

MEETING:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE:	7 AUGUST 2013
TITLE OF REPORT:	131240/CD - REDEVELOPMENT OF SITE TO PROVIDE A PUBLIC CAR PARK WITH ASSOCIATED LIGHTING, SIGNAGE AND PARKING METERS AT LAND AT FORMER ROCKFIELD DIY SUPERSTORE, STATION APPROACH, HEREFORD, HR1 1BB For: The Owner and/or Occupier per Mr Robert Scott, Plough Lane Offices, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR4 0LE
WEBSITE LINK:	http://news.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/58286.aspx?ID=131240&NoSearch=True

Date Received: 22 May 2013

Ward: Central

Grid Ref: 351571,240440

Expiry Date: 17 July 2013

Local Member: Councillor MAF Hubbard

1. Site Description

- 1.1 The site lies immediately north east of Station Approach running up to the junction with the A465 (Commercial Road). South west is Morrison's supermarket and north east is the rail station car park. The site was until recently used for retail and occupied by Rockfield DIY but was acquired by the council to enable the construction of the ESG link road. The brick and steel frame corrugated building on site has now been demolished. The site is relatively flat and the boundaries are enclosed by a mixture of railings and brick wall on the roadside and fencing and vegetation to the south and east.
- 1.2 The site is classified as floodzone 2 (1 in a 1000 year probability of flooding) and the grade II listed rail station lies 30 metres north of the site.

The Proposal

- 1.3 The application seeks to re-develop the site to create a Council operated pay and display long stay public car park totalling 175 spaces. The existing two way vehicular access entering on to the mini roundabout serving the station will be retained as will the existing pedestrian access on to Station Approach itself. The site will be re-surfaced with tarmac and spaces demarked, new lighting and ticket machines installed. New landscaping is also proposed along the peripheries, particularly Station Approach.
- 1.4 In addition to the plans, the application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, Traffic Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment.

2. Policies

- 2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mr R Pryce on 01432 260288

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and this is defined as encompassing an economic, environmental and social dimension which are mutually dependant.

Relevant sections are as follows:

- Section 4 Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Section 7 Requiring good design
- Section 8 Promoting healthy communities
- Section 10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan:

- S1 - Sustainable Development
- S2 - Development Requirements
- S6 - Transport
- DR1 - Design
- DR2 - Land Use and Activity
- DR3 - Movement
- DR7 - Flood Risk
- T1 - Public Transport Facilities
- T6 - Walking
- T7 - Cycling
- T8 - Road Hierarchy
- T10 - Safeguarding of Road Schemes
- T11 - Parking Provision

2.3 Herefordshire Local Plan - Draft Core Strategy:

- SS1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- SS4 - Movement and Transportation
- SS6 - Environmental Quality and Local Distinctiveness
- SS7 - Addressing Climate Change
- HD1 - Hereford
- HD2 - Hereford City Centre
- HD3 - Hereford Movement
- MT1 - Traffic Management, highway safety and promoting active travel
- E2 - Re-development of existing employment land and buildings
- LD1 - Landscape and Townscape
- LD4 - Historic Environment and Heritage Assets
- SD1 - Sustainable Design and Energy Efficiency
- ID1 - Infrastructure Delivery

2.4 Other Guidance:

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Design, ESG Design Framework

Local Transport Plan 3

2.5 Other Material Considerations:

ESG Masterplan

- 2.6 The Unitary Development Plan and draft Core Strategy policies together with any relevant supplementary planning documentation can be viewed on the Council's website by using the following link:-

<http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/29815.aspp>

3. Planning History

- 3.1 CE092576/F – Demolition of existing buildings and construction of a new highway, cycleway, drainage, landscaping and associated works between A49 Edgar Street and A465 Commercial Road along with a new link road to Blackfriars Street and Canal Street. Approved 30th March 2010.
- 3.2 S/130788/D – Prior notification of the proposed demolition of DIY superstore. Prior approval not required, 15th April 2013.
- 3.3 S/130789/AM – Non-material amendment to CE092576/F (road levels, cycle provision and north south feeder road). Approved 23rd April 2013
- 3.4 Additionally, various other planning history exists associated with the former retail use of the site but none is now relevant to the consideration of this application.

