

2 CW2003/0620/F - ERECTION OF 6 NO. STORAGE SILOS ON CONCRETE BASE AT GELPACK EXCELSIOR LTD, GRANDSTAND ROAD, HEREFORD, HR4 9NT**For: Gelpack Excelsior Ltd. per Clarke Matthews Ltd.,
16 Museum Place, Cardiff, CF10 3BH****Date Received: 27th February 2003 Ward: Three Elms Grid Ref: 50200 41150
Expiry Date: 24th April 2003**

Local Members: Councillors Mrs. P.A. Andrews; Mrs. S.P.A. Daniels and Ms. M.A. Toon

This application was reported to Members on the 11th June 2003 when it was deferred for the applicant to investigate alternatives to the six 12 metre silos which were proposed in the scheme. The applicant has now had the opportunity to consider two options which involve "digging down" the silos to lower their appearance on the site or the option of reducing the silos to in height by increasing their numbers.

In response the applicant indicates that the first suggestion to dig down the silos into the site by up to 3 metres presents many technical difficulties. It would require a reinforced concrete pit approximately 3 metres deep with side walls and a base which will need to be half a metre thick. To accommodate six silos of 4.2 diameters allowing for 1 metre clearance for a walkway around the outside of the tanks for health and safety purposes, the pit would be approximately 30 metres long by 6.2 metres wide. This would involve the excavation of 1,200 metre cubed of soil which would be approximately 150 lorry movements. More significantly the size of the excavation would dictate that any other vehicular access to the yard would be prevented.

The suggestion to lower the height of the silos but increased numbers is also not possible. Given the restriction in the site area, it would also move the silos closer to the residential properties. In effect a 9 metre silo would be some 9.5 metres closer to the properties than the siting proposed.

To try to accommodate the concerns of residents, the applicant's agent has reviewed the requirements of Gelpack and revised the layout of the silos. The height of the silos has been reduced from 12 metres to 11 by increasing their diameter. In addition electrical equipment near the silos has been relocated allowing the silos to move 1 metre towards the site entrance thus having the overall effect of moving the last silo approximately 2 metres further away from the properties on Grandstand Road.

In view of the above, the agent advises that Gelpack has considered the objections and concerns of residents in making several amendments to this application. Clearly the installation of the silos is a significant element in the business development of Gelpack as well as reducing traffic within Hereford and noise movements of forklift trucks in the yard adjacent to the residential properties.

The amendments shown have both reduced the proposed silos by an additional 1 metre and moved the structures further from the residential boundary. As such, Officers are satisfied that the applicant has made reasonable effort to address the concerns expressed by local

residents and recommend approval. The report below remains unaltered with the exception of the above update to that presented to Central Area Planning Sub-Committee on the 18th June 2003. One additional condition is suggested A09 that development be carried out in accordance with the amended plans received on the 1st August 2003.

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The site is located to the south of Grandstand Road and is accessed off Faraday Road. The site presently comprises of the Gelpack factory units with a small circulation and delivery area on the east side of the buildings. Parking for the site is currently provided along the main buildings entire south side. As identified in the Hereford Local Plan and the emerging Unitary Development Plan, the site is clearly defined as an established employment area. It should also be noted that along its northern boundary the site is in close proximity to residential properties on Grandstand Road which in both Development Plans is shown as an established residential area.
- 1.2 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of six storage silos which will be sited in a straight line running north to south on the east boundary of the factory site. The silos themselves will be used for the storage of polymer granules which are turned into bags and other forms of plastic packaging. The six silos each measure 12 metres in height and have a diameter of 4 metres.

2. Policies

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance:

PPG1	-	General Policy and Principles
PPG4	-	Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms
PPG24	-	Planning and the Noise

2.2 Hereford Local Plan:

Policy E2	-	Established Employment Areas
Policy E7	-	Development Proposals for Employment Purposes
Policy ENV14	-	Design
Policy H21	-	Compatibility of Non-Residential Uses
Policy H22	-	Existing Non-Residential Uses

2.3 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Deposit Draft):

Policy DR1	-	Design
Policy DR13	-	Noise
Policy E6	-	Expansion of Existing Businesses
Policy E8	-	Design Standards for Employment Sites

3. Planning History

- 3.1 CW2000/0356/F Roof alterations to allow internal alterations to production area. Approved 23/03/00.
- CW2000/0357/F Change of use to provide parking for 23 cars – subject to a Section 106 Agreement – not yet completed.
- CW2002/1767/F Erection of six storage silos. Withdrawn 02/008/02.

