

Nayland with Wissington Conservation Society

Registered Charity No.268104

Comment submitted to Babergh Mid Suffolk Planning Authority

Date: 8 August 2017 at 07:34:14 BST

Case Officer: Gemma Pannell

To access the BDC web site: <https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=ORVY5SSHJTS00>

Application Ref: DC/17/03117 - Konings Juices and Drinks UK Ltd, Hill Farm, Brick Kiln Hill, Polstead, Suffolk CO10 5NY

Proposal: Full Planning Application - Erection of extensions to existing production premises and new buildings to provide canning line (12,611sqm); warehouse space (7,100sqm); apple processing and juice storage (2,060sqm); and apple processing (1,040sqm); associated vehicle parking, landscaping and drainage infrastructure.

Objection Comment: On behalf of the Nayland with Wissington Conservation Society the following objections are made:

1 A business case has been put forward to justify that the circumstances are exceptional and hence should take place in the AONB. However, the impact visually and physically on the area is so great that an independent assessment should be made of their business case, to enable the LPA to reach a proper and informed decision.

2 It is not considered that there is justification for an industrial and commercial process to be introduced to the site that does not relate to produce grown on site. All of the materials for processing will be brought into the site, and distributed from the site once the process is complete. Planning is about allocating the right use to the right location. This is not the right location, being a very attractive, rural area, in the AONB with poor road networks servicing it. It should be placed on an industrial estate in an urban area with direct access onto a trunk route.

3 The buildings and associated servicing areas will impact on the visual characteristics of the AONB. The applicant's supporting case states that because the existing buildings detract from it, so further buildings and activity will have a negligible additional impact is unjustifiable. Their statement that bunds will screen also negates their case regarding visual impact. The fact that a landscape has been scarred by buildings so more are acceptable is not proper planning. Also the admission that bunds are required to provide screens accepts the fact that the buildings will be visually harmful. National and Local Planning Policy does not state that development is acceptable visually in an AONB provided they are screened by bunds. The bunds themselves will cause demonstrable harm to the AONB.

4 The physical activity generated by the use will also impact upon the character and quality of the AONB. The generation of a significant number of heavy vehicles, cars, people generation, industrial processes, noise, flood lighting and so on will all intrude into the peace and serenity of the AONB that is an integral part of its character. The Dedham Vale has the darkest night skies closest to London and the inevitable flood lighting will erode this important quality.

5 It is noted that SCC Highways has raised no objections. This stance is strongly contested. The road from which access is gained is a relatively narrow country road with sharp bends and dangerous junctions, such as that into Stone Street. It is known locally that lorries currently accessing the site sometimes queue into the public highway because the gates are closed, causing highway and pedestrian dangers. Lorries also regularly access Stone Street in error, a very narrow country road with medieval cottages hard on the highway on both sides. There are no safe places for lorries to turn leading to inevitable highway dangers and erosion of the verges. Vehicles that do not use the A134 will travel from the A12 through Higham, Thorington street, and Stoke By Nayland, again in very close proximity to Listed Buildings, attractive country lanes with high verges, tight bends, restricted road widths and so on. This would lead to very considerable highway and pedestrian dangers. The Highways Departments lack of objection is indefensible. The country roads accessing the site, even that from the A134 are not suited to heavy traffic or use by large vehicles. Hence just east of the site is a home made sign on the verge asking drivers to slow down as tractors are turning. This exemplifies the highway dangers.

6 This application is essentially for a large industrial estate in a very attractive and rural location. It will urbanise the area, set an undesirable precedent making it difficult to resist further development of the site in the future, result in demonstrable visual harm to the AONB, lead to highway dangers and damage to heritage assets through the introduction of unsustainable levels of heavy traffic, and is contrary to National and Local Planning Policy.

7 The Council is urged to refuse planning permission.

M. Hunter
Chairman,
Nayland with Wissington Conservation Society