

Application Ref: 15/01209/FUL

Proposal: Change of use of ArcHaus ground floor from B1(a) to a mixed use of B1(a) (Office) and Sui Generis (Motorcycle showroom) and construction of new workshop (B2) adjacent to existing building

Site: ArcHaus, Peterborough Road, Wansford, Peterborough

Applicant: Mr Simon Harris
Harris McCormack Architects

Agent:

Referred by: Wansford Parish Council

Reason: The application is inappropriate

Site visit: 07.08.2015

Case officer: Mrs J MacLennan

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Recommendation: **GRANT** subject to relevant conditions

1 **Description of the site and surroundings and Summary of the proposal**

Site and Surroundings

The site area is approximately 0.2ha and lies within and to the far east of the village settlement boundary of Wansford and abuts the Wansford Conservation Area boundary to the south. The site also runs parallel to the A1 to the east. The site contains a two storey building of art deco style built in the 1930s to serve travellers on the A1 which at the time was a single carriageway. Since then, the building has been in the same use although rebranded at various times, and the Little Chef, as it was most recently, closed some years ago. The building itself is on the Local List and, although very dilapidated, still shows some original art deco features such as typical art deco curved walls and flat roof, and is still largely rendered.

There is an existing access from Peterborough Road which is at a right angle to the A1. The access is almost on the junction of the A1 and with current traffic volumes and speeds the access has become less suitable and more dangerous. The site is elevated from the A1, and the access slopes up. There are existing residential dwellings to the west, one of which uses the current access to the site. There is also egress from the site to the A1.

This application is a revision to a formerly approved scheme (14/00637/OUT) which sought approval for 'a change of use of existing roadside restaurant to B1 including external alterations and a first floor extension'. The former approved scheme proposed to carry out various repairs and improvements to the building, add a small extension, and to change the use to offices.

Proposal

The application seeks approval for use of the ground floor as B1(a) offices and Sui Generis (motorcycle showroom); and the construction of garage building to provide further storage and a workshop (B2). There are no further changes to the main building. The workshop would be positioned along the western boundary. The footprint of the workshop would be 92m². The building would have a flat roof to a height of 3.4m. There would be no openings on the rear of the building. The front elevation would have two roller shutter doors. The building would have a rendered finish to match the ArcHaus building.

A new access to the site was approved under the outline consent for the housing development to the north (14/00637/OUT). It is proposed that the existing access is used for a while, until the

housing development to the north is carried out and the new access road put in. The new access would be used by ArcHaus, the housing development to the rear and the dwelling to the west of the site.

The site would provide 16 no parking bays including 2 disabled and 6 no motorcycle parking bays and provision for cycle parking.

2 Planning History

Reference	Proposal	Decision	Date
14/00637/FUL	Change of use of existing roadside restaurant to B1(a) (offices), including external alterations and a first floor extension	Permitted	27/06/2014
14/00643/OUT	Construction of nine two storey dwellings with single storey garages and associated access road/infrastructure	Permitted	20/06/2014
15/01119/REM	Application for Reserved Matters (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale) for the construction of nine two storey dwellings with single storey garages and associated access road/infrastructure pursuant to planning permission 14/00643/OUT	Pending Consideration	

3 Planning Policy

Decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Section 3 - Rural Economic Growth

Should be encouraged through sustainable growth and the expansion of business/ enterprise including sustainable rural tourism/leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside, via the conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings. The retention and development of local services and community facilities should be promoted.

Section 12 - Conservation of Heritage Assets

Account should be taken of the desirability of sustaining/enhancing heritage assets; the positive contribution that they can make to sustainable communities including economic viability; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. When considering the impact of a new development great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Planning permission should be refused for development which would lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance unless this is necessary to achieve public benefits that outweigh the harm/loss. In such cases all reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the new development will proceed after the harm/ loss has occurred.

Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011)

CS14 - Transport

Promotes a reduction in the need to travel, sustainable transport, the Council's UK Environment Capital aspirations and development which would improve the quality of environments for residents.

CS16 - Urban Design and the Public Realm

Design should be of high quality, appropriate to the site and area, improve the public realm, address

vulnerability to crime, be accessible to all users and not result in any unacceptable impact upon the amenities of neighbouring residents.

CS17 - The Historic Environment

Development should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment including non scheduled nationally important features and buildings of local importance.

CS21 - Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

Development should conserve and enhance biodiversity/ geological interests unless no alternative sites are available and there are demonstrable reasons for the development.

Peterborough Site Allocations DPD (2012)

SA04 - Village Envelopes

These are identified on the proposals map. Land outside of the village envelope is defined as open countryside.

