

---

<b>Ditton</b> Ditton	<b>571214 158700</b>	<b>24.03.2005</b>	<b>TM/05/00959/FL</b>
-------------------------	----------------------	-------------------	-----------------------

Proposal:	Erection of a two storey extension to Cobdown House and construction of two additional buildings all for use Classes B1(a) offices, B1(b) research and development, B1(c) light industry, together with associated parking
Location:	Cobdown House 548 London Road Ditton Aylesford Kent ME20 6BX
Applicant:	The Patman Trust

---

## **1. Description:**

1.1 Members will recall that this application was originally considered at the Committee meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> July 2005, where it was deferred for a Members' site inspection. This took place on 17<sup>th</sup> August and the application was re-considered at the Committee meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> August. At this meeting it was resolved that the application should again be deferred for the submission of additional information, as outlined below:

- Consideration of a reduction in parking provision in association with a green travel plan in an attempt to remove the lower parking area west of Cobdown House.
- Applicant to explore possibility of carrying out tree planting on south side of stream in liaison with Cobdown Sports and Social Club.
- Submission of revised site plan including access road outlined in red and notice served on relevant parties.
- Submission of traffic calming measures having regard to users of the sports grounds.
- Consideration of an alternative means of access to the site away from the sports pitches.

1.2 Copies of the two previous reports (including the Supplementary report of 25 August 2005) are attached (Annex 1).

1.3 Following further discussions, the applicants have submitted a detailed response to these matters by way of a letter dated 28 September 2005. Rather than attempting to summarise this letter I have reproduced it in Annex 2 attached to this report.

**2. Consultees** (Further comments following the submission of additional plans and information):

2.1 PC: The Council feels unable to comment as the amendments are not very clear.

2.2 KCC (Highways): Views awaited.

2.3 Private Reps: 2 further letters received and following points raised:

- Tenants could be accommodated in existing offices in the district.
- Green travel plan is idealistic, not realistic.
- Employees are unlikely to use public transport.
- Additional vehicle movements on busy public thoroughfare.
- Introduction of 2 visually prominent buildings.
- Roots from suggested tree planting on southern side could undermine bank of stream.
- Traffic calming measures would harm nature of parkland setting and could be hazardous.
- Public safety.
- Increased noise and pollution.

**3. Determining Issues:**

3.1 The principal issues relating to this proposal were set out in the earlier Committee reports, and I have not reiterated them in this report. Details of the revisions and other comments in response to Members' concerns are outlined in the agents letter dated 28.09.2005. I therefore respond to each of these issues in turn below.

3.2 Travel Plan and parking reduction: The production of a green travel plan is a useful tool to encouraging sustainable means of reaching the proposed offices. The plan in itself is acceptable but its success will depend on the willingness of future employees to commit to the aims of the plan. The reduction in parking provision in the area to the west of Cobdown House is welcomed. This together with the earth mound and associated landscaping should help to limit any impact on the open parkland setting, in accordance with the aspirations Members have previously expressed.

- 3.3 Tree Planting: Discussions between the applicants and the Cobdown Sports and Social Club appear to indicate that tree planting on the south side of the stream is not a preferred option. Problems of root damage, leaf dropping and general maintenance in proximity to the stream are not welcomed by the sports club. In this instance it is considered unreasonable to pursue this suggestion and insist on tree planting. I remain of the view that the proposal is acceptable in terms of its effect on the setting of the site and surroundings overall and indeed, as explained in paragraph 5.6 of my report to your July meeting, it is a more sensitive scheme than that approved in 1993 and 1998.
- 3.4 Site plan: The revised site plan now includes the access road from Station Road and is acceptable.
- 3.5 Traffic Calming: The submitted details appear to be identical to those previously approved in connection with the earlier scheme. I can identify no material change in circumstances surrounding this particular issue that would warrant a different assessment of their acceptability now.
- 3.6 Alternative access routes: It has not been possible to identify an alternative means of access to Cobdown House as access rights are limited. It must also be remembered that the scheme previously approved also relied upon the same access route as now proposed.