4. Consultation Summary

Internal Council Advice

4.1 Transportation Manager

The Transport Assessment submitted is based upon traffic flows taken in 2012 and based on a car park size of 188 spaces, whereas 175 are now proposed. An assessment of the likely traffic flows from those previous uses at Barrs Court Trading Estate and Rockfield DIY has also been made. The junction analyses considers one scenario of 75% and one of 100% car park capacity and both based upon 85% of arrivals in the AM peak and 85% departures during the PM peak hour, based upon data from Merton Meadows car park. However I would comment that the 85% departures used for the PM peak appears to be somewhat onerous. It should be noted that the Country Bus Station car park arrival and departure pattern indicates a more gradual arrival and departure pattern and remains relatively full during the PM peak hour.

For the purposes of the analysis, the distribution (origin/destination) of car park trips on the road network has been made according to the distribution of trips at the existing Merton Meadows car park, as the proposed car park is intended as a partial replacement, but it may be that actual traffic patterns do not accurately reflect this. A slight amendment to signal cycle time from 112 to 120 seconds is proposed at the Station Approach/Commercial Road junction to partially mitigate the impact of the car park.

The assessments indicate that in the AM peak the junction operates close to capacity but with a slight improvement from the current situation, obtained by the proposed increase in the signal cycle time. In the PM peak there is a slight deterioration in operation of the junction with increased queue lengths by up to 8 vehicles on some approaches.

It is therefore acknowledged that the proposals will have a slight detrimental impact on the operation of the Station Approach/Commercial Road junction development until such time as the link road is constructed and the revised junction configuration introduced.

However, it should be noted that these comparisons are made against the current situation with Rockfield DIY removed and the reduced occupancy at Barrs Court Industrial Estate to around 20%. A comparison of the previous situation with those developments fully operational indicates little change.

In terms of highway safety, the Transport Assessment concludes that the proposal will not compromise highway, pedestrian and cyclist safety at the junction and on Station Approach.

The proposed internal layout for the car park is considered acceptable.

Consideration should be given to the opportunity to provide cycle parking, preferably covered or lockers, within the car park to supplement that available at the railway station.

Consideration should also be given to provision of a further bus layby to add capacity and reduce bus congestion at peak times. This would also allow future capacity should any operators wish to extend their services to include the railway station.

I consider that the proposals are acceptable subject to the consideration of the cycle parking and bus provision.

4.2 Drainage Engineer

No objection

4.3 Environmental Health Manager

No Objection

5. Representations

5.1 Hereford City Council

No Objection

5.2 7 letters and e-mails of objection have been received. The main points raised are:

- The car park does not support the sustainable travel objectives in the Local Transport Plan and draft Core Strategy
- The development will cause a re-distribution of traffic from Merton Meadow potentially increasing cross city movements and increasing peak hour congestion
- The site could be the location for a new bus station or transport hub which would greatly benefit rail users who wish to catch a bus.
- Provision should be made for a bus stop with shelter and bus waiting bays which will enable additional bus services to call at the station
- Additional traffic through the Station approach junction will make accessing town for pedestrians and cyclists even more difficult
- The site should be used as a green space and park
- The development does not take the opportunity to improve pedestrian and cyclist links and facilities to and from the station

- 5.3 4 letters and e-mails of comment have been received, the additional points raised that aren't already listed above are:
- Additional cycle parking should be provided
 - Access to and from Morrison's could be improved
 - An additional bus stop could be created where the existing cycle parking is located if this were re-located
 - Making small provisions for sustainable transport modes may assist with pulling in additional government funding for more significant sustainable transport infrastructure
- 5.4 The consultation period has not yet expired at the time of completing this report. Any further representations received within the consultation report (which expires on 1st August) will be reported to Planning Committee and the comments taken into account in the recommendation to Members.
- 5.5 The consultation responses can be viewed on the Council's website by using the following link:-
<http://news.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/searchplanningapplications.aspx>
- Internet access is available at the Council's Customer Service Centres:-
www.herefordshire.gov.uk/government-citizens-and-rights/complaints-and-compliments/contact-details/?q=contact%20centre&type=suggestedpage
- 6. Officer's Appraisal**
- 6.1 The issues relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:
- 1) Parking Need
 - 2) Traffic Impacts
 - 3) Flood Risk
 - 4) Layout and Access
 - 5) Public Transport
 - 6) Conclusion
- Parking Need
- 6.2 Appended to the recently adopted Local Transport Plan 3 is a short, medium and long term county parking strategy. In terms of the city, this looks at parking supply and demand across the city and considers ways in which modal choice can be influenced in the future through the implementation of new parking measures. Some of the key actions that come out of the strategy are:
- Implementation of park and ride and further promotion of park and share and park and cycle
 - A reduction in commuter parking across the city in the medium to long term
 - Installation of real time driver info for Council owned car parks on key arterial routes into the city
 - Support the re-development of existing public and private car parks
 - Work with the supermarkets to establish if any spare capacity could be utilised outside peak times and ensure active enforcement
 - Reviewing the parking pricing structure, particularly for commuter parking.
- 6.3 The above measures have been partly informed by the on-going work on the outer distributor road which has revealed that a high proportion of the car based journeys into the city are from residents who live within 5 miles of the city. There is therefore an opportunity to implement a

more aggressive sustainable transport strategy in the future to encourage more sustainable travel patterns, to reduce congestion and complement the new road infrastructure and the Council is committed to this.

- 6.4 Many of the above measures may, however, be very controversial as they will require a shift in the way people choose to travel into the city particularly for work. Many will also take some time to implement and will need to be introduced in sequence. For example, it is unlikely that there can be a significant reduction in city parking until genuine and viable alternatives are provided such as park and ride and improved bus efficiency.
- 6.5 The parking study therefore also examined the short term parking requirements using a simple supply and demand analysis informed by occupancy surveys carried out in 2007 and 2012. The table below summarises the current position and situation over the next year or so.

DATE	EVENT	SUPPLY	DEMAND	DEMAND + 10%	SURPLUS/ DEFICIENCY
June 2013	Current	2957	2234	2457	+500
Feb 2014	Temp Blackfriars car park closes	2905	2234	2457	+448
May 2014	Stanhope dev opens	3520	2640	2904	+616
July 2014	Merton Meadow closes	2760	2640	2904	-144
2015	Link Road complete and new car park in place	2885	2640	2904	-19

Note: The figures all assume Garrick House multi storey is open.
The +10% is to accommodate small variations in demand

- 6.6 The table indicates that there is likely to be a deficit in provision once Merton Meadow car park closes. The figures are also reliant on surplus capacity at all existing public and private car parks being utilised which will require, for example, all floors of the multi storey car park to be used. The data indicates there is a need for replacement car parking at least until other measures can be implemented. However, the replacement will only offset 23% of the commuter parking lost when Merton Meadows is developed and even then, there will remain a small deficit in overall provision. Parking on the Stanhope development will also not be priced to be affordable for commuter parking. As such, the provision of much reduced commuter parking will be a first step towards implementing the new parking strategy.
- 6.7 Locationally, there is currently little long stay parking on the eastern side of the city and therefore this location will intercept some commuter journeys that would have otherwise had to travel through the heart of the city to Merton Meadow car park. Discussions have also taken place with the hospital to provide permits for staff within the new car park to replace those currently provided for at Garrick House.
- 6.8 There is therefore a need for the car park in the short term (next 5 years) and its delivery will not compromise the transport strategy with the LTP3. The location is also considered acceptable in parking demand terms.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mr R Pryce on 01432 260288

Traffic Impacts

- 6.9 The application is supported by a Traffic Assessment (TA) that considers the traffic impacts of the development on the Commercial Road/Station Approach junction. This junction has been focussed on as it is already operating close to capacity at peak times. Regard has been had to traffic flows attributable to existing uses in the area and on site (prior to demolition of the retail unit) and proposed flows have been obtained from an assessment of peak flows at Merton Meadow car park during 2012. The junction assessment can be summarised by a Degree of Saturation (DOS) percentage – over 90% and the junction is over capacity, over 100% and the junction is completely saturated.
- 6.10 The TA indicates that in the 2013 existing scenario, some legs of the junction are already operating over capacity, although not saturated. When the car park is 100% full, during the AM peak, the operation of the junction will not be materially different but during the PM peak, 4 legs of the junction will be over capacity (with a DOS over 90%), but none over 100%. This will increase queue lengths on parts of the junction by up to 8 vehicles during the PM peak. Once the new link road is constructed, the TA indicates that the junction will be operating within capacity. The TA also confirms that the proposal will not compromise highway, pedestrian and cyclist safety at the junction.
- 6.11 The impact is proposed to be partially mitigated by increasing the traffic light cycle time from 112 to 120 seconds but the development will have a short term adverse impact on the efficiency of the junction and queue lengths until the new link road is constructed. Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe. The additional delay at the junction until the link road is built is not considered to be severe.
- 6.12 The Traffic Manger acknowledges the short term adverse impact on the operation of the junction but does not object to the application as the issues will be addressed when the link road is constructed. Also, the assessment was carried out on the basis of 188 spaces (175 now proposed) and has not discounted any traffic that may be currently travelling through the junction to access Merton Meadow and therefore represents a worst case scenario. Furthermore, the proposal would result in traffic flows that are comparable to the situation prior to demolition of Rockfield and closure of several businesses at Barrs Court Trading Estate.
- 6.13 The traffic impacts of the development are therefore acceptable in accordance with the requirements of policies DR2 and 3 of the UDP and Section 4 of the NPPF.