Peterborough Planning Policies DPD (2012)

PP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Applications which accord with policies in the Local Plan and other Development Plan Documents will be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no relevant policies, the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

PP02 - Design Quality

Permission will only be granted for development which makes a positive contribution to the built and natural environment; does not have a detrimental effect on the character of the area; is sufficiently robust to withstand/adapt to climate change; and is designed for longevity.

PP03 - Impacts of New Development

Permission will not be granted for development which would result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, public and/or private green space or natural daylight; be overbearing or cause noise or other disturbance, odour or other pollution; fail to minimise opportunities for crime and disorder.

PP08B - (b) Employment Uses in the Countryside

Development involving the expansion of an existing employment use on its current site for B1 to B8 uses will be supported, provided that the building would not require significant reconstruction.

PP12 - The Transport Implications of Development

Permission will only be granted if appropriate provision has been made for safe access by all user groups and there would not be any unacceptable impact on the transportation network including highway safety.

PP13 - Parking Standards

Permission will only be granted if appropriate parking provision for all modes of transport is made in accordance with standards.

PP16 - The Landscaping and Biodiversity Implications of Development

Permission will only be granted for development which makes provision for the retention of trees and natural features which contribute significantly to the local landscape or biodiversity.

PP17 - Heritage Assets

Development which would affect a heritage asset will be required to preserve and enhance the significance of the asset or its setting. Development which would have detrimental impact will be refused unless there are overriding public benefits.

4 Consultations/Representations

PCC Conservation Officer – No objections – The reuse of the building and alterations were welcomed under the previous scheme. There are no objection to the proposed use of the ground floor or the detached garage/workshop building.

PCC Pollution Team – No objection – Given the location of the site and its proximity the A1 there are no concerns raised with the proposed use. There are a number of such activities that operate within residential areas with low background noise without causing nuisance. It is also noted that particularly high background noise levels will be part of the noise climate in this location, and therefore the intrusiveness for comparable noise sources would be less. To prevent nuisance will however require a suitable level of managerial control.

The workshop facility is suitably orientated to minimise disturbance and it is noted that it is proposed to keep doors closed during works. Glazing/openings in the rear and side elevations and through the roof may also present pathways for noise transfer. These pathways require suitable consideration at the detailed design stage. It is recommended that the building shall be constructed so as to provide sound insulation against internally generated noise of not less than 35dB(A), with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided.

PCC Transport & Engineering Services - No objection in principle. Car and cycle parking space are acceptable, however the cycle parking should be secure, covered and overlooked. Amended drawings have been submitted extending the red outline to include the new access road off Peterborough Road which already has consent. The LHA no raises objections to the proposal subject to conditions.

Wansford Parish Council – Objections to proposal. The Parish Council were opposed to this application, it was felt to be inappropriate - if officers are minded to approve, the Parish Council would wish the application to go before full planning committee.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer – No objection in respect of crime and safety and no objections to the principle of such a change of use for this site. The use as a specialist Motorcycle Sales and Repair Centre, may raise the risk of crime for this site, particularly taking into account the close proximity of the A1 as a quick escape route. However, I'm sure that appropriate security measures can be incorporated without having to adversely affect the aesthetics of the building. It is recommended that contact is made with the Local Crime Prevention Officer in Peterborough, to ensure appropriate security measures are designed into any future refurbishment of the site, sufficient to ensure that vulnerability to crime will be adequately addressed, as required by CS16 of the Local Core Strategy Policy.

Highways England - No objection - Highways England has no objections for this planning application, on the understanding that the proposal is constructed as shown on drawing no. (08) G02, dated July 2015, produced by Harris McCormack, titled "Proposed Ducati Dealership ArchHaus, Wansford" submitted with this application.

Local Residents/Interested Parties

Initial consultations: 2
Total number of responses: 1
Total number of objections: 1
Total number in support: 0

No neighbour representations have been received. The objection refers to one made by the Parish Council.

5 Assessment of the planning issues

The principle of development

The existing building has always had a commercial use and it was specifically built in this position due to its association with the A1 road network. Originally built as a roadside motel in 1932, it subsequently became a public house, The Mermaid in 1936 (later becoming the New Mermaid). It ended its recent life as one of the Little Chef's roadside cafes in 2007. Since then it has been redundant. However, the lawful A3 (restaurant/café) use could be reinstated without reference to the Local Planning Authority. Furthermore, A3 uses can change to A2 (financial and professional services) uses or A1 (shops) uses under Permitted Development.

The first floor of the building would be used as offices (B1) and the ground floor would be used as motor cycle showroom with associated offices.