#### **4. Recommendation:**

- 4.1 **Grant Planning Permission** as detailed by letters dated 28.09.2005, 24.08.2005, 14.06.2005, 28.03.2005, 23.03.2005 and by plans – Plan 2, CHD/L2, CHD/L1, site plan received 04.10.2005, 817.10E, 817.11C, 817.13D, 817.14D, 817.16C, 817.12A, 817.15, 817.17A, 817.18, 1682/100D, 14255/001/002 and by Planning Statement received 24.03.2005, Traffic Calming Report dated August 2003, Travel Report received 04.10.2005, Tree Survey received 24.03.2005, subject to the following conditions:

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

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2 The development shall be constructed at the level indicated on the approved drawing.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and privacy.

- 3 No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is

observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded.

- 4 All materials used externally shall accord with the approved plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not harm the character and appearance of the existing building or visual amenity of the locality.

- 5 No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping and boundary treatment including cross sections north-south through the car parking area to the west of Cobdown House. All planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be implemented during the first planting season following occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the earlier. Any trees or shrubs removed, dying, being seriously damaged or diseased within 10 years of planting shall be replaced in the next planting season with trees or shrubs of similar size and species, unless the Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: Pursuant to Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality.

- 6 The existing trees and shrubs shown on the approved plan, other than any specifically shown to be removed, shall not be lopped, topped, felled, uprooted or wilfully destroyed without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority and any planting removed with or without such consent shall be replaced within 12 months with suitably sized stock, adequately staked and tied and shall thereafter be maintained for a period of ten years.

Reason: Pursuant to Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to protect the appearance and character of the site and locality.

- 7 All trees planted shall be protected (particularly against stock and rabbits) immediately upon planting and such protection shall be retained at all times for 10 years thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of good forestry and amenity.

- 8 The use shall not be commenced, nor the premises occupied, until the area shown on the submitted layout as vehicle parking space has been provided, surfaced and drained. Thereafter it shall be kept available for such use and no permanent

development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order amending, revoking or re-enacting that Order) shall be carried out on the land so shown or in such a position as to preclude vehicular access to this reserved parking space.

Reason: Development without provision of adequate accommodation for the parking of vehicles is likely to lead to hazardous on-street parking.

- 9 No building shall be occupied until the area shown on the submitted plan as turning area has been provided, surfaced and drained. Thereafter it shall be kept available for such use and no permanent development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order amending, revoking and re-enacting that Order), shall be carried out on the land so shown or in such a position as to preclude vehicular access to this reserved turning area.

Reason: Development without provision of adequate turning facilities is likely to give rise to hazardous conditions in the public highway.

- 10 The cycle and motorcycle storage as detailed in the Travel Report and by plan 817.11C shall be carried out concurrently with the development and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 11 The traffic calming measures as detailed in the Traffic Calming Report dated August 2005 shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of any of the buildings hereby approved and shall be retained at all times thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of vehicular and pedestrian safety.

- 12 No development shall take place until details of an attenuation system to control the rate of surface water discharged to Ditton Stream shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, and the work shall be carried out in strict accordance with those details. (D008\*)

Reason: To prevent the overloading of the drainage system.

- 13 No lighting for the car park shall be installed without the prior approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and the visual amenity of the locality.

- 14 The bridge over the stream providing access to the site shall be retained at all times and at no time shall it be removed or altered without the prior consent in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

- 15 Development shall not begin until a scheme for protecting the proposed buildings from noise from the M20 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and all works which form part of the scheme shall be completed before any of the permitted buildings are occupied.

Reason: In the interests of the residential amenity of the new development.

- 16 The Travel Plan measures as detailed in The Travel Report received on 04.10.2005 shall be implemented and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 17 Prior to being discharged into any watercourse, surface water sewer or soakaway system, all surface water drainage from parking areas and hardstandings shall be passed through trapped gullies to BS 5911:1982 with an overall capacity compatible with the site being drained.

Reason: To prevent pollution of the water environment.

Informatives:

- 1 You are reminded that in the interests of highway safety the vehicle routes and parking places within the site are clearly defined.
- 2 The applicant is advised to ensure that adequate access and turning facilities for a fire engine are provided within the site. For further advice the applicant is advised to discuss the matter with the Chief Building Control Officer.

Contact: Hilary Johnson