4. Consultation Summary

4.1 None.

5. Representations

5.1 Hereford City Council: No objections.

5.2 Six private letters of objection have been received on the application from Mr. S. Husbands, 99 Grandstand Road; Miss M. Williams, 103 Grandstand Road; Mr. J. Baskerville, 17 Grandstand Road; Mrs. Jo Williams and Family, 19 Grandstand Road; Mr. G. & Mrs. K. Bennett, 101 Grandstand Road and Mrs. N. Probert, 107 Grandstand Road.

The points raised:

- The height of the silos are well in excess of the residential properties adjoining the site and will completely obliterate what little sunlight we get into the rear gardens of our properties. Concerns are raised about the physical height of the silos and concern is raised about interference with television reception having regard to their aluminium construction.
- Previous complaints have been made going back to 1994 on the noise from activities in the yard and forklift trucks and personnel. The Environmental Health Department of Herefordshire Council have made investigations since that time and residents are very concerned about noises associated with the silos. It is suggested the silos or storage could be underground instead of obstructing local residents' views.
- It is suggested that Members of the Committee should visit the site before the application is debated and to listen to local objections. We certainly hope the objections raised will be considered at length by the Planning Committee.
- We are very concerned about the operation of the silos and feel it is essential they can only operate between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays and are not filled at weekends or public holidays. There is an insidious noise created every time that they are filled which could go on all day during busy periods. It is difficult for local residents to open windows and enjoy the summer given the noise which is generated from the industrial site.

5.2 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Central Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officers Appraisal

6.1 The key issues in the consideration of this application relate to the principle of the proposed development and the visual impact the proposed silos will have on the amenity of the area and on adjoining residential properties.

6.2 With regard to the principle of development, the site is clearly defined within the existing and emerging Development Plan as an established employment site. In this instance the northern boundary of the site is adjoined by an established residential area, the general character and amenity of which should be protected from harm. At present the polymer granules which are used within the factory are stored in a

warehouse on Holmer Road, some 800 metres from the site and it is delivered to the warehouse in bags on pallets. At least one 25 tonne load of granules is delivered per day to the warehouse. It is clear that the use of the polymer granules and their storage is integral to the operation of Gelpack Limited and at present considerable amounts of polymer granules are moved between this site and Holmer Road. Given the importance of this element of the site's operation, it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable on this established employment site subject to the proposal not being detrimental either visually to the area or through noise on the amenity of adjoining residents.

- 6.3 The current application proposes six 12 metre storage silos which will be positioned along side the existing factory running north to south away from the residential boundary. The submission of this application follows the withdrawal of a previous proposal which indicated six 17 metre silos in the same position on site. Strong concerns were expressed by Officers and as such the application was withdrawn. Careful consideration has been given to the siting, design and height of the silos which are now proposed. Having regard to the relationship between the adjoining rear boundary and the existing industrial site, it is not considered that the silos would have a detrimental visual impact on adjoining properties or be overbearing such to warrant refusal of the application. Whilst the silos will project above the ridge line of the existing building, the fact that they can be seen is not in itself a reason to refuse the application.
- 6.4 A number of the letters received from residents make reference to potential for noise and disturbance when the silos are being filled and during the transfer of the polymer granules into the factory. The Council's Environmental Health Section have for a number of years worked with the applicant to try and reduce noise and disturbance for adjoining residents. Furthermore, this application is accompanied by a full Acoustic Report detailing how noise attenuation measures can effectively reduce the operation of such equipment. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has considered carefully the report submitted and concludes that with suitable conditions on the hours of operation and the noise limits the scheme is acceptable.
- 6.5 In summary it is considered that the proposed silos are acceptable in principle and that their siting and design will not have a detrimental or overbearing impact on the adjoining residential properties. Subject to the conditions set out which control the hours of operation and ensure appropriate noise attenuation measures are installed, the proposal is supported. It should also be noted that the capability to store the polymer granules on site will reduce a number of vehicular movements between the site and the existing Holmer Road storage depot which is considered to be a benefit and in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1. A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission)).**
Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2. A07 (Development in accordance with approved plans).**
Reason: To ensure adherence to the approved plans in the interests of a satisfactory form of development.

- 3. Deliveries to the six storage silos shall only be made between the hours of 0830 to 1700 Monday to Friday. No deliveries shall be made on weekends or on Bank holidays.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of properties adjoining the northern site boundary.

- 4. The rating level of the noise emitted from the feed pipes and associated machinery/plant serving the six silos shall not exceed the existing background noise level of 45 dB LA90 by more than 3 dB. The noise level shall be determined at 1m from the rear façade of 99 Grandstand Road (including measurement at first floor level as close to 1m from the façade as possible) and all readings shall be taken in accordance with BS 4142:1997.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of properties adjoining the northern site boundary.

- 5. GO1 (Details of acoustic boundary fence).

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- 6. A09 (Amended plans).

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the amended plans.

Decision:

Notes:

Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies