Consultee Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0978/VAR

Application Summary

Application Number: DC/26/0978/VAR
Address: Arriva Vauxhall Duddery Hill Haverhill Suffolk CB9 8DS
Proposal: Planning application - Variation of condition 2 of DC/23/1702/FUL to allow for use of amended plans for one commercial building for self-storage (class B8) with associated vehicular and cycle parking and landscaping (following demolition of existing building)
Case Officer: Ed Fosker

Consultee Details

Name: Haverhill Town Council
Address: Haverhill Arts Centre, High Street, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 8AR
Email: Not Available
On Behalf Of: Parish Council

Comments

OBJECT:
1. Harm to the character and appearance of the area
The proposed 2.4-metre-high perimeter security fence would form a dominant and visually intrusive feature around the site. The application occupies a prominent gateway location on Duddery Hill, visible from the adjoining roundabout and surrounding roads. The introduction of extensive high-security fencing would create an overly defensive appearance that is out of keeping with the character of the area and would detract from this important entrance into Haverhill. Furthermore, the Council considers that the submitted amended plans do not adequately demonstrate the visual impact of the fencing within the wider street scene, as updated elevations and contextual views have not been provided.
2. Impact on neighbouring amenity
The proposed fencing would have an overbearing impact on neighbouring occupiers, including nearby businesses and residential properties opposite and adjacent to the site. Given its height and continuous nature around the site boundary, the fencing would create an oppressive boundary treatment, adversely affecting the outlook and amenity enjoyed by neighbouring properties.
3. Highway safety concerns
The Council notes that Suffolk County Council Highways has not provided unconditional support and has advised that:
"Any gates... shall be set back a minimum distance of 5 metres from the public highway and shall not open towards the highway. This should be demonstrated prior to any formal recommendation being made."
The Council shares these concerns. The submitted drawings do not clearly demonstrate that the entrance gates are positioned sufficiently within the site to allow vehicles to wait clear of the public

highway while the gates are operated. Without this information, there remains potential for vehicles to queue on Duddery Hill, affecting the safe and efficient operation of the highway. Given the site's location adjacent to a busy roundabout and on one of the principal routes into Haverhill, the Council considers that the safe operation of the access arrangements has not been satisfactorily demonstrated.

4. Public Rights of Way

The Council also notes the comments from Suffolk County Council's Public Rights of Way team that Haverhill Footpaths 015 and 016 have not been identified on the submitted plans.

The PROW officer has advised that:

- the public rights of way must be shown on all relevant plans;
- any fencing must be set back by a minimum of 0.5 metres from the public rights of way;
- gates must not open onto the public rights of way; and
- the routes must remain open, unobstructed and safe at all times.

The Council is concerned that these matters have not been adequately addressed within the submitted application, leaving uncertainty over the relationship between the proposed fencing, gates and the existing public rights of way.

The Town Council therefore considers that the proposal would introduce a visually intrusive and overbearing form of development that would harm the character and appearance of this prominent gateway site and adversely affect neighbouring amenity. Furthermore, the application has not adequately demonstrated that the revised access arrangements can operate safely or that the relationship between the proposed fencing and the existing public rights of way has been satisfactorily resolved.

Additionally, members were concerned that the perimeter fencing forms a significant element of the development and considers that it would have been preferable for it to have been assessed as part of the original application. Also, concern was raised that the submitted plans do not clearly demonstrate how emergency access to adjoining properties will be maintained following the installation of the proposed perimeter fencing and requests that the Local Planning Authority satisfies itself that appropriate access arrangements are secured.