

Item No. 10

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/12/03290/OUT
LOCATION	Unit 7, Grovebury Road, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 4SQ
PROPOSAL	Outline Planning Permission: Proposed non food retail park of up to 10,775 sqm (116,000sqft) Gross retail floorspace, up to 600 sqm (6,460 sqft) storage up to 604 sqm (6,500 sqft) pub/restaurant, up to 167 sqm (1800sqft) drive thru restaurant, new vehicular access and associated highway works, associated car parking; hard and soft landscaping and associated infrastructure works.
PARISH	Leighton-Linslade
WARD	Leighton Buzzard South
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllrs Berry, Bowater & Dodwell
CASE OFFICER	Adam Davies
DATE REGISTERED	18 September 2012
EXPIRY DATE	18 December 2012
APPLICANT	Barwood Developments Ltd & Invesco P.I.T. Ltd
AGENT	Framptons
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Town Council objection to major application

RECOMMENDED DECISION	Outline Application - Granted
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Resolution

That Planning Permission be REFUSED for the following reasons;

(1) In line with South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review Policy E1, Policies 6, 7 and 8 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and national guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council seeks to maintain an appropriate portfolio of employment land within Central Bedfordshire. The application site forms part of a designated Main Employment Area as defined on the proposals map of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review 2004 and the policy map of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire wherein the Local Planning Authority's primary objective is to encourage Business, General Industrial or Storage and Distribution development. The application site falls within an area identified as being in adequate condition for B Class employment with some potential for redevelopment taking account of factors including the quality of stock, access to amenities, the adequacy of site servicing, strategic road access and public transport provision (CBC 2012 Employment Land Review). The main source of demand for B Class premises in Leighton Buzzard is generated as a result of expansion by locally based firms, and some relocation from nearby areas (Luton and South Beds Employment Land and Market Assessment Study, NLP 2010). In this case, there is an expressed need for low cost warehousing to support the expansion of locally based firms as demonstrated by the present/recent occupation of the premises and by third party representations received from a major local employer in response to the application. In light of this demonstrated demand, it has not been

adequately shown that there is no viable prospect of the site delivering a B Class use, including through the redevelopment of the site to provide modern units for the local market. Taking account of the supply of B Class land within Leighton Buzzard itself and the scale, quality and location of the site, the proposed development would detrimentally impact upon the supply of B Class land within the locality. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy E1 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review 2004, Policies 6, 7 and 8 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and national guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

(2) By reason of the combination of the total commercial floor area of the development, the size of the individual units proposed, the range of goods to be sold from the site, and the number of retail units proposed, the proposed retail development would result in an unacceptable diversion of trade from Leighton Buzzard Town Centre to the detriment of the vitality and viability of the Main Shopping Area. Further, and given the propensity for competition among retailers seeking to come to Leighton Buzzard, the proposal would also negatively impact upon the town centre's capacity to attract new investment and may also prejudice the Council's ability to bring forward development in accordance with the Land South of the High Street Development Brief 2012, in line with its commitment to regenerate this site as a key objective within the Council's adopted Medium Term Plan, "Delivering Your Priorities 2012-16". The development would therefore have an unacceptable impact on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in Leighton Buzzard contrary to Policies 11, 12 and 15 of the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire and national guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

NOTES

(1) In advance of the consideration of the application the Committee were advised of additional consultation and publicity responses as follows:

- GVA Grimley the Councils retail consultant
- Strategic Planning
- Economic Regeneration
- National Grid
- BE Aerospace
- 90 additional letters of objection
- Third Party representation forms headed; Help Save Your High Street
- Leighton Buzzard Observer Poll
- Detailed third party representations
- Applicants additional information
- Additional comments from the Case Officer

(2) In advance of the consideration of the application the Committee received representations made under the Public Participation Scheme.