

BUILDING 1 (DAF TRUCKS), KINGSMEAD BUSINESS PARK, HOWLAND ROAD

Change of use from offices (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to comprise 45 flats with ancillary facilities and parking.

1. Planning History:

P15/S1637/O - Outline application for demolition of all existing buildings and erection of a food store (A1 food), car park, PFS and Employment Development (B1).

TTC Recommended Refusal

SODC refused permission

P99/N0768/A - Erection of one free standing externally illuminated sign, 2 non-illuminated signs and one internally illuminated reception sign. (As amplified by letter from agent dated 17 January 2000 and Marine Specification received 24 February 2000.)

SODC granted consent to display an advertisement

P97/N0515 - Relocation of access, reorganisation of car & lorry parking and related highway works (to the B1 building). (As amended by Dwg. No. TRA/201 accompanying Agent's letter dated 6 October 1997).

SODC granted permission

P97/N0465/RET - Change of use to office for vehicle retails.

SODC granted permission

2. Key Issues:

- This is a prior approval application made under permitted development

The District's Planning Officers will have to establish if the application is valid. They may then only formally consult the County in their role as highway authority, the District Council's Environment Team for contamination and noise issues and the Environment Agency to establish flood risk on the site.

As permitted development, the District's Development Plan of which the Thame Neighbourhood Plan is part, is not relevant.

- The impact on employment provision

The use of this site for anything other than B1 – B8 employment is against Thame Neighbourhood Plan policy. With the DAF building under its current uses capable of hosting 283 jobs at office space densities (assuming 3,400 sq. m is available) the impact will be notable.

- Impact on highways access and safety

The entrance to the site will be shared between residents and the occupants of the sizeable industrial / warehouse unit to the rear. This is not part of this application and will continue to be serviced and visited by heavy goods vehicles. The proposed play area, which is not permitted development and would require a separate planning application, would only serve to increase the risk of incident.

- Proposed housing

Four studio flats, 19 one-bed flats and 22 two-bed flats are proposed through the conversion. Anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that such properties are in demand within Thame.

Policy considerations regarding affordable housing, housing mix and type, amenity and internal space provision, parking standards, etc. do not apply as the application is made under the permitted development regime.

- The conversion

The office building was built over at least two phases, using a modular construction method. It is not certain how this will impact the building's conversion. It is also possible that the building has a substantially shorter design life than that of a traditional structure. The possibility therefore exists that the building will deteriorate in some way that would be difficult or impossible for 45 separate ownerships to resolve.

3. Policies Relevant to the Application

No policies from the Thame Neighbourhood Plan, the Core Strategy or the Local Plan have relevance due to the nature of the application submitted.