

DELEGATED DECISION OFFICER REPORT

AUTHORISATION	INITIALS	DATE
File completed and officer recommendation:	AC	6 th Nov 2019
Planning Development Manager authorisation:	TF	7/11/2019
Admin checks / despatch completed	CC	7/11/2019
Technician Final Checks/ Scanned / LC Notified / UU Emails:	EXR	7/11/19

Application: 19/01358/FUL **Town / Parish:** Ardleigh Parish Council

Applicant: Mr Robert Rendall

Address: Pole House 36 Harwich Road Lawford

Development: Retrospective installation of 2no biomass boilers with feed hopper.

1. Town / Parish Council

Ardleigh Parish Council Support this application in principle if it is confirmed that the boilers will reuse waste matter generated on site. If the new boilers would require deliveries by road then they would not wish to support the application due to the increase in traffic.

2. Consultation Responses

None received

3. Planning History

01/00944/FUL	Carport, porch, extended utility, rear single storey extension	Approved	23.07.2001
04/00244/FUL	First floor rear and side extension	Approved	05.05.2004
19/01358/FUL	Installation of 2no biomass boilers with feed hopper.	Current	

4. Relevant Policies / Government Guidance

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework February 2019

National Planning Practice Guidance

Tendring District Local Plan 2007

QL1 Spatial Strategy

QL9 Design of New Development

QL10 Designing New Development to Meet Functional Needs

QL11 Environmental Impacts and Compatibility of Uses

ER7 Business, Industrial and Warehouse Proposals

SP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SPL1 Managing Growth

SPL2 Settlement Development Boundaries

SPL3 Sustainable Design

PP13 The Rural Economy

Local Planning Guidance

Essex Design Guide

Status of the Local Plan

The 'development plan' for Tendring is the 2007 'adopted' Local Plan. Paragraph 213 of the NPPF (2019) allows local planning authorities to give due weight to adopted albeit outdated policies according to their degree of consistency with the policies in the NPPF. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF also allows weight to be given to policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency with national policy. As of 16th June 2017, the emerging Local Plan for Tendring is the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft.

Section 1 of the Local Plan (which sets out the strategy for growth across North Essex including Tendring, Colchester and Braintree) was examined in January and May 2018 and the Inspector's initial findings were published in June 2018. They raise concerns, very specifically, about the three 'Garden Communities' proposed in north Essex along the A120 designed to deliver longer-term sustainable growth in the latter half of the plan period and beyond 2033. Further work is required to address the Inspector's concerns and the North Essex Authorities are considering how best to proceed.

With more work required to demonstrate the soundness of the Local Plan, its policies cannot yet carry the full weight of adopted policy, however they can carry some weight in the determination of planning applications. The examination of Section 2 of the Local Plan will progress once matters in relation to Section 1 have been resolved. Where emerging policies are particularly relevant to a planning application and can be given some weight in line with the principles set out in paragraph 48 of the NPPF, they will be considered and, where appropriate, referred to in decision notices. In general terms however, more weight will be given to policies in the NPPF and the adopted Local Plan.

5. Officer Appraisal (including Site Description and Proposal)

Site Description

The site comprises extensive polytunnels and glasshouses for soft fruit production. The main glasshouses are heated by farm dried woodchip boilers, the woodchip dried by waste heat from the applicants alternative site situated in Boxford.

Description of Proposal

This retrospective application is for the installation of 2 biomass boilers and associated concrete woodchip handling area to heat 2 existing glasshouses. The biomass boilers were installed in January 2019. The two biomass boilers are housed in a single moveable metal container which has a width of 3.5m, a length of 12.3m and is 2.9m high, the flue stands at 4.9m tall. The woodchip hopper is housed in a second container that has smaller dimensions of 3.5m x 9m x 2.9m. Both are painted in RAL 7009 green/grey. The concrete biomass handling area is 13.4m x 12m and surrounded on 3 sides with railway sleeper containment walls supported by grey metal posts.

Business, Industrial and Warehouse Proposals

Whilst the thrust of both local and national policy is to direct new jobs to existing built up areas and centres of employment, it is recognised that the District's rural areas and open countryside also make an important contribution to the overall economy of the District and so the Council should seek to achieve sustainable economic growth of its rural economy. Agriculture, in particular, which generally requires a countryside location, remains a source of local employment and continues to play an important role in the local economy and so the Council will continue to support proposals for agricultural-related development (where permission is required) provided adverse impacts on the environment are kept to a minimum.

Boxford (Suffolk) Farms Limited (BSF) have been growing Fruit on the Suffolk and Essex border for 80 years. The business itself started trading in 1938 and has been involved in many types of farming over the years such as arable, organic, fruit and livestock. The farm itself produces around 4515 tonnes of fruit annually. The extended season is made possible in the UK climate partially aided by using heated glasshouses and polytunnels to modify the temperatures and growing environment. The main glasshouses are heated by farm dried woodchip boilers, the woodchip dried by waste heat from the companies' alternative sites. This cyclical approach to utilising waste products is a considerable environmental improvement over the historic gas-blowing heaters.

Design & Appearance

The Government attach great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people. One of the core planning principles of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as stated at paragraph 130 is to always seek to secure high quality design.

Saved Policies QL9, QL10 and QL11 aim to ensure that all new development makes a positive contribution to the quality of the local environment, relates well to its site and surroundings particularly in relation to its form and design and does not have a materially damaging impact on the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties. Emerging Policy SP1 reflects these considerations.

The siting of the containers is in a well screened location, nestled amongst existing structures, and not visible from any neighbouring holdings, highways or rights of way, therefore there is little to no visual impact and no wider landscape harm.

Impact to Neighbouring Amenities

The NPPF, at paragraph 17 states that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. In addition, Policy QL11 of the Saved Plan states that amongst other criteria, 'development will only be permitted if the development will not have a materially damaging impact on the privacy, daylight or other amenities of occupiers of nearby properties'. These sentiments are carried forward in Policy SPL3 of the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft (June 2017).

The proposal is fully contained within the site and as such will not impact on the amenities of any neighbouring properties.

Highway Issues

The proposed development would generate additional vehicle movements; typically the wood chips would be delivered between the period of February to April and September to November. During these periods three loads of wood chips would be delivered once a fortnight. This would equate to an increase of approximately 24 vehicle movements in a year.

In terms of the effect of the additional vehicular movements on the highways network, versus the environmental implications of the carbon emissions from natural gas (i.e. re-using the existing gas boilers), having the woodchip deliveries would emit 7kg/MWh of CO₂ versus 227 kg/MWh of CO₂

for natural gas factoring in transport. The benefit of the significantly lower CO₂ emissions from having the wood-chip delivered are considered to outweigh the impact of the additional vehicular movements required.

6. Recommendation

Approval - Full

7. Conditions / Reasons for Refusal

None

8. Informatives

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Are there any letters to be sent to applicant / agent with the decision?		NO
Are there any third parties to be informed of the decision?		NO