



Application N°: PL2025/08707

Tisbury Motors Ltd, High Street, Tisbury, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 6HF

Employment Loss & Change Considerations

Tisbury Motors employ four people at this site, who comprise the owner, a mechanic, a trainee mechanic and a person who has a shared role as receptionist and petrol pump attendant as this is not a self-service facility. Because petrol stations are classed as sui-generis it can be suggested that as the role of the attendant is only partially within planning class B and so only relates to half a job loss as considered within the Tisbury Plan policies.

Of those currently employed at this site, it is the owner's intention to retire in the near future, which will mean that there are in realistic terms three members of staff who will be affected by this proposal. All these, we understand are being offered employment at this firm's other workshop in Salisbury.

It is worth noting that with employment considerations within Tisplan2 there is mention of various forms of employment along the High Street, but this business does not seem to have been considered amongst. That could suggest that it was seen as of minimal benefit to the village or that there was a subliminal wish that it was not there as part of the writing of that document.

As mentioned above, a noticeable part of this site is a petrol filling station where there are two pumps that have between them three fuel dispensing nozzles for petrol and diesel. In addition, bottled gas is also sold from the forecourt as an ancillary supply service for local customers. The main storage tanks for the petrol and diesel are under the concrete apron between the front of the building and the back edge of the pavement and are licensed by the Petroleum Enforcement Authority (PEA), which in this case is Wiltshire Council.

Due to the age of the tanks, their position and method of installation and venting they do not comply fully with the current standards. As a result, we understand, the PEA is only prepared to continue the license for this facility for a limited period time and then only within the current ownership and operation of the site. If there is any change in this then all licensing will be withdrawn, the tanks fully emptied and then made safe. That later action will usually mean the removal of all the tanks and associated pipework as can only be in agreement with the Environment Agency that they may be allowed to remain in-situ. If they are permitted to remain then records must be kept as to their date and type of decommissioning, as well as them being monitored for the potential for contamination.

As a result of the loss of the fuel storage license and the cost of decommissioning the underground tankage attempts have been made over the last five or so years to sell the

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premises as an on-going concern, through commercial property agents, but none have been prepared to consider it.

As outlined in the planning support document that accompanies this application this property falls within section (2) of Tisplan2 policy EB1(A) where this applies to the site is not being *appropriate for the continuation of its present or any employment use due to a significant detriment to the environment or amenity of the area*. A consideration that needs to be borne in mind is the condition of the fuel storage facility and the potential for this to cause physical and environmental problems if this needs to be taken out and replaced for business to continue in its present form.

Following that consideration is the situation of these premises in a primarily residential part of Tisbury, where business opens and operates directly on to the back edge of the pavement, which that is only on this side of the street in this location. As a result, vehicles of all sizes, ranging from cars to petrol tankers, frequently manoeuvre, drive across or park in this area causing a hazard to pedestrians as well as traffic movements up and down the High Street.

The limited parking area towards the top of the private lane belonging to and on the north side of the garage, is such that overflow parking frequently occupies most of the street parking bays within perhaps a 100.00 m of the site, causing inconvenience to other motorists and residents alike. In addition, the frequent movement of vehicles up and down the north side private lane to and from the main parking area and then in and out of the workshop causes further congestion, obstruction to pedestrians and potential road hazards.

As this is a motor repair workshop there are often loud noises emerging from the building such as hammering and powered tools as well as engines being revved and tested. Smells in the form of exhaust fume are emitted, even though those are controlled through the health and safety approved ventilation system from the workshop.

A secondary aspect is the overall bulk, appearance and style of this building within the street frontage to the High Street in what is, as previously mentioned, a mainly residential area of classic 19th C domestic properties. The building is one of the largest single structures in this part of the street, where only the adjoining chapel is marginally bigger, but which has far more architectural character. As well as being over-scale for this vicinity, the external appearance of the garage is of an alien style and form for anything else along the whole of the High Street and so this when combined with its apparent bulky commercial use it is detrimental to the visual amenity of this part of the conservation area.

As a result, we hope that the description of the business, its activities and the impact it has on this part of the village shows that these premises is not suitable for continued usage due to the detriment they cause to the environment or amenity of this area. Therefore, it satisfies section (2) of Tisplan2 policy EB1(A).

