

**Parish: Easingwold**  
**Ward: Easingwold**  
**6**

**Committee date: 28 June 2018**  
**Officer dealing: Miss R Hindmarch**  
**Target date: 4 July 2018**

**18/00661/FUL**

**Change of use of storage/workshop to furniture manufacture, repair and refurbishment and textile/soft furnishing production with ancillary retail use**

**At Summersgill Auctioneers, Unit 1, Roxby House Business Park, York Road, Easingwold**  
**For Mr T Summersgill**

**This application is referred to Planning Committee at the request of a member of the Council**

## **1.0 SITE, CONTEXT AND PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 The unit is a substantial building constructed of red brick, grey cladding and grey cement sheeting. It is located on the southern boundary of Roxby House Estate (a business park) which in turn lies within open countryside to the south of Easingwold.
- 1.2 The unit is currently used by Summersgill Auctioneers for storage. It is proposed to create new businesses within this unit, focused around repairing and restoring furniture and making soft furnishings. The applicant has submitted an indicative layout which splits the unit in four different areas. Area A would focus on the refurbishment/restoration of furniture that has not sold in the auction room. Area B would focus on the manufacture of textile products. Area C would be related to Area A in that there would be furniture repair and painting. These three areas would all require goods storage and workshop areas. Area D is intended for public access, where the products would be displayed and sold.
- 1.3 The applicant is also proposing workshops where members of the public could attend and get involved in the processes. At present it is anticipated the workshops would take place once every 3 months with approximately 15 students. The workshops would revolve around the proposed uses such as furniture repair and refurbishment and textile/soft furnishing production.
- 1.4 It is estimated approximately 16% (50 square metres) of the total floor space would be used for the display area and retail sales.

## **2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT HISTORY**

- 2.1 17/02206/FUL - Change of use from storage/workshop to retail, storage and workshop: Refused 5 December 2017 for the following reason;

*In the view of the Local Planning Authority the retail element of the scheme, which forms the largest element of the proposed development, would be unsustainable, would lead to the loss of existing employment space and as a consequence of this would potentially affect the vitality and/or viability of Easingwold Town Centre. It is considered that no satisfactory justification has been put forward to justify the development on the grounds of the benefits it may have to the local economy nor have any other substantive grounds been put forward to justify it. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to the provisions of policies CP1, CP2, CP4, CP15, DP3, DP9, DP17, DP24 and DP25 of the Local Development Framework and Section 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework’.*

- 2.2 The following applications relate to Unit B3b directly opposite the application site.
- 2.3 10/01057/FUL - Change of use from an agricultural barn to a farm shop; Refused 8 July 2010 on grounds of the relatively unsustainable location and the likely harmful effect on the vitality and viability of Easingwold town centre. Appeal allowed 19 January 2011 subject to a conditions including one requiring the shop to be operated solely in conjunction with Roxby House Farm and limiting the goods sold to products produced on the farm unit.
- 2.4 12/00195/MRC - Application to vary condition 4 of planning permission number 10/01057/FUL to allow produce from other local farms within a 12 mile radius of Roxby House to be sold at the farm shop; Refused 17 April 2012.
- 2.5 16/01057/FUL - Change of use and alterations, including new ramp and stepped entrance from general purpose agricultural building to mixed use (storage with retail and office) and formation of car park; Granted 11 July 2016.

The retail element was very small in scale, amounting to no more than 50 out of a total of 280 square metres floor area with the remainder forming office and storage space. Furthermore, it was essentially to be used in conjunction with Howells Veterinary Surgery which also occupied the business park, albeit it was not formally tied to use in this way. With this in mind, and as it was felt that this use could not easily be disaggregated from the others, it was felt that it would have no significant impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre.

### **3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

- 3.1 The relevant policies are:

Core Strategy Policy CP1 - Sustainable development  
 Core Strategy Policy CP2 - Access  
 Core Strategy Policy CP4 - Settlement hierarchy  
 Core Strategy Policy CP14 - Retail and town centre development  
 Core Strategy Policy CP15 - Rural Regeneration  
 Core Strategy Policy CP16 - Protecting and enhancing natural and man-made assets  
 Core Strategy Policy CP17 - Promoting high quality design  
 Development Policies DP1 - Protecting amenity  
 Development Policies DP3 - Site accessibility  
 Development Policies DP9 - Development outside Development Limits  
 Development Policies DP24 - Other retail (and non-retail commercial) issues  
 Development Policies DP25 - Rural employment  
 Development Policies DP30 - Protecting the character and appearance of the countryside  
 Development Policies DP32 - General design  
 National Planning Policy Framework - published 27 March 2012  
 Development Policies DP17 - Retention of employment sites

### **4.0 CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 Parish Council – Wishes to see the application approved.
- 4.2 Highway Authority – No objection.
- 4.3 Environmental Health Officer – No objection.
- 4.4 Yorkshire Water – No comments received.
- 4.5 Public comments – None received.

## 5.0 OBSERVATIONS

- 5.1 The main issues to consider are (i) the principle of the proposed use in this location; (ii) the impact on the vitality and viability of Easingwold Town Centre; (iii) the potential loss of employment land; (iv) highway safety; and (v) amenity.

