

## LATE SHEET

### DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 25 APRIL 2018

#### **Item 6 – CB/17/04476/OUT – Woodlands Nurseries, Biggleswade Road, Upper Caldecote, Biggleswade, SG18 9BJ**

##### **Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

The applicant has provided the following statement which provides an update on the applicants latest financial position:-

*Unfortunately due to circumstances beyond Chessum Plants control the company has been forced into Administration. Chessum Plants supplied its products via a 3rd party trading company. This Company (Green Moon Plants) supplied £12m of plants to a leading supermarket – this order was cancelled on 24 hours notice. This action forced Green Moon into administration owing Chessum Plants £786k. Furthermore the very poor weather up to the middle of April has led to sales being £500k behind forecast. These two events has unfortunately led Chessum Plants having to review its position and subsequently enter administration.*

*However there is a clear plan to resurrect this business and take it forward and continue with the project both in the short term and more importantly the long term.*

*In the immediate term:-*

- *Paul Chessum Roses – PCR (the Chessum Family Business) has purchased all of the stock and assets belonging to Chessum Plants.*
- *PCR has already re-employed 21 staff and is looking to add a further 30 staff over the next 4-6 weeks*
- *The plan is for PCR Sales Ltd to trade out the existing container stock at Woodlands*

*In the long term:-*

- *PCR Sales Ltd are in discussions with Harkness New Roses about the Intellectual Property Rights that Harkness own (i.e. plant variety rights and trademarks). The long term plan is for PCR Sales Ltd to develop the Harkness Brand and sell to the UK Market via traditional Garden Centres and through a direct online channel*
- *PCR Sales Ltd has agreed a strategy with Solai Holdings with regard to the new container facility and the added value plant production unit at Woodlands. These sites are key for the future of the PCR Sales strategy as we need to have an efficient production site to trade from.*

*The provision of the new container bed facility is still therefore vital for the long term and will enable the site to compete efficiently in this very competitive market.*

*Whilst this plan is different to the one we had envisaged, it does provide for a long term production Nursery at the Woodlands site and will provide for up to 100 jobs over the next 5 years.*

### **Additional Comments**

The Officer Committee Report does attach weight to the way in which the planning application will help secure the horticultural operation at the site and associated job retention/creation. The above position may therefore have some impact on this. However, the planning application will continue to see significant job creation associated with the commercial element and will see provision of new access arrangements which, as noted in the report are an issue. Officers also note that, despite the applicant's recent difficulties that a strategy has been put in place which requires the provision of new container bed facilities which forms part of the package of proposals in this application. Accordingly, the above position set out by the applicant does not materially impact or alter Officers recommendation.

### **Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

Comments are received from Northill Parish Council requesting that the village hall contribution be allocated towards the enhancement of the two church halls in Upper Caldecote and Northill Village Hall.

All the three halls are used regularly by the community, with Caldecote Church Rooms used least frequently simply because of it's poor condition. Northill Village Hall requires contributions towards a new kitchen and front door and the Methodist church hall requires contributions towards external stonework.

### **Additional Comments**

Officers have no objection to the allocation of the village hall contributions in this way.

### **Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

As noted in the Officer Committee Report, members will be updated on highways conditions in the late sheet.

### **Additional Comments**

Planning conditions 1-5 noted below require detailed submissions relating to access arrangements, visibility splays and closure of existing accesses. These conditions have been considered by Officers and are considered to be necessary, reasonable and in the interests off highway safety and access.

The Highway Officer recommends that a new footway be provided to the southern side of Biggleswade Road to link between the new commercial access and Upper Caldecote. The applicant has commented that such a condition and the associated

financial implications have not been taken into account in the viability assessment and, in any event, there is an adequate pedestrian footway to the northern side of Biggleswade Road. The applicant proposes the provision of an informal crossing point between the southern part of Biggleswade Road and the existing northern pedestrian footway.

Officers consider that there are different options available to improve pedestrian access between the development site and the village of Upper Caldecote to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport – i.e. walking. Given that there is an existing footway to the northern side of Biggleswade Road a new additional footway may not be necessary and a new crossing point could be provided. There are also opportunities to link the residential element to the public right of way to the south of the site and improve the condition of that right of way. Officers therefore recommend the inclusion of condition 6 below which will enable pedestrian access arrangements to be considered in more detail and in consultation with the Highway Team at a later stage.