Flood Risk

- 6.14 The site falls within an area designated as floodzone 2 which equates to a 1 in 1000 year probability of flooding. The proposed car park is classed as a less vulnerable use which the NPPF technical guide indicates is acceptable, in principle, in a floodzone 2 area. Safe and dry access can be achieved via Station approach and there will be no increased flood risk as the existing building slab and surrounding hard surface are being retained therefore there will be no material change in site levels. The extent of impermeable surface will also largely remain unchanged and the existing surface drainage network is to be used in the short term pending construction of the link road. Pollution prevention measures are to be installed to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution. The Council's drainage engineer has no objections and the flood risk requirements of policy DR7 and the NPPF have been met.

Layout and Access

- 6.15 The site will be laid out and serviced in line with other Council car parks in terms of lighting, signage, ticket machines and so on. The surface is to be tarmacked and spaces demarked with white lines. Adequate manoeuvring space will be available. Provision of secure covered cycle parking is considered necessary given the proximity to the station and will be secured by condition. A lighting plan has also been provided to demonstrate there will be no unacceptable light pollution. The car park will have no greater visual impact than the former buildings that occupied the site and there are no properties nearby that will be directly affected by the development.
- 6.16 The existing vehicle and pedestrian access points will be retained and the Traffic Manager has no objection to the design of capacity of these access arrangements. Part of the site falls within the footprint of the permitted link road and therefore approximately 50 spaces will be lost when construction commences. Longer term, a new development plot will be created on the residual land possibly incorporating some adjoining land in a post link road scenario. The layout will therefore need to be modified to accommodate the link road but this is unlikely to necessitate any works that require planning permission.

Public Transport

- 6.17 A number of representations have been received suggesting that a new bus layby should be created along the western road frontage to mirror what already exist on the opposite side of the road. Adequate land exists to achieve this and following further discussions with the public transport officers, it is considered the bus stop would be beneficial. A condition is therefore recommended requiring this to be delivered. Notwithstanding this, the Council also remains committed to the delivery of a new sustainable transport interchange in the future but this is likely to be located in front of the station.

Conclusion

- 6.18 The need for additional long stay parking at least in the short term is evidenced and the location is considered appropriate particularly as public parking on the eastern side of the city is more limited. Short term adverse impacts on the operation of the Commercial Road/Station Approach junction will arise but the impact in terms of delay is not considered severe, is comparable to the situation prior to demolition of Rockfield and closure of businesses on Barrs Court Trading Estate and will ultimately be addressed once the link road is completed. All other land use planning considerations are considered acceptable. The development will also facilitate the delivery of new sustainable housing and other development within the Edgar Street Grid Regeneration Area in line with the NPPF.
- 6.19 A 5 year temporary planning permission is considered appropriate and necessary for the following reasons:
1. To protect the link road permission as required by UDP policy T10,
 2. To allow a further review of parking needs and demand post closure of Merton Meadow car park and opening of the Stanhope development
 3. Review the development opportunities on the residual land
 4. To tie in with the adopted and emerging sustainable movement strategy for the city contained within the Local Transport Plan and Core Strategy for the city
- 6.20 Subject to this, the development is considered acceptable and accords with the relevant UDP policies, the Local Transport Plan and NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1. **F18 Temporary permission (5 years)**
- 2. **B01 Development in accordance with the approved plans**
- 3. **G10 Landscaping scheme**
- 4. **G11 Landscaping scheme - implementation**
- 5. **H29 Secure covered cycle parking provision**
- 6. **Prior to the commencement of development, scaled plans identifying the provision of a bus lay-by and supporting bus infrastructure including a bus shelter and signage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans prior to first use of the car park hereby permitted.**

Reason: To improve the public transport facilities in the locality and support the creation of a transport interchange in accordance with policies T1 and DR3 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

INFORMATIVES:

- 1. **The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against planning policy and any other material considerations. Negotiations in respect of matters of concern with the application (as originally submitted) have resulted in amendments to the proposal. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework. .**

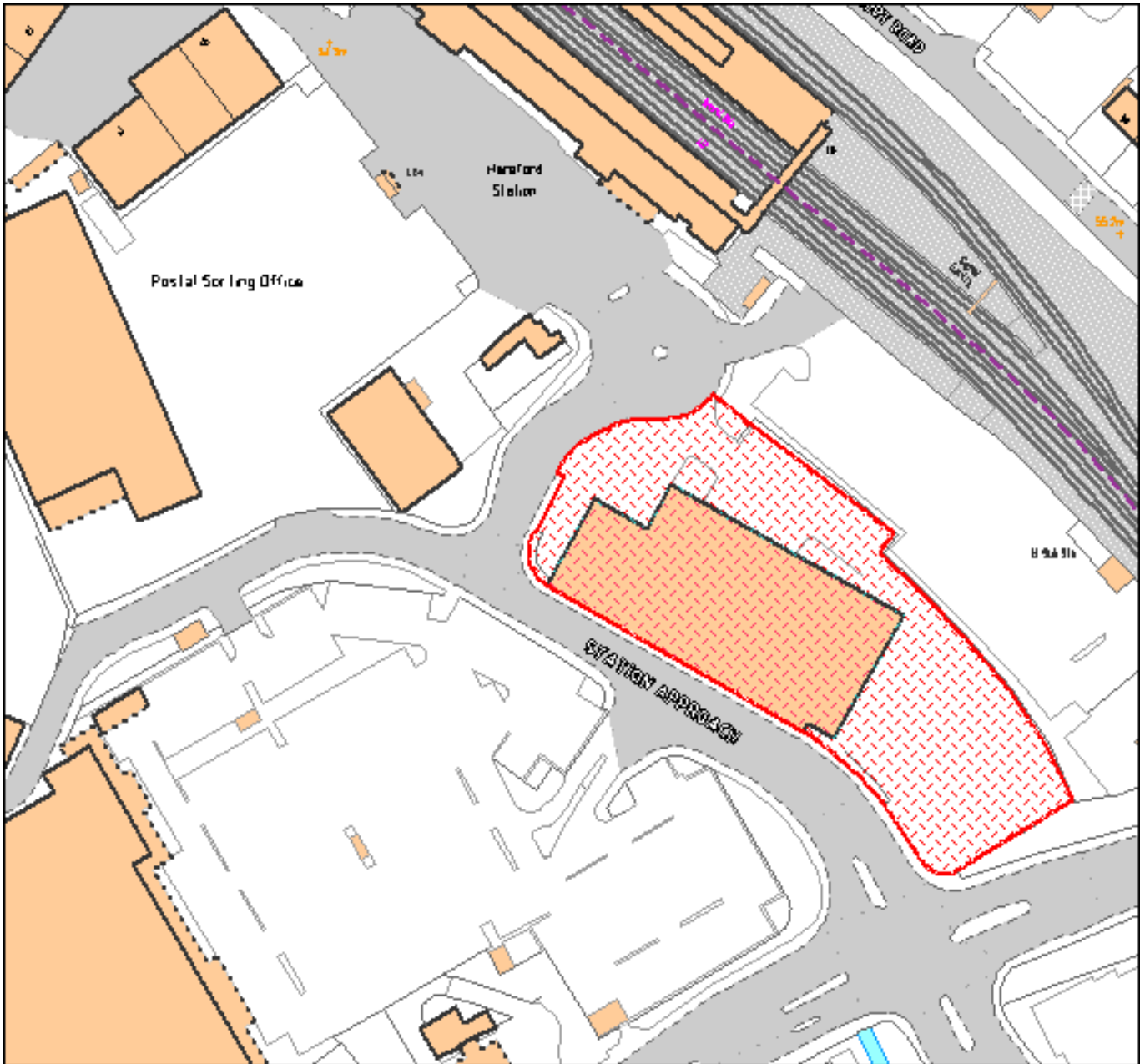
Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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APPLICATION NO: 131240/CD

SITE ADDRESS : LAND AT FORMER ROCKFIELD DIY SUPERSTORE, STATION APPROACH,
HEREFORD, HR1 1BB

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mr R Pryce on 01432 260288