

Denverra
Sun Lane
Bowling Bank
Wrexham
LL13 9RW

The Planning Inspectorate
Crown Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Dear Sirs

PLANNING APPEAL - H6955/A/12/2188910 LPA APPLICATION NUMBER P/2016/0327

LAND SOUTH OF RIDLEY WOOD ROAD AND EAST OF BRYN LANE, WREXHAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, WREXHAM

I write in connection with the above referenced Appeal as the County Borough Councillor for the Ward in which the site is situated.

This site (known as site 3A) and the one immediately to the South of it (known as site 3B) formed a total area of land included in the Unitary Development Plan as an “exceptions site” to be utilised by a single employer.

It is important to look at the site history and previous appeal decisions which were both coloured by the need to protect an existing employer.

The current appeal site and Site 3B which is immediately to the South of the current appeal site was subject of an appeal in 2010 (APP/H6955/A/09/2113258). The Appeal decision clearly acknowledged that the site was contrary to Policy E3, PS1, 2 & 4 (para 34) However the appeal was allowed IN PART as significant weight was given to the needs of an existing employer (then TDG Haulage) who had limited opportunities to extend anywhere else given that they already occupied a site adjoining and within the Industrial Estate boundary. Consequently permission was granted on Site 3B. largely based on the needs of TDG. Para 51 & 52 of that report acknowledges the more sensitive nature of the current appeal site and subsequently development on this area of land was dismissed.

Shortly after this decision notice was issued, Wrexham Power Limited were given an option of the site for the development of a power station currently the subject of a Development Consent application and their option on the site still remains. It was contended by the applicant that TDG had, in the interim, been taken over by Norbert Dentressangle (NDL) and their requirements had changed.

Turning to the current appeal site, an application was submitted (P2011/0891 – Nov 2011) again claiming to be for the needs of NDL claiming that Site 3B was no longer available. This was refused by the Local Planning Authority and was the subject of an appeal in 2013 (APP/H6955/A/12/2188910)

When the application was considered by the Planning Committee in 2012, the applicant's agent submitted a letter to all Planning Committee members clearly highlighting that it would provide 150 new jobs and that it was the only site NDL could expand onto (points 2 & 3 of letter HOW Planning April 2012 appended)

The 2013 Appeal Decision clearly indicates the weight given to the safeguarding and expansion of an existing employer. Paras 5, 6, 10, 22, 23, 28, 44 and 46 all refer to the needs of NDL as an existing employer. That report again highlights that it does not accord with UDP Policy and although the appropriate TAN would not allow the permission to be made personal to NDL, the appeal was allowed. This decision, in my view, was severely influenced by the needs of an existing employer.

Immediately the appeal decision was announced the land was offered for sale and to this day still has a large "for sale" sign on it which clearly demonstrates that there is no immediate need from NDL or, as they are now known, XPO.

When the current application P/2016/0327 was received Planning Committee members refused the application which is an unusual step given that it was the renewal of a previously allowed application. They did however feel that there was no evidence that needs of NDL/XPO still needed to be met given that the land had been continuously on the market since 2013 and so circumstances had changed and the reasons originally given to ignore Policy objections had gone.

I fully support the decision to refuse planning consent.

Yours sincerely

Michael Morris
Ward Member – Wrexham County Borough Council.

27 April 2012

To all Members of the Planning Committee**By Email**

Dear Councillor

APPLICATION FOR B8 WAREHOUSE DEVELOPMENT FOR KINGMOOR PARK AND NORBERT DENTRESSANGLE LIMITED, BRYN LANE, WREXHAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE (P/2011/0891)

I am writing to you as agent on behalf of Kingmoor Park Properties Limited and Norbert Dentressangle Logistics who have submitted this planning application due to be considered at Planning Committee on Monday April 30th. I would like to draw your attention to the following key points which are of major importance to the Council's determination of this application.

