

MC/21/2289

Date Received: 2 August 2021
Location: Medway Norse Depot Pier Approach Road
Gillingham Medway
Proposal: Application for continued siting of a temporary building (until 31 October 2023)
Applicant: Medway Norse
Agent: NPS Property Consultants Ltd
Mr Andy Scales
Nautilus House
10 Central Avenue
St Andrews Business Park
Norwich
NR7 0HR
Ward: Gillingham North Ward
Case Officer: Dylan Campbell
Contact Number: 01634 331700

Recommendation of Officers to the Planning Committee, to be considered and determined by the Planning Committee at a meeting to be held on 13th October 2021.

Recommendation - Approval with Conditions

- 1 The temporary building shall be removed from the site on or before 31 October 2023.

Reason: To ensure that the permitted development does not prejudice proposals for redevelopment of the area and as the structures are temporary in appearance, in accordance with Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Received 13 August 2021:

Gillingham 002 REV 1	Block Plan / Site Plan
NPS-00-00-DR-A-()-TempB REV CODE P0	Temporary Structure

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

For the reasons for this recommendation for approval please see Planning Appraisal Section and Conclusions at the end of this report.

Proposal

This is a planning application for the continued siting of a temporary building to the front of the Norse Depot site, near the entrance/exit. The building has been used for a temporary period of time from October 2019, approved under MC/19/1926, for the inspection and repairs to waste and refuse vehicles (such as light bulbs, wiper blades and hydraulic hoses) in connection with the wider site that is used as a base for parking refuse vehicles.

This application seeks permission for the siting of temporary building for a period of up to 2 years (31 October 2023) until they identify and deliver an alternative depot site for refuse vehicle use (with associated inspection building).

Relevant Planning History

MC/19/1926

Retrospective application for the construction of temporary building (until 31 October 2021)
Decision: Approval with Conditions
Decided: 19 September 2019

Representations

The application has been advertised on site and by individual neighbour notification to the owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties.

4 letters have been received raising the following objections:

- Out of keeping with surrounding buildings
- Proximity to residential properties
- Noise
- Air pollution
- Not temporary
- Use on weekends and bank holidays

Development Plan

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Medway Local Plan 2003 (the Local Plan). The policies referred to within this document and used in the processing of this application have been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 and are considered to conform.

Planning Appraisal

Background

The delivery of a new depot site at Maidstone Road in Rochester, has taken longer than anticipated and it will now not be ready and operational until late 2022 at the earliest. This represents phase 1 of Medway Norse plans to enhance depot provision. Due to the constraints associated with the Maidstone Road site, it will not be able to accommodate all refuse and waste vehicles.

Medway Norse in conjunction with Medway Council have an ambition to identify and develop a new depot site to accommodate refuse and waste vehicles at this application site. As a result, the current parking arrangement would need to remain unchanged at the Pier approach Road site and the temporary building would be required for a longer period of time.

Medway Norse was initially seeking to extend temporary period of time to up to 31 October 2026, however the LPA raised concerns with this length of time, outlining a period of 5 years is considered longer than reasonably necessary to identify a site, gain planning permission, complete the development and relocate the activities and could prejudice proposals for redevelopment of the area.

Therefore, the application was revised to seeks permission for the siting of the building for a period of up to 31 October 2023 until Medway Norse identify and deliver an alternative depot site for refuse vehicle use (with associated inspection building).

Principle

The area is allocated for employment uses by the Local Plan, Policies ED1 and ED9 confirming that Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 and port related development will be permitted in this location. The Local Plan does not include reference to mixed use and residential developments which have been permitted and substantially constructed and occupied at Chatham Waters and Victory Pier.

In the current case, there is no overriding objection in principle to the use of the land for parking and storage including with regard to Paragraph 83 of the NPPF, which states that planning decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors, including making provision for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations. However, the acceptability of the development rests on an assessment of the details of the impact of the temporary structure in terms of design, amenity and highways.

Design

The application site is located on the east side of Pier Approach Road on part of the Medway Norse depot site. The site provides extensive parking for operational vehicles. The building on the site is temporary in design, constructed from an aluminium frame with insulated steel sheet cladding walls and an insulated translucent plastic-coated membrane roof with steel finished roller shutter. Due to the overall size and scale of the building, it is highly visible from several points along Pier Approach Road and

Ocean Drive, as well as from the recently constructed flat developments, including The Boathouse to the north which directly overlooks the site. It is considered that this proposal, which is large, prominent and sited very close to the entrance of the Norse Depot, is not in accordance with the aspirations for this area for high quality development with good design. However, in advance of this site coming forward for longer term development it is considered that, for a short-term temporary period of up to 31 October 2023, the impact is limited when seen against the backdrop of the existing development to the south (Pier Road Industrial Estate) and the currently un-redeveloped parts of the wider Chatham Waters site. As a temporary permission in the short term, with the long-term aspirations for high quality development, there are no objections raised with regard to the design of this proposal and the application is considered to conform to Policies BNE1, ED1 and ED9 of the Local Plan and Paragraphs 83 and 130 of the NPPF.

Amenity

Whilst this area has historically been in commercial use, over recent years the area has changed with development of the waterfront area, which has delivered a mix of residential and other commercial uses (including hotel accommodation). This has somewhat changed the character of the area. However, the non-commercial uses have been developed in a manner that does not prejudice the continuing operations of commercial businesses and uses on Pier Approach Road (including the Medway Norse depot). The site is in close proximity to recently built apartment blocks and some dwellings. It is therefore important that the development does not result in harm to the living conditions of the occupants of nearby residential accommodation.

The proposed building is located in the southwest corner of the site, near the entrance/exit of the Norse Depot, to the north of the Pier Road Industrial Estate and more than 80m south from the nearest residential accommodation. In light of this, it is considered that the proposal would not detrimentally impact residential amenities in terms of loss of daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy or dust and noise. The proposal is in accordance with Policy BNE2 of the Local Plan and Paragraph 130f of the NPPF.

Highways

The application site is located on the east side of Pier Approach Road on part of the Medway Norse depot site. The site provides extensive parking for operational vehicles. Access to the site is via an existing arrangement from Pier Approach Road. This operates with a separate entrance and exit, which avoids vehicle conflict when manoeuvring on the site. All vehicles enter and leave the depot site in a forward gear.

It is not considered that the proposal would significantly increase trips to and from the site. There are no highway safety or capacity objections to the development, which is accessed from Pier Approach Road, a no-through road. There are no objections regarding Policies T1, T2 and T13 of the Local Plan and Paragraph 111 of the NPPF.

Conclusions and Reasons for Approval

There is no overriding objection in principle to the proposal in the short term and in the circumstances, on balance, the visual impact is considered acceptable subject to conditions limiting the permission to for a temporary period. Temporary approval is therefore recommended with regard to the advice in Policies ED1, ED9, BNE1, BNE2, T1, T2 and T13 of the Local Plan and Paragraphs 83, 111, 130 and 130f of the NPPF.

The application would normally be determined under delegated powers but is being referred for Committee determination due to the number of representations received expressing a view contrary to officer's recommendation for approval.

Background Papers

The relevant background papers relating to the individual applications comprise: the applications and all supporting documentation submitted therewith; and items identified in any Relevant History and Representations section within the report.

Any information referred to is available for inspection in the Planning Offices of Medway Council at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR and here <http://publicaccess1.medway.gov.uk/online-applications/>