

Re - Planning application DC/19/1973/OUT

Clopton Commercial Park, Debach Airfield, Clopton

Details – Extension to business park with erection of one and two storey units and studio/gym.

The following is the response from Clopton Parish Council as agreed at the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting of 4th June 2019.

The meeting was well attended with an open session and a number of interested local parishioners able to express their views.

It is noted that the proposed development is outside the current approved site boundary and therefore contravenes the Current Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Development Plan, Document of January 2017' page 69 Policy SSP23. As it stands at the moment the local plan does not allow for an expansion at the Clopton Commercial Park site. In brief summery this explains that planning permission will be granted through re-development or refurbishment or other change of use of existing buildings. There is no provision for new buildings. Planning permission can be granted however if there is seen to be a need and want for such a development.

A principal concern is the impact that the development would have on the local road network. It is felt that the predicted Site access MCC Traffic Flow predictions underestimate the ultimate traffic flow to the site and the impact that this will have on the local road network. Particularly in view of the 126 parking spaces proposed for the development.

The increasing number of HGVs utilising the road network through Clopton and the neighbouring villages are, and have been, an ongoing concern for villagers for many years. However, it is noted that the vision for the development is for small scale enterprises and not those requiring the use of Heavy Goods Vehicles, (HGVs). The potential increase in the number of smaller vehicle journeys through the village is to be preferred to those of HGVs.

In order to accommodate any additional traffic, Clopton Parish Council would encourage all relevant parties to push for the Local Highways authority to work towards the introduction of a speed limit along the B1078 approaching Manor Road from the west and past Shop Road to the east.

Despite these concerns, the general feeling of residents and councillors is that current Clopton Commercial Park is a huge improvement on the previous situation at the site, both visually and in terms of the type of vehicular traffic, the whole site is very tidy and the range and reduced scale of individual business activities have decreased the HGV traffic to the site.

The proposed new buildings are seen as unobtrusive in design and will perhaps balance out the aesthetics of the site as a whole.

There is hope that Clopton Commercial Park with the Café and Gym/Studio could help in some way to create a hub for Clopton in the future.

It is hoped that the employment that the proposed additional units would create will bring a variety of job potential to Clopton and surrounding village residents. Especially those who do not have their own transportation.

The consensus is that by allowing the proposed application to go through for small business types there will be less risk of HGV traffic increase to the site in future years.

The council voted on the applications and the unanimous decision was that the application would be supported but with the following observations:

- a) Use of this extension to Clopton Commercial Park is restricted to activities falling with use categories B1 and B2 only and specifically excludes type B8;
- b) The developer and local authorities to push for the Local Highways authority to work towards the introduction of a speed limit along the B1078 approaching Manor Road and past Shop Road;
- c) The developer should be encouraged to incorporate a number of business starter units;
- d) Regarding Clopton footpath number 5 which currently, crosses the site. The proposed revision to the route across the airfield, as outlined in the application, be formalised with East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council and the definitive map be duly updated accordingly;
- e) The developer be encouraged to enter into a dialogue with the operators of the local bus service to facilitate access to the park using local transport services;
- f) That the developers be encouraged to consider the installation of electric vehicle charging points and PV solar panels;
- g) Where necessary, any potential contamination at the site is removed;
- h) Where necessary adequate sewage treatment facilities are provided;
- i) If required measures are taken to assess and manage any heritage assets on the site;
- j) Where necessary, a drainage strategy is approved and implemented before development proceeds.