1. The application is submitted on behalf of Norbert Dentressangle who acquired TDG in 2010. TDG are a major storage and distribution company with large scale premises at Wrexham Industrial Estate. Norbert employs approximately 180 people at the Wrexham site currently and wish to expand their operations, hence this planning application.
2. The expansion proposals will safeguard existing jobs and will **provide up to 150 new jobs**. The proposals are fully supported by Norbert Dentressangle as demonstrated in the attached letter. Correspondence is also attached from the West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce expressing their strong support for the proposals. The application is also strongly supported by the Council's own Economic Development Officer.
3. This site is the only location where Norbert can expand onto. They must have a physical connection to their existing warehousing operations at Bryn Lane for security and operational reasons. This application will deliver the connection by way of a new private internal connecting road. Other sites in Wrexham Industrial Estate or elsewhere in Wrexham are of no use to Norbert, and if the development does not occur here the company will not be able to expand.
4. Other land at Bryn Lane has planning permission following an appeal decision in 2010. This immediately adjoins the TDG factory but is now not available to Norbert. It has been disposed of by Kingmoor Park and is being brought forward by another developer for a power station proposal. Pre-application discussions have taken place with Council officers; this power station scheme will itself create new jobs and amount to very significant new investment in the County Borough. In short this land is not available to Norbert or any other user.
5. The application site is covered by Policy E3 of the UDP. It is **not** green belt land as has been suggested in a number of the public representations made to the Council. The development allocation confirms that the Council accepts the suitability of this site for major development in principle.
6. Whilst the UDP policy allocates the land for a large single user, the previous appeal Inspector recognised that the land would effectively need to be developed in two separate parcels due to the protected woodland which divides the site. In practical

Planning and Environmental Advisers**Partners:**Gary Halman BSc FRICS MRTPI
Richard Woodford BA (Hons) BSc BTP MRICS MRTPI
Fiona Woodford
Julie Halman**Associates:**Carol Clarke BA (Hons) MTPI MRTPI
Jon Suckley MTCP (Hons) MRTPI**HOW Planning LLP**Registered Office: 40 Peter Street, Manchester M2 5GP
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100 3 2182

terms the current application would not lead to any different a form of development physically than a large scale single user.

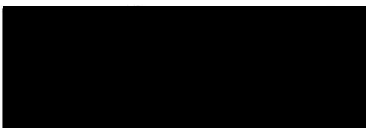
7. The proposals are technically acceptable and there are no objections from the Council or other statutory consultees, including the highways department or Environmental Health. The scheme has been substantially reduced in scale from that originally submitted to ensure there are large areas for ecological habitat. As a result CCW have no objections to the application.
8. The new building can be adequately screened with new landscape planting provided, which is part of the proposals, and a substantial new area of ecological habitat. The Council's landscape officer does not disagree that the development could be adequately screened with new planting.
9. The proposals represent a sustainable development. Retaining Norbert in the Borough and providing new jobs which will help reduce out-commuting will help contribute to this. The proposals are intended to meet a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good' meaning that the new building will be highly sustainable.
10. The proposals represent a major vote of confidence in Wrexham Industrial Estate. The Estate is an attractive location for occupiers such as Norbert and with the opening of the new Industrial Estate Access Road in the near future, putting Wrexham on the map as a business friendly location can only be in the interest of the Council and local community.

Summary

The applicant's acknowledge that the proposals do not strictly comply with the single user requirement of Policy E3. However Members will appreciate from the above that there are very significant material considerations which justify the grant of planning permission in this instance, and this would clearly be the best decision for the Borough. Providing the ability for an existing major employer to grow and taking this opportunity to protect existing jobs at the industrial estate is, we would suggest, more important than a technical breach of a planning policy.

In these difficult economic times we would ask the Council to be guided by the advice of its Economic Development Officer who strongly supports this application. The Council can and should positively embrace this vital economic development opportunity and the benefits it will deliver for the Borough.

Yours Faithfully



GARY HALMAN
PARTNER

Direct Line: 0161 831 5885

Email: gary.halman@howplanning.com

Enc. Letters from Norbert Dentressangle and West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce