

05 JUNE 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE

5j	18/0263	Reg'd:	12.03.18	Expires:	07.05.18	Ward:	MH
Nei. Con. Exp:	04.04.18	BVPI Target	Minor other - 18	Number of Weeks on Cttee' Day:	12/8	On Target?	No

LOCATION: Lion Retail Park, 151 Oriental Road, Woking

PROPOSAL: Erection of a single storey building in existing car park to be used as a clothes recycling office with associated storage.

TYPE: Full Planning Application

APPLICANT: Mary Street Estate Ltd

OFFICER: David Raper

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE:

The proposal includes the erection of a detached building which falls outside the scope of delegated powers as set out by the Management Arrangements and Scheme of Delegation.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for the siting of a single storey detached structure to be used as a 'cash for clothes' recycling office and store. The proposed building would have a height of 2.85m with a length of 6.3m, a depth of 3.3m and an internal floor area of 18m². The area in question is currently 3x parking spaces which would be occupied by the proposed structure.

PLANNING STATUS

- Urban Area
- Priority Place
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA ZoneB (400m-5km)

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT planning permission subject to conditions.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposal relates to the Lion Retail Park which is characterised by 7x large warehouse retail units to the north of the site with a servicing area to the rear and a large customer car park in the southern portion of the site. Maybury Hill bounds the eastern boundary and Oriental Road forms the southern boundary. The railway line is to the north and an office building and Woking Mosque is located to the west. The wider area is characterised by residential development of a mixture of ages and styles.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is substantial planning history for the site with the most relevant history listed below:

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- PLAN/1995/0290:- Full planning permission for the erection of a non-food retail park development, garden centre, associated car parking and highway modification works
- Permitted 08/08/95

CONSULTATIONS

County Highway Authority: No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

Two representations have been received objecting to the proposal raising the following summarised concerns:

- The surrounding area is already congested and the proposal would worsen this
- The applicant is inaccurate in suggesting the car park is under-capacity; the car park is regularly full and the proposal would worsen the parking situation
- There are enough facilities for collecting textiles, a permanent fixture here is not required
- Proposal would encourage people to dump unwanted clothes
- The proposed structure would be ugly and detract from the character of the area
- Proposal would worsen the highway safety of the area
- The food van already takes up parking spaces
- There is no longer a height restrictor at the site entrance and larger vehicles and coaches often take up more than one space
- The unit would encourage 24hour use of the site
- Proposal would lead to additional noise, air and light pollution
- The landowner is unreliable and there is a problem of pests, overflowing bins and poor quality soft landscaping
- Potential advertisements would be unsightly (*Officer note: Advertisements may require separate Advertisement Consent*)
- Proposal would be detrimental to charities as the proposal is a commercial venture (*Officer note: This is not regarded as a material planning consideration*)

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012):

Section 2 – Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres

Section 4 - Promoting sustainable transport

Section 7 - Requiring good design

Woking Core Strategy (2012):

CS1 - A Spatial strategy for Woking Borough

CS5 - Priority Places

CS18 - Transport and accessibility

CS21 - Design

CS24 - Woking's landscape and townscape

CS25 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):

Parking Standards (2018)

Woking Design (2015)

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PLANNING ISSUES

Principle of Development:

1. The proposal is for the siting of a detached outbuilding to be used as a 'cash for clothes' clothes recycling facility whereby members of the public deposit second-hand clothes in exchange for money, the clothes are then taken to an off-site facility. The building would have a total floor area of 18m² and would comprise an office and a storage area for clothes. The proposed use is not considered a retail use and can best be described as a 'sui generis' use. The proposal site is not within a designated shopping frontage or Local or Neighbourhood Centre, however as the proposed use is not considered a 'main town centre use' as defined by the NPPF (2012), a Sequential Test assessing the impact on existing designated frontages is not considered necessary.
2. The scale of the proposed use is very modest and is considered ancillary and complimentary to the scale and function of the existing retail park and given the relatively unique nature of the proposed use, the proposal is not considered to draw custom away from existing retail centres in the Borough. The proposal is not therefore considered to detrimentally impact on the function or viability of existing retail centres.
3. Overall the proposed use is considered acceptable in principle in the context of the existing uses and character of the Lion Retail Park subject to the further material planning considerations outlined below.

