

**DEFERRED ITEM  
(Report by Development Control Manager)**

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**Case No:** 0213092OUT(OUTLINE APPLICATION)

**Proposal:** ERECTION OF BUILDINGS FOR PACKING,  
GRADING, PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF  
VEGETABLES. CONSTRUCTION OF  
HARDSTANDING AND ACCESS

**Location:** COLLMART GROWERS LTD, THE DROVE,  
PONDERSBRIDGE

**Applicant:** COLLMART GROWERS LTD

**Grid Ref:** 525914 292082

**Date of Registration:** 26.11.2002

**Parish:** FARCET

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**RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Members will recall considering this application at its meeting held on 24th February 2003, (Copy attached). It was resolved to defer to enable the Head of Environmental Health Services to reconsider the impact of the application and to recommend noise attenuation measures to mitigate the potential nuisance from the site.
- 1.2 The applicant was requested to provide plans that minimised the impact of the proposed development to neighbouring residents amenity, and local roads.
- 1.3 The applicant engaged noise and traffic consultants to produce a revised scheme that includes a new road access and improvement to the present junction arrangements with the B1095. The revised layout plans show the proposed buildings parallel to The Drive and houses opposite with a 4 metre wide, 3 metre high landscaped bund and acoustic fence and new access arrangements furthest away from adjoining residents. As a result, circulation with the site is contained by the proposed and existing buildings. The existing access to the present building will be closed.
- 1.4 In response to these revisions the Local Highway Authority, (Cambridgeshire County Council) have no objections and suggest several operational conditions and a green travel plan.
- 1.5 The Head of Environmental Health Services made the following comments:

"I feel that the positioning of an acoustic fence behind the proposed 3 metre bund is not the most effective application of the noise barriers. If the proposal proceeds I would like to see the acoustic fence on top of the bund, maximising the height of the barrier.

An area that I feel is acoustically weak is the southeast corner of the site, where there is no proposal for a bund. I think that commercial activities, including vehicle movements, should be prohibited in this area.

The current proposal leaves considerable unused space at the north eastern edge of the site. It seems likely that if the proposal proceeds this space will be used for commercial activities unless it is rendered unusable. Moving the proposed process building to the edge of the bund or landscaping the area would ensure that it is not misused. Alternatively this space, including the southeast corner, could be used for staff car parking for which there currently appears to be no provision.

The north east and south east facing facades of the north easterly process building should not have any openings, doors, vents or fans, (they should be completely blank). This appears to be the case on the plan but I stress the importance of this point in the context of noise control.

Generally please note the proposed condition that we like to see attached if permission is forthcoming."

- 1.6 The new Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure 2003 plan, and a draft revision of PPG7 (PPS7) indicate support for rural diversification, but not at the expense of the countryside. Indications are that such diversification should be sensitive and small scale.

## **2. CONCLUSION**

- 2.1 The amended proposals have gone some way to minimising the impact of the development upon local residents in terms of noise but have not addressed the principle cause for concern of impact upon the character and visual appearance of the flat countryside. The proposal whilst clearly of a rural nature is nonetheless far too insensitive in its scale.

## **3. RECOMMENDATION – REFUSE, for the following reason:**


- 3.1 The site lies in the open countryside wherein only development that is essential to the efficient operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, permitted mineral extraction, outdoor recreation or public utility services will be permitted. The scale of proposed development would be contrary to Policy P1/2 and P2/6 of the Cambridgeshire and

Peterborough Plan 2003 and Policy En17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 as altered by the Local Plan Alteration 2002 and

have a significant, detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Planning Application File Reference: 02/13092/OUT  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan  
Cambridgeshire Structure Plan  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration

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