It is considered that this use would be much less intensive than the former A3 use and the proposal would bring the building back into beneficial use as well as providing a rural employment use. The site lies at the edge of a village settlement, has a commercial character and adequate parking provision. It is considered that there is no reason in principle to object to the proposal subject to the application according with other relevant planning policy and material considerations.

Neighbouring Amenity

There have been no objections or representations made by neighbouring occupiers. However, concerns have been raised by the Parish Council who consider that this is an inappropriate location for the proposed motorcycle showroom due to the potential for noise and disturbance arising from the use.

It is assumed that the concern is regarding the potential for motorcycles being test driven through the village and the subsequent noise and disturbance to residential occupiers that would result.

It is considered however, that while the use does give the perception that the site would generate noise there are numerous examples where such uses live quite harmoniously juxtaposed residential dwellings. The applicant has provided examples of such situations including: Webb's Yamaha Centre (High Street, Eye), Sycamores (Helpston Road, Glington), Classic Cars (Wisbeach Road, Thorney), Nene Overland (Ailsworth), Broadway Garage (Broadway, Yaxley), Stirling Cars (South Street), Dwyer Motor Company (Church Street), First Choice Cars (Church Street), and so on.

The potential occupiers (Ducati) have not come across concerns with noise issues before when proposing a new showroom. Ducati have provided information on the decibel ratings (at static testing) for models as follows:

Superbikes – 108Db
Multistrada – 100Db
Monster's – 102/3Db
Scrambler – 96Db
Diavel – 105Db
Hypermotard – 97Db

These numbers decrease by quite a large margin on drive by ratings. For example, according to Ducati's Certificate of Conformity, the Monster 821 drops from 102Db to 79.2Db, which is not much louder than a Ford Fiesta 1.8 (2010) at 85mph which rates as 75.3Db or 71.7Db at 75mph according to the www.auto-decibel-db.com.

It is proposed that the building would be constructed of 2 skins of 100mm dense concrete blocks with cavity filled insulation. Only high level glass blocks will be inserted into the back elevation. This will prevent any sound from transferring towards the existing houses and would mitigate against noise. The bikes would be statically maintained and tested so that noise pollution is reduced to an absolute minimum.

A condition would be appended to the decision to secure details of the noise mitigation measures proposed for the building.

It is also considered that the position of this workshop will also provide an acoustic barrier to this part of the site currently exposed to the noise from the A1.

It is considered that the use of part of the site as a motorcycle showroom with associated workshop would not unduly impact upon the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring properties particularly when considering the historic use of the site and its proximity to the A1.

The applicant has, however, agreed to a personal consent which would restrict the occupier of the showroom to Ducati who are a specialist and reputable supplier and it is unlikely the amenity of neighbouring residential properties would be unduly affected.

The location of the workshop building would be some 45 metres from the proposed residential development to the north and this separation distance combined with the design building is sufficient to avoid any adverse impact on the amenities of the occupiers of these properties.

The proposal therefore accords with policy PP3 of the Adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD and policy CS16 of the Adopted Peterborough Core Strategy DPD.

Highway Implications

The proposed site layout indicates the provision of 16 no. parking spaces including 2 no. disabled parking spaces and 6 motorcycle parking spaces. Provision is also made for cycle parking however, this will need to be covered, secure and overlooked; the details will be secured by condition. The Local Highways Authority raises no objections subject to condition.

Under the former approval (14/00637/FUL) it was proposed to close off the existing access from Peterborough Road once a new access has been constructed to the west of the site which would also serve the new housing development to the north (14/00643/OUT) in addition the egress from the site to the A1 will be closed off. Conditions will be appended to this planning consent securing these works for the avoidance of doubt. Highways England and the Local Highways Authority therefore raise no objection on access issues.

It is considered that the proposal would not unduly impact upon the adjacent highway and accords with policies PP12 and PP13 of the Adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD and policy CS14 of the Adopted Peterborough Core Strategy DPD.

Design and Visual Amenity

The former approved scheme dealt with the changes to the existing building. There are no alterations to the existing building as part of this application.

The proposed garage/workshop would be single storey with a rendered finish and would not be dissimilar to a former building which occupied the site.

It has become an iconic building over the years, recognised by English Heritage (when assessing the building for listing status due to its architectural style) links to historical motoring associations and the Local Authority by giving it Special Interest status. However the building has been a target for vandalism & crime and has been stripped of its internal fixtures / fixings; covered in graffiti, had its doors / windows smashed and boarded up. The occupation of the building is welcomed and will ensure the building is brought back into beneficial use which would help secure its refurbishment and survival.