Impact on Character:

4. The proposed building would have a height of 2.85m with a length of 6.3m and a depth of 3.3m and would be sited on an area currently occupied by 3x parking spaces. The proposal site is a large retail park characterised by large warehouse retail units to the north of the site and a large car park on the southern portion of the site with a detached building in A3 (café) use to the south. The proposed building would be positioned in the southern portion of the site close to the east of the detached building. Oriental Road bounds the southern boundary of the site and is significantly higher than the car park level of the retail park which means there is a retaining wall approximately 2.5m in height and a landscaped strip on the southern boundary. The retaining wall is staggered in nature and the proposed location of the building would be up-against the retaining wall and in the recessed area. This siting of the building significantly limits its prominence from public vantage points and the proposal is not considered to result in an unduly prominent building when viewed from surrounding roads. When viewed from the car park the building would be viewed against the backdrop of the existing retaining wall.
5. The building would be finished in timber cladding with grey UPVC doors and windows and would have a simple utilitarian appearance. The building would be viewed in the context of the existing modern retail buildings on the site and is relatively modest in scale compared to surrounding structures. Overall the proposal is considered a visually acceptable form of development and is considered to have an acceptable impact on the character of the proposal site and surrounding area.

Impact on Neighbours:

6. There are residential neighbours surrounding the site including on Maybury Hill to the east and on Little Riding to the south. The unit would generate activity in terms of members of the public depositing clothes to the unit and clothes being collected from

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the site. However given the modest scale of the proposed use (18m²) and when viewed in the context of the scale of the existing retail uses on the site and the existing associated vehicle movements, the activity generated by the proposed use is not considered to result in unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity.

7. It is however considered appropriate to limit both the opening hours of the proposed unit and the hours in which deliveries and collections can be made in order to safeguard the amenities of neighbours. It is considered appropriate to limit the opening hours to the approved opening hours of the retail units on the retail park (08:00am to 20:00pm Monday- Sunday); this can be secured by condition (Condition 3). In terms of how the unit would operate, the applicant has confirmed that the unit would be staffed by two staff members and deposited clothes would be collected twice a week. The applicant has indicated that it would be unlikely that clothes would be left outside the unit due to the business model of exchanging clothes for money, however the applicant has confirmed that the operator would take full responsibility for any clothes which are left outside the unit outside of the hours of operation.
8. It is considered appropriate to limit the permission to a period of 12 months which will allow the situation to be reviewed in a year's time, including the impact on neighbouring amenity. Overall the proposal is therefore considered to have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbours subject to conditions.

Transportation Impact:

9. The siting of the proposed building would result in the loss of 3x parking spaces in the existing car park which currently features approximately 375x spaces. The loss of 3x parking spaces cannot be considered to materially impact on parking availability in the context of the scale of the existing car park (0.8% reduction). The additional vehicle movements associated with the proposed use are not considered to materially impact on the local high network, congestion or parking availability due to the modest scale of the proposed use. The County Highway Authority has reviewed the proposal and raises no objection and overall the proposal is considered to have an acceptable transportation impact.

CONCLUSION

10. Overall the proposal is considered an acceptable form of development which would have an acceptable impact on the visual amenities of the area, on the amenities of neighbours and in transportation terms subject to the situation being reviewed in a year's time. The proposal therefore accords with the Development Plan and is recommended for approval subject to conditions, including a condition limiting the permission for a temporary period of one year.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Site visit photographs
2. Consultation responses
3. Representations
4. General Site Notice dated 22/03/2018

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RECOMMENDATION

PERMIT subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below:

AAA5158-P2-001 received by the LPA on 09/03/2018

AAA5158-P2-002 received by the LPA on 09/03/2018

AAA5158-P2-003 received by the LPA on 09/03/2018

ASB609-01 received by the LPA on 09/03/2018

ASB609-02 received by the LPA on 09/03/2018

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

2. This permission shall be for a limited period of 12 months from the date of this decision. On the expiry of 12 months from the date of this decision, the building hereby permitted shall be removed from the site in its entirety and the land restored to its former condition, including three parking spaces, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To review the condition of the building and the effect on the amenities of neighbours.

3. The building hereby permitted shall not be open to customers, nor any deliveries or collections carried out, outside the hours of 08:00am to 20:00pm Monday-Sunday unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the environment and amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012.

Informatives

1. The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of paragraph 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.