If the building were to continue in use as a vehicle repair and maintenance workshop, even after the necessary neutralisation of the fuel storage tanks by some means, then the problems of vehicle access in and out of the site and the workshop would continue. Without the need for access to the fuel pumps then the forecourt could be used for additional vehicle parking or potentially for motor sales, both of which is likely to be unacceptable in terms of appearance to the street scene or civic amenity.

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Overall, the main part of the building, because of the way in which it was constructed in a combination of cast-in-situ concrete and concrete blockwork, to which an additional floor was added under a flat roof, is in a poor and deteriorating condition. Whilst the structure is not unsafe, it does not incorporate any form of what can now be considered as thermal insulation and as a result it does not comply with energy performance certification for commercial or industrial buildings. The flat on the upper floor suffers from the same level of problems, where comparative insulation levels are even poorer, so would not meet energy standards for residential letting.

If the building is continued to be used for commercial / industrial purposes then there will be a need to up-grade the building to greatly improve thermal efficiency, which would be a costly amount of work that would be necessary after having the underground fuel tanks removed. Those are items that are likely to discourage future occupation of this nature, as has already been voiced by selling agents who have been approached previously in connection with a sale of this site.

Within the workshop, the headroom is very limited for the lifts used to raise vehicles to allow working underneath. This is particularly when dealing with modern cars, where many popular makes are now so tall that the lifts cannot be raised to an adequate height for the mechanics to work comfortably below them. This means that working on vehicles cannot be undertaken in an efficient manner and the posture that the mechanics have to adopt is not good for their bodies.

As the site is within planning use class B the potential use for this area, not just the building itself, is very wide and would re-introduce most, if not all of the environmental and amenity concerns that have been highlighted in connection with the present business. Because of the wide range of enterprises that fall within class B it will be very difficult for the planning authority or the Parish Council to have control over what happens in this situation and what could be a very unsympathetic replacement occupier.

Depending on the potential future use the present car storage space at the top of the private north side lane could be used for industrial or other related storage with the associated movement of large commercial vehicles up and down that and across the pavement at the bottom. On the frontage, once the fuel pumps and the tanks have been removed that could potentially be used for materials storage, display of products, vehicle parking etc. There will still be the movement of vehicles on and off the premises for collections and deliveries and if there are visitors, as well as staff / employees, then that is likely to mean many vehicles parking on the adjacent streets.

It is worth considering figures produced by the Office of National Statistics showing that more than a quarter (28%) of working adults in Great Britain are hybrid workers, where they work partially or entirely from home, with a suggested rise in this to just under 40% within the next few years. When that is refined to age and employment type then data shows that just under 20% of people work almost entirely from home. Extrapolation of these figures could suggest that with 7 houses, having an average 2 persons in occupation, then there will be 14 people on the redeveloped site. Based on the above statistics then at least five of those could be

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working in a hybrid manner and about 3 people solely working from home, which could suggest an increase in employment levels on this site.

Tisbury is now seen as being very popular as a commuter base for those working in the direct of London due to the efficient railway service and from the traffic flow from the station it can be seen how this enables hybrid and home based working. Since Covid the former commute regime of going up on Monday and coming down on Friday has changed so that it is now two or three days mid-week and then working from home on either side. This results in what is now modern an increased potential comparative employee spending in Tisbury shops as compared to those in a pre-Covid traditional or industrial type of employment.

From the information set out above it is hoped that the council will accept that the movement of the employment by Tisbury Motors from this site and its relocation in Salisbury will not result in any loss of employment in the general area of south Wiltshire. In addition, the use of the site in a residential area for a combination of sui-generis and class B purposes is such that it is out of character and is intrusive both environmentally and in terms of the adverse effect on the amenities, both visual and aesthetic, of this part of Tisbury.

The conversion of this site from an alien industrial activity to be residential in a residential area will help safeguard the surrounding environment, although with the relocation of the directly employed people in the present business. However, what needs to be taken in to account will be the larger number employed during the development of the site, which is likely to be several person years compared to the present activity. Then following occupation of the houses, it is possible to suggest that many of those living in the new properties will be working from home partially or full-time and therefore more than replacing those who were employed there previously.

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