relates to the reserved matters for the substation only. The proposed substation is shown to be located on an area of land positioned at the junction of Stoneleigh Road and Bubbenhall Road, with access via the latter. The substation measures 3.1 metres x 2.2 metres, so a total of 6.8 sq.m. The height of the substation is 2.2 metres and the submitted elevation drawing indicates that the structure would be glass and resin finished with a topcoat of coloured gel. While no colour is specified, this is to be conditioned.

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The site of the proposed substation is a triangular parcel of land at the junction of Stoneleigh Road and Bubbenhall Road. The area is open at present and is outside the village boundaries of both Baginton and Bubbenhall, but it is acknowledged that it is close to a small number of residential buildings to the north west and south west of the site as well as the site of a recently approved development for

56 dwellings to the north west of the site, though the nearest southern edge of this development is approximately 190 metres from the site of the proposed substation. The site is in the West Midlands Green Belt.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is extensive planning history associated with the wider site (in relation to the outline application for Gateway South) however, the most relevant record directly associated with this particular development proposal is the approval of the outline application for the re-development of Gateway South which was approved under ref. W/18/0522 on 07 October 2019.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- National Planning Policy Framework
- DS1 - Supporting Prosperity
- DS3 - Supporting Sustainable Communities
- DS4 - Spatial Strategy
- DS5 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DS8 - Employment Land
- DS9 - Employment Sites to be Allocated
- DS16 - Sub-Regional Employment Site
- DS18 - Green Belt
- PC0 - Prosperous Communities
- EC1 - Directing New Employment Development
- SC0 - Sustainable Communities
- BE1 - Layout and Design
- BE3 - Amenity
- TR1 - Access and Choice
- TR2 - Traffic generation
- TR3 - Parking
- TR5 - Safe Operation of Aerodromes
- HS1 - Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities
- HS2 - Protecting Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
- HS4 - Improvements to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
- HS5 - Directing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
- HS6 - Creating Healthy Communities
- HS7 - Crime Prevention
- CC1 - Planning for Climate Change Adaptation
- CC3 - Buildings Standards Requirements
- FW1 - Development in Areas at Risk of Flooding
- FW2 - Sustainable Urban Drainage
- FW3 - Water Conservation
- FW4 - Water Supply
- HE1 - Protection of Statutory Heritage Assets
- HE2 - Protection of Conservation Areas
- HE4 - Archaeology
- NE1 - Green Infrastructure
- NE2 - Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets
- NE3 - Biodiversity
- NE4 - Landscape
- NE5 - Protection of Natural Resources

- DM1 - Infrastructure Contributions
- Open Space (Supplementary Planning Document - April 2019)
- Parking Standards (Supplementary Planning Document- June 2018)
- Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines SPG
- Baginton and Bubbenhall Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2029

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Baginton Parish Council: Objection for the following reasons:

- There are more appropriate areas in which the substation could be placed
- There will be noise, air pollution and an unwanted visual impact on Baginton village resulting from this development
- The Local Plan highlights protecting rural communities, and this would be too close to residential properties including the 54 new approved homes adjacent to the site
- Acknowledge the substation is needed, however this is the wrong site, and it should be placed on the main development area away from the village

Bubbenhall Parish Council (adjacent PC): Objection for the following reasons:

- The proposed location of the substation is too close to Baginton village and to the roads in and out of the village in the direction of Bubbenhall and Stoneleigh
- The substation should be relocated within the main Gateway South site, far removed from domestic housing and daily traffic

WCC Highways: No objection

Safer Communities, Health & Community Protection: No objection, subject to condition

WCC Landscape:

- The substation will have a negative visual impact in the proposed location, however, if there is no alternative location for it then the proposed landscaping will go some way towards screening it
- If screening cannot be achieved on three sides this suggests it may be too close to the road and an alternative location may be better
- In the proposed location, feathered trees are recommended to supplement the proposed landscaping already shown on the submitted drawings; these would further assist in screening the substation

Public Response: 2 objections received on the following grounds:

- The CAA should assess the safety of the nearby airfield and if unacceptable risks are found then remedial action will be necessary.
- The proposed location will be harmful to highway safety due to its position
- There are concerns about noise pollution from the substation and the impact on nearby residents
- A substation was not originally shown in this location on earlier parameters plans which show this area as landscaping
- The substation will be visibly and audibly intrusive to nearby residents
- It will be highly visible and harmful to the Green Belt

Other non-material planning considerations have been raised including compliance with CDM regulations and the substation's efficacy e.g., potential for volt drop between substation and end user.

ASSESSMENT

As this is an application for the approval of reserved matters, it is not possible to reconsider the principle of development. This was considered in the assessment of the outline planning application and was found to be acceptable.

Since the principle of development cannot be re-visited, consideration of the current application can only include issues related to the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the proposed electricity substation.

In view of the above, the main issues relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

- Whether the proposal constitutes appropriate development in the Green Belt.
- The impact on the character and appearance of the area (including landscaping).
- The impact on the living conditions of nearby dwellings (including noise).
- Highway safety.

Whether the proposal constitutes appropriate development in the Green Belt

As set out above, this is an application for approval of reserved matters and consequently the principle of development cannot be reconsidered. That being said, while the principle of a substation was established through the earlier outline, the site on which it is now proposed is within the Green Belt.

