

13/00462/FUL**LAND AT THE FOUR SEASONS GARDEN CENTRE,
SOUTHEND ROAD, ROCHFORD****PROPOSED HAND CAR WASH TO PART OF EXISTING
CAR PARK, INCLUDING LAYING OF NEW CONCRETE
HARD STANDING****APPLICANT: Mr WISSAM EI KAMEL****ZONING: METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT****PARISH: ROCHFORD****WARD: ROCHFORD**

In accordance with the agreed procedure this item is reported to this meeting for consideration.

This application was included in Weekly List No.1205 requiring notification of referrals to the Head of Planning and Transportation by 1.00 pm on Wednesday, 9 October 2013 with any applications being referred to this meeting of the Committee. The item was referred by Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill.

The item that was referred is appended as it appeared in the Weekly List, together with a plan.

1 THE SITE AND LOCATION

- 1.1 The proposal is to operate a car wash facility on land at the Four Seasons Garden Centre on Southend Road, Rochford. Both the existing garden centre and the proposed car wash use would share the site.

2 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The site is on land within the Green Belt and is an area deemed by the Environment Agency as being at risk of flooding. The northern side of the site is bounded by Watts Lane with a public house just beyond. There is a detached dwelling 20m to the south of the proposed car wash area and a flatted development on the opposing side of Southend Road. The site lies just outside the Rochford Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The proposal is to use the left hand side of the existing car park bounded by Watts Lane for a hand car wash and valet service. It would involve the laying

of a concrete hard standing to the left hand (northern) side of the existing gravelled car park to provide the area for the facility. This hard standing would be rectangular with a width of 14m, a length of 25m and have a fall to the left where a new drainage gully would be provided with interceptors connected to the main drainage system. The hard standing would allow for a washing area for two vehicles and an on site queuing area for any waiting vehicles. The proposal would not involve any new buildings and an existing portakabin would be used for the storage of all washing equipment.

- 2.3 It is proposed to have six employees and to operate on a daily basis.
- 2.4 There would be five car parking spaces adjacent to the Southend Road boundary identified for staff. Car parking for customers of the garden centre would be provided on the right side (southern) side of the car park and ten spaces have been indicated on the plan. The adopted parking requirements for a garden centre are for a maximum of 1 space per 40m² (retail area covered and uncovered). The garden centre has approximately 0.1ha of retail space and this would equate to a maximum of 25 customer car parking spaces. The proposed parking area would provide ten spaces, as indicated on the site layout plan, but further parking could be provided in the central part of the car park if required and in any case the area proposed for the car wash could double up as parking space. It is considered that this would be sufficient to serve customer needs.
- 2.5 The Local Highways Authority does not object to the proposal, but has recommended a condition requiring an anti-clockwise circulation of traffic within the site, rather than the clockwise circulation indicated on the plan. Notwithstanding the views of the Local Highways Authority it is considered that the site is of a sufficient size, with an identifiable queuing area, such that there would be no requirement for vehicles to queue either on Southend Road or at the entrance to the site.
- 2.6 The Head of Environmental Services has no objection to the proposal, subject to a condition regarding the use of noise generating jet washes and vacuum cleaners. The Environment Agency does not object to the proposal, but has recommended a condition regarding details of the drainage to be provided. There would be a fall in levels to a drainage channel leading to vehicle wash separators (for removal of silt) connected to the existing mains sewerage.
- 2.7 It is considered that the proposal would be an acceptable form of development within an area at risk of flooding and that the proposed hard standing would not exacerbate the risk of flooding to nearby sites.
- 2.8 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the essential characteristics of the Green Belt are their openness and permanence. The Framework, in elaborating what forms of development are and are not appropriate, in general refers to the erection of buildings and operations that

would permanently affect the visual characteristics of land and not uses of land with limited or no visual impact. The proposal would not involve the erection of any new buildings and makes use of an existing developed site within the Green Belt but this does not, by itself, deem the proposed use to be an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt. However, the site has traditionally been used for the temporary parking of vehicles and thus the use of the site for the washing of vehicles would not have a material impact on the established use of the site. Furthermore, no new structures are proposed. It is not considered that there would be any additional impact on the openness, character and appearance of this fringe part of the Green Belt.

- 2.9 It is considered that the proposed use would not undermine the objectives or character of this part of the Green Belt. It is not considered that the proposed hand car wash would have an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.

3 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 ROCHFORD PARISH COUNCIL - Members were concerned regarding cars queuing on Southend Road and waste water drainage and contamination to local wildlife.

- 3.2 ECC HIGHWAYS - No objection, subject to recommended conditions:-

- No unbound material shall be used in the surface treatment of the vehicular access within 6 metres of the highway boundary.
- The circulation of traffic within the site shall be anti-clockwise with relevant signs and lines.
- Prior to commencement of the development details showing the means to prevent the discharge of surface water from the development onto the highway shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety prior to the access becoming operational and shall be retained at all times.
- The public's rights and ease of passage over public footpath no.18 (Rochford) shall be maintained free and unobstructed at all times.