The proposal would respect the character and appearance of the existing building and would be an enhancement to the visual amenity of the site particularly when viewed from the Conservation Area. Hence the proposal accords with policies CS16 and CS17 of the Adopted Peterborough Core Strategy DPD and policies PP02 and PP17 of the Adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD.

6 Conclusions

Subject to the imposition of the attached conditions, the proposal is acceptable having been assessed in the light of all material considerations, including weighing against relevant policies of the development plan and specifically:

- The site has an existing commercial character located on the edge of the village and the use of the ground floor of the building by a motorcycle dealership would not be uncharacteristic for the site and would support the rural economy and create jobs;
- The occupation of the building would bring the Locally Listed building back into beneficial use and ensure its longevity as well as providing a positive contribution the local area and the scale and design of the workshop are acceptable;
- There is adequate parking within the site and the access and egress would be improved hence there would be no impact on the highway;
- The use of the ground floor of the building by a motorcycle dealership would not unduly impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers; and
- With the noise mitigation measures applied to the workshop the intended use would not result in the significant rise in noise levels.

Hence the proposal accords with policies PP2, PP3, PP12, PP13 and PP17 of the Adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD, policies CS14, CS16 and CS17 of the Adopted Peterborough Core Strategy DPD and section 3 and 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7 Recommendation

The case officer recommends that Planning Permission is **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

- C1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- C2 Notwithstanding the details hereby approved the showroom will be occupied by a Ducati dealership only.

Reason: The condition would enable the Local Planning Authority to control future occupiers of the showroom. In this instance 'Ducati' is a specialist dealer providing for a niche market and in the interests of neighbouring amenity.

- C3 Prior to any occupation of the building for the intended use, the existing egress point from the site shall be permanently closed.

For the avoidance of doubt, this condition refers to the egress point situated on the side boundary of the site, to the A1, and located about 40m north of the junction of the A1 with Peterborough Road.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety in accordance with policy PP12 of the adopted Planning Policies DPD (2012).

- C4 Prior to any occupation of the building for the intended use, the existing access from Peterborough Road shall be permanently closed in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority with a footway being provided across the closed entrance to link into the existing footway either side.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety in accordance with policies PP12 and P13 of the adopted Planning Policies DPD (2012).

- C5 Within six months of the approved change of use being implemented, a scheme of landscaping of the site, including surfacing to the new higher car park and planting details to the site boundary including the existing access areas to be closed, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing.
The approved scheme shall be implemented in full no later than the first planting season after closure of the existing access (as required by Condition 4).

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the development and the enhancement of biodiversity in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Peterborough Core Strategy DPD (2011) and Policy PP16 of the Peterborough Planning Policies DPD (2012).

- C6 The car parking area shown on plan 15-424 (08)E02 Rev A shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the building for the intended use, and shall thereafter be maintained for the parking of vehicles in association with the development.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and in accordance with policies PP12 and PP13 of the Adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD.

- C7 Notwithstanding the cycle parking shown on plan 15-424 (08)E02 Rev A plans showing 6 cycle parking spaces shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking shall be provided prior to the occupation of the building for the intended use and thereafter be maintained for the parking of cycles only.

Reason: In order to promote sustainable means of travel and in accordance with policy PP13 of the Adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD.

- C8 A Construction Management Plan shall be implemented as follows:
- No Temporary Construction Access point(s) shall be created unless the details have been approved by the Local Planning Authority
 - Temporary parking, turning and loading/unloading facilities shall be provided on site for the duration of the build
 - Wheel washing facilities shall be operated such that debris does not get deposited on the highway and compromise highway safety

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and in accordance with policies PP12 and PP13 of the Adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD and policy CS14 of the Adopted Peterborough Core Strategy DPD.

- C9 Notwithstanding the details hereby approved a scheme which seeks to control any noise emanating from the workshop shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For clarity It is recommended that the workshop building shall be constructed so as to provide sound insulation against internally generated noise of not less than 35dB(A), with windows shut and other means of ventilation provided. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the building being occupied for the intended use and shall remain in place in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and in accordance with policy PP3 of the Adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD and section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- C10 All work, repairs and servicing of motorcycles shall take place within the workshop building only.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with policy CS16 Peterborough Core Strategy DPD and policy PP3 of the Adopted Peterborough Planning Policies DPD.

C11 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- * Site location and existing block plan 15-424(08)G01 A
- * Proposed block plan 15-424(08)G02 A
- * Existing ground floor plan and elevations 15-424(08)E01 A
- * Proposed ground floor and elevations 15-424(08)E02 A
- * Ground floor plan 15-424(08)E03
- * Proposed elevations 15-424(08)G03

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

Copies to Councillors: J F W Holdich OBE, D Lamb

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