### Principle

- 5.2 The application in 2017 for this unit proposed a change of use that would see the unit operate largely as an A1 retail unit. This application was refused as in the view of the Local Planning Authority the retail element of the scheme, which formed the largest element of the proposed development, would be unsustainable, would lead to the loss of existing employment space and as a consequence of this would potentially affect the vitality and/or viability of Easingwold Town Centre. It was considered that no satisfactory justification was put forward to justify the development on the grounds of the benefits it may have to the local economy nor were any other substantive grounds been put forward to justify it.
- 5.3 The change of use now proposed is different to the scheme refused as the majority of the unit would be used for the repair and restoration of furniture and the manufacture of soft furnishings. It is proposed that a smaller element of the unit would be used as a retail sales area where the goods produced would be sold. The retail part of the unit would according to the applicant be approximately 16% of the unit an area of 50 square metres.
- 5.4 The proposal requires a large area for workshops and storage and the retail is an ancillary part of the proposal. It is considered the proposal has significantly changed from that proposed in the previous application.
- 5.5 LDF Policy CP4 allows development in principle if the site lies within the Development Limits of settlements that are defined in the Settlement Hierarchy, and which is of a scale and nature appropriate to secure the sustainability of each settlement. The site is outside Easingwold and lies beyond the Development Limits of the settlement. Any development in this location therefore needs to be justified as an exception to Policy CP4. Criteria iv of this policy states that an exception can be made if "it would re-use existing buildings without substantial alteration or reconstruction, and would help to support a sustainable rural economy..." The proposed change of use is located within an existing building and the applicant states the businesses would provide additional employment related to the existing business in an adjoining building, it is considered to support the local economy.
- 5.6 Policy CP15 of the LDF supports the economic need of rural communities by encouraging the diversification of the agricultural economy but in all cases the development should be designed to be sustainable. Policy CP15 is supported by Policy DP25, which supports rural employment in locations outside the Development Limits subject to certain criteria. The proposal meets with criteria (i) of Policy CP15 as it results in the expansion and diversification of the existing auctioneers business.
- 5.7 The application site, although outside the Development Limits, is less than half a kilometre from the edge of the town and a footpath link leads directly from the application site into the centre of Easingwold, passing residential areas. It would not be unreasonable for employees at the application site to walk to work.
- 5.8 The proposed use must comply with all the criteria of Policy DP25, including evidence to show that the business is not capable of being located within a sustainable settlement. The submitted information shows the proposed business is directly related to the existing auctioneers business at the site. The nature of the business means that a location close to the existing auctioneers is required. If they

were located separately there would be additional transport movements and costs associated with this.

- 5.9 A sequential test has also been submitted in support of the application. This outlines the floor space required for the business and states that a search of the town centre and edge of town centre area returned no sites that were suitable, available or viable.

#### Impact on the vitality and viability of Easingwold Town Centre

- 5.10 In terms of the impact on the vitality and viability of Easingwold Town Centre, this scheme has a limited area of retail floor space and the proposed business is connected to the existing auctioneers business at the site. It is considered that given the nature of the use and limited retail floor space there will not be a significant effect on the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. It is considered appropriate to attach a condition that limits the amount of retail space within the unit to ensure this remains the case.

#### Potential loss of employment land

- 5.11 A further aspect of the reason for the previous refusal related to the potential loss of employment land. At present the unit is used for surplus storage for the auction house and the applicant states does not generate any employment. The application form states that up to three full time and two part time jobs would be created in the unit and there would thus be a gain in employment.

#### Highway safety

- 5.12 The Highway Authority has confirmed there are no highways objections to the proposal. It is not envisaged the proposals would give rise to any undue highway safety concerns. The applicant is proposing to use the land to the side (south west) of the building to provide parking for the development. This, it would appear, is already used for parking purposes and is considered to be large enough both to satisfactorily accommodate the number of vehicles likely to be attracted by the respective uses and to allow them to turn so that they can enter the adjoining access road in a forward gear. Vehicular access to this parking area is currently gained from the access road serving the business park and there are no proposals to alter this arrangement which is considered to be acceptable.

#### Amenity issues

- 5.13 It is not intended to increase the size of the building as part of the scheme. Consequently this reduces the potential impact upon the surrounding premises.
- 5.14 In terms of noise it is not considered these proposals would give rise to undue disturbance of the neighbouring premises due to the nature of the surrounding uses.
- 5.15 The Environmental Health Team has raised no objections to the proposal.
- 5.16 Overall, the retail use of the building would be small scale, closely related to the workshop elements of the building and is associated with the existing auctioneers business. There would be no significant impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre, nor could the uses be easily disaggregated from the existing business. The mix of the uses proposed is therefore found to meet with the requirements of the policies of the LDF.

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 That subject to any outstanding consultations permission is **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby approved shall not be undertaken other than in accordance with the proposed floor plan, drawing number HN/18/003/004 and the proposed site plan, drawing number HN/18/003/002 received 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
3. The floor space used for retail purposes shall not exceed 50 square metres.
4. The use shall not be undertaken other than in association with the use of the adjoining unit (Building B Unit 1) and the unit opposite (Summersgill Auctioneers Unit 1) as an auctioneers premises.

The reasons are:

1. To ensure compliance with Sections 91 and 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and where appropriate as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. To ensure a satisfactory form of development.
3. To control the extent of the out of centre retail provision limiting the impact on the vitality and viability of the defined retail centre.
4. To ensure that the use supports the local economy as sought by the policies of the LDF, particularly CP4, CP15 and DP25.