### **Additional/Amended Conditions**

1. Development shall not begin until details of the eastern (commercial) junction between the proposed road and the highway has been approved by the Local Planning Authority and no building shall be occupied until that junction has been constructed in accordance with the approved details.  
Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the proposed estate road.
2. The residential development shall not begin until details of the western (residential) junction between the proposed road and the highway have been approved by the Local Planning Authority and no dwelling shall be occupied until that junction has been constructed in accordance with the approved details.  
Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the proposed estate road.
3. Visibility splays shall be provided at the junction of the eastern (commercial) junction with the public highway before the development is brought into use. The minimum dimensions to provide the required splay lines shall be 2.4m measured along the centre line of the proposed access from its junction with the channel of the public highway and 215m measured from the centre line of the proposed access along the line of the channel of the public highway. The required vision splays shall, on land in the applicant's control, be kept free of any obstruction.  
Reason: To provide adequate visibility between the existing highway and the proposed access, and to make the access safe and convenient for the traffic which is likely to use it.
4. Visibility splays shall be provided at the junction of the western (residential) junction with the public highway before the development is brought into use. The minimum dimensions to provide the required splay lines shall be 2.4m measured along the centre line of the proposed access from its junction with the channel of the public highway and 43m measured from the centre line of the proposed access along the line of the channel of the public highway. The

required vision splays shall, on land in the applicant's control, be kept free of any obstruction.

Reason: To provide adequate visibility between the existing highway and the proposed access, and to make the access safe and convenient for the traffic which is likely to use it.

5. No development shall commence until details of the closure of the existing access to commercial traffic to the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The closure for commercial traffic shall be implemented within 3 months of the first use of the new approved access. The development shall accord with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority

Reason: In the interest of road safety and to reduce the number of points at which traffic will enter and leave the public highway.

6. Prior to the commencement of any above ground building works, details of pedestrian access between the application site and Upper Caldecote shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include a combination or provision of either 1) A new footway (to the southern side of Biggleswade Road between the new access and Upper Caldecote), 2) Provision of an informal crossing point between the application site and the northern pedestrian footway along Biggleswade Road or 3) Improvements/access between the residential element and public right of way no 7.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and pedestrian movement.

### ***Item 7 – CB/17/04583/OUT – Land adj 129A and 131 Clophill Road, Maulden, Bedford, MK45 2AE***

#### **Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

None.

#### **Additional Comments**

Members should note that the proposed 'buffer' to the adjacent SSSI is approximately 22m and is consistent with that recently considered under application ref. 17/CB/00981/OUT (resolution to grant subject to appropriate legal agreement).

It should also be noted that the legal agreement will also secure a contribution of £31,050.00 towards the extension of Maulden Village Hall.

#### **Additional/Amended Conditions**

The applicant has agreed to provide 35% affordable housing (9 dwellings). Further to this, the tenure split of 73% affordable rent and 27% intermediate tenure has been secured and is in line with the SHMA.

However, to ensure that the mix and location of affordable dwellings is acceptable, it is recommended that the following condition is imposed:

1. The development shall not begin until a scheme for the provision of affordable housing as part of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The affordable housing shall be provided in accordance with the approved scheme. The scheme shall include the type, size, tenure mix and location on the site of the affordable housing provision to be made.

Reason: To ensure that the affordable housing associated with this development is appropriate, in accordance with Policies CS7 and DM10 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

### ***Item 8 – CB/17/05480/FULL – Staples Wholesale Nursery, Fordfield Road, Millbrook, Bedford, MK45 2HZ***

#### **Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

One letter has been received from the applicant in response to objections. This is appended to this Late Sheet.

#### **Additional Comments**

##### Business Investment Officers

*Wernick is a well-established national business looking to expand its local presence, currently on the Ampthill Business Park. I am aware that their Agents, Kirkby Diamond have looked extensively for other suitable sites, as have we, but without success.*

*The position remains that unless they can find a site in the area they will relocate their current operation with a loss of employ within CBC. This is a chance to have a viable user on site whilst retaining/ increasing employment with little, if any, disruption to the immediate area.*

*This would seem to be a suitable site for growing an established business that will be creating several new jobs for the area.*

#### **Additional Informative**

1. This permission relates only to that required under the Town & Country Planning Acts and does not include any consent or approval under any other enactment or under the Building Regulations. Any other consent or approval which is necessary must be obtained from the appropriate authority.

***Item 9 – CB/17/04479/FULL – 61 Hitchin Street, Biggleswade, SG18 8BE***

**Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

**CBC Business Investment Team** - Whilst we can see that the area is mainly residential, from an Economic Development perspective we have some concerns that a successful business would have to close and jobs lost and are mindful as to the precedent this could set.

***Item 10 – CB/18/00615/REG3 – Franklin House, Brewers Hill Road, Dunstable, LU6 1UU***

The application is recommended for deferral to allow full consultation to be carried out with those members of the public who made representations on the application.