Consideration has therefore been given to paragraph 150 of the NPPF which, at point (c), states that local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location is a form of development considered appropriate in the Green Belt providing it preserves its openness and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

The substation proposed is specifically related to the street lighting infrastructure on the 'link road' between Bubbenhall Road and Rowley Road. Distance and safe operating limits for low voltage infrastructure constrain the opportunities for the substation's location, hence its chosen location which is in closest proximity to the infrastructure it will be supplying. Another constraining factor is the need to provide appropriate visibility splays for the safe operation of the highway. Technical information has also been provided in support of the application, further demonstrating why this needs to be the location of the substation.

Having regard to the above, officers are satisfied that the substation falls into the type of development set out at para.150(c) of the NPPF and as such it constitutes appropriate development. Moreover, by its nature as a necessary component of essential infrastructure and given its small size overall, officers are also of the view that it would not result in any adverse impact on the openness of the Green

Belt, nor would it conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Further consideration to its wider visual impacts and proposed screening is set out below.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

Following some initial concerns expressed by the County Landscape Officer about the position of the substation and its relationship to the road, a series of further landscaping proposals have been submitted. The latest, Rev.P4, has followed all of the recommendations of the Landscape Officer and show additional planting around as much of the substation as can be achieved without compromising visibility. Moreover, feathered trees have introduced in line with the Landscape Officer's recommendations to supplement the landscaping originally shown.

In view of the fact that the location of the substation is determined out of necessity and the recommendations of the Landscape Officer have been followed as far as possible, Officers are satisfied that the proposal as amended with additional landscaping, result in a form of development which is considered acceptable in visual terms. It is not considered that the proposal would result in such visual harm to the character of the surrounding area as to justify a refusal of permission.

Proposed materials are annotated on the submitted drawings and include glass and resin finished with a topcoat of coloured gel; final colour to be determined. It is proposed that the finished colour be conditioned to ensure the most appropriate appearance for this structure in this location.

Overall, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in material harm to the character of the area and therefore the development accords with Policy BE1 of the Local Plan.

Impact on the living conditions of nearby dwellings

In considering the impact on nearby dwellings, it is important to bear in mind that the wider site has outline planning permission for a comprehensive development that includes a range and mix of commercial uses. It follows that a development of this scale will require the necessary infrastructure to support it, including features such as substations.

The principle of this type of development is therefore accepted and it falls to consider whether or not the proposed siting and scale would result in material harm to the residential amenity of any nearby properties or other neighbouring buildings in the vicinity.

The closest neighbouring properties to the site of the substation are approximately 100m to the north west and 180m to the south west. The physical distance is such that the substation would not result in any discernible harm to residential amenity by reason of loss of light, outlook or privacy.

In terms of noise that may be generated by the substation, the Environmental Health Officer has considered the application, read the submitted documents and confirmed that there is no objection to the development on noise grounds, subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the installation of plant with the same or lower sound power characteristics than those specified in the Noise Report and

other supporting documents submitted. This would limit the potential for noise impact on local residential dwellings.

Subject to the recommended condition, Officers consider the development is acceptable in terms of noise and general disturbance and there would be no material harm arising in this regard.

Having regard to the above it is therefore concluded that the development would not result in any detriment to the amenity of residential properties or other neighbouring land uses/buildings and as such the development is considered to accord with the relevant provisions of the Development Plan, principally, Policies BE3 and NE5.

Highway safety

Access is proposed off Bubbenhall Road, which is subject to a 50mph speed limit, but has good visibility in both directions. The nature of the proposal is such that there is a limited need for parking within the site which can be suitably accommodated by the proposal in any case.

No objection has been raised by the County Highways Authority and the proposal is therefore considered in accordance with Policy TR1.

Other matters

While the comments of both Baginton and Bubbenhall Parish Councils are noted, it must be reiterated that the location of the substation is determined by its need and the infrastructure it will be supplying. Officers acknowledge the comments of both Parish Councils which refer to the desirability of moving the substation further away from any housing and closer to/ within the main Gateway South site, however this is not logistically possible due to the constraints as summarised above.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

The development forms a detailed part of the wider site development approved under an earlier outline permission. The principle is therefore acceptable subject to an assessment being made of the other relevant planning considerations. The proposal constitutes appropriate development in the Green Belt and would not impact on openness. There are no environmental health concerns about the proposal in terms of noise and general disturbance and therefore together with the distance to the nearest neighbouring properties officers are satisfied that the substation would not result in material harm to residential amenity. Having regard to the constraints which limit the location of the substation along with the revised landscaping proposals that illustrate the extent to which it will be screened, the development is also considered acceptable in terms of its visual impact. The recommendation is therefore to approve planning permission, subject to conditions.

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the following approved drawings, except as required by condition 2:-

GSC-PPL-HAD-OF-DR-CE-SK83 C, GSC-PPL-HAD--OF-DR-CE-105 K, GSC-PPL-HAD-OF-DR-CE-135 J, GSC-PPL-HAD-OF-DR-CE-SK124, MN210498-ELEC-003, MN210498-ELEC-009, TR1, B 707.1 Issue.2 and 31460-FE-028 A and specification contained therein, submitted on 28 July 2021 and revised drawing GSC-BCA-ELS-XX-DR-LA-1839-18-27-S5 Rev.P4 and specification contained therein, submitted on 20 December 2021.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies BE1 and BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.

- 2 Pursuant to Condition 1 of outline planning permission ref: W/18/0522, a schedule of materials to be used on the development hereby permitted, including the finish and colour, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. **REASON:** To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy BE1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.
- 3 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the details in the document entitled 'Substation Assessment' 103600-VAN-EN-PN-001 Rev.R00 (14 December 2021). All plant shall be installed with the same or lower sound power characteristics than those specified in the aforementioned report. **REASON:** To protect the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties in the locality in accordance with Policy BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.