- 3.3 RDC ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES - The Head of Environmental Services understands that the applicant wishes to operate a hand car wash without the use of equipment such as pressure washers or vacuum cleaners. Therefore, if Members are minded to approve the application, it is recommended that a condition is imposed preventing the use of such equipment in the interests of protecting nearby properties from undue noise disturbance.

- 3.4 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - No objection raised, subject to a condition regarding details of drainage system.

4 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That the application be approved, subject to the following conditions:-

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

REASON: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- (2) No jet washers or mains powered vacuum cleaners shall be used in connection with the use hereby permitted without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain adequate control over noise levels generated by such equipment in the interests of residential amenity.

- (3) Prior to the commencement of the development details showing the means to prevent the discharge of surface water from the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To prevent the egress of water onto the highway in the interest of highway safety.

- (4) No development shall commence until precise details of the means to dispose of trade effluent and surface water, including full details of the fall, drainage channels and wash separators, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and therein implemented as approved.

REASON: To prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants.

- (5) The use of the site, hereby permitted, shall not commence before a plan indicating the anti-clockwise circulation of traffic within the site together with details of the requisite signage informing users of the anti-clockwise circulation of traffic has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with any details as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain adequate control over the circulation of vehicles in the interests of highway safety.



Shaun Scrutton

Head of Planning and Transportation

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals

National Planning Policy Framework

Core Strategy Policy GB1, ENV3

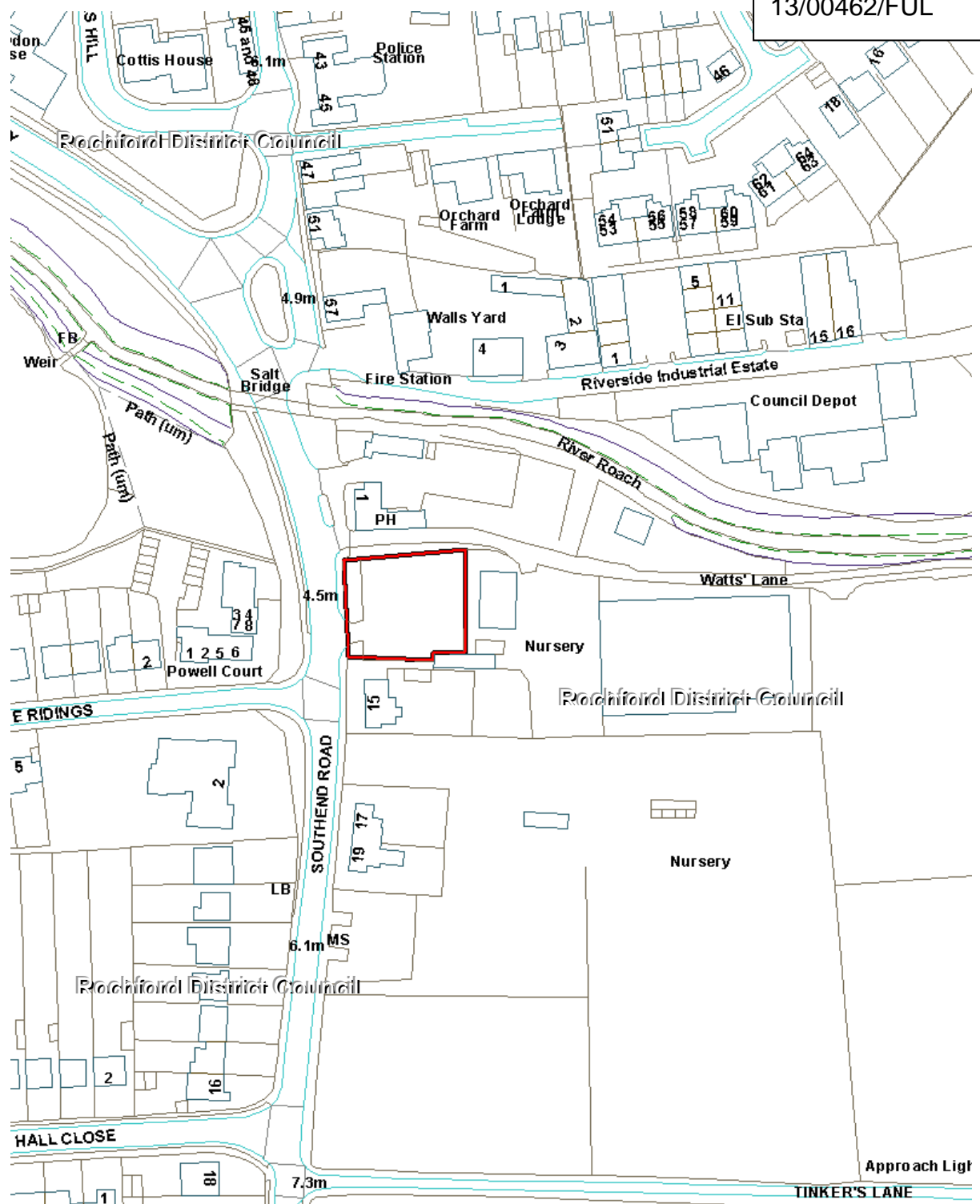
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13/00462/FUL



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