

Item No. 7

SCHEDULE A

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/10/04207/FULL
LOCATION	Land adjacent Arlesey Railway Station, Old Oak Close, Arlesey
PROPOSAL	Full: Provision of a new surface car park for 75 No. cars and 6 No. motorcycles. Provision of a new footway and parking on-street prevention measures. Provision of street lighting and cctv for off-street parking areas only.
PARISH	Arlesey
WARD	Stotfold & Arlesey
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllrs Dalgarno, Saunders, Street, Turner
CASE OFFICER	Godwin Eweka
DATE REGISTERED	22 November 2010
EXPIRY DATE	17 January 2011
APPLICANT	Network Rail
AGENT	Frankham Consultancy Group
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	The Head of Development Management considers it appropriated for Committee to determine the application given the recent approval of a 390 space car park on an adjacent site
RECOMMENDED DECISION	Full Application - Refused

Site Location:

The proposed development site lies west of Arlesey Railway Station platform and is currently vacant. To the east of the application site, there is an existing Network Rail car park across the Railway platform and residential properties in Old Oak Close, whilst to the west, a new car park is proposed. The application site lies partly within the County Wildlife Site (CWS) and partly in the floodplain and outside the Settlement Envelope.

The Application:

Provision of a surface car park for 75 no. cars and 6no. motorcycles. Provision of a new footway and parking on-street prevention measures. Provision of street lighting and CCTV for off-street areas only.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Policies (PPG & PPS)

PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development)
PPS9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation)
PPG13 (Transport)

Regional Spatial Strategy

East of England (May 2008)

Policy SS1(Achieving Sustainable Development)

Policy T14 (Parking)

Policy ENV3 (Biodiversity and Earth Heritage)

Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009)

DM3 (High Quality Development)

DM4 (Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes)

DM14 (Landscape and Woodland)

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Design Guide

N/A

Planning History

10/00908/FULL New surface car park for 75 cars, 6no. motorcycles and 3no. disabled bays. Provision of new footway and parking on-street prevention measures. Provision of street lighting for off-street car park areas and provision of CCTV. withdrawn 8th July 2010.

Representations: (Parish & Neighbours)

ArleseyTown Council	Objects to this proposal on the grounds of overdevelopment in terms of car parking provision.
Henlow Parish Council	No objection in principle to the creation of a car park. However, we wish for the following comments to be taken into consideration before the application is determined: a) Very unsure if the old medieval bridge is adequate for the additional traffic that would result by the formation of the new car park. b) The removal of the unofficial parking in the access road is welcomed, but the actual numbers at present parking on both sides of the access is far greater than the 'designated' 70 spaces shown on 'existing parking layout' plans and greater than the 75 spaces proposed. c) Very concerned about egress onto the A507 and suggest that the entrance/exit is improved. d) Request that parking for bicycles is provided close to the station within these proposals.

Neighbours One letter of objection has been received from a partner representative in the Glebe Meadows. The grounds of objection are that, there are no indications how traffic will be managed across the medieval bridge and to bring to your attention the need for unrestricted access for agricultural vehicles to the meadows alongside the station and the River Hiz.

Consultations/Publicity responses

Highways and Transport Division No objection in principle, subject to conditions.

Public Protection North No objection in principle, subject to conditions.
The past and current use of the adjacent land as a Railway may have resulted in land contamination. It is noted that there is a landscaped area on the eastern boundary of the proposed development immediately adjacent to the railway and other smaller areas. Notwithstanding the Phase One Environmental Review submitted with this application the attached conditions should apply.

Ecology No objection raised, but further comments have been addressed under biodiversity section in this report.

The Wildlife Trust Our comments are in relation to Henlow Park Woods County Wildlife Site, which covers part of the application area and River Ivel and Hiz County Wildlife, which is adjacent to it.

In addition to being an important habitat in its own right, the river provides an essential corridor for species to move along, connecting wildlife rich areas along its length. It is part of the Green Infrastructure Network identified in the Mid Bedfordshire Green Infrastructure Plan. Both PPS9 and the Central Bedfordshire: North Area Core strategy Policy DM15 " states the importance of CWS and seek to protect them.

It is concerning that the Ecological report still did not include in its desk based report information from Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre (BRMC), despite our earlier comments (dated 20/4/10).

The current parking situation in Arleseey is not ideal. It does cause The Wildlife Trust problems when trying to get vehicles into Glebe Meadows Nature Reserve for management purposes and therefore, we welcome the intention to improve it. The Nature Reserve is accessed from the field gate off the south western edge of the

existing disabled car park.

We encourage people to visit our reserves and those coming by car to Glebe Meadows currently park on the roadside adjacent to the reserve. We are concerned that a long stay parking regime in the proposed car park, which could be expensive and new parking restrictions on the road, will seriously deter visitors to the nature reserve and its surroundings. We would ask that a shorter stay option in the car park or a few short stay spaces on the road are created to allow people to use the car park to visit Glebe Meadows and other riverside walks.

Walking, Cycling
Programme Manager

& This application should be conditional on the provision of a cycle shelter with the capacity to accommodate 20 cycles. The preferred location is shown on the attached plan, which was discussed earlier this year with First Capital Connect. Network Rail should have had sight of this plan.

Environment Agency

We consider that planning permission should only be granted to the proposed development as submitted, subject to conditions. Without the stipulated conditions, the proposed development on this site poses an unacceptable risk to the environment and we would wish to object to the application.

Landscape Officer

Details are required regarding planting scheme proposed.

Far north east corner of the car park has sufficient space to include one good specimen tree. Trees typical of the area include Alder, either *alnus incana* or the slightly more exotic and slower growing *alnus incana Aurea*, which has excellent colour at all times of year.

There appears to be approx 0.5 metre between the fence and the parking area on the west boundary. If the fencing is proposed to be chain link or palisade (no detail(s) of this is shown on the plan). It would be feasible to plant a single row of native hedge planting within this strip which would benefit screening from the adjoining land to the west which includes fishing lakes and areas which at present have leisure access. It would also help to provide the "wildlife corridor" which is identified in the Ecology Report. This hedge could run from the north side of the bridge to the far northern corner and could be trimmed back as it matures on the car park side but would naturally grow through the palisade/wire fencing on the other side.

The south west corner has a 3 metre strip for planting. Again this is an area that could be utilised for tree planting as well as shrub under storey. It may be that the

CCTV will need moving 3 metres to the east to ensure tree planting does not interfere with camera view. What height are the cameras to be set at?

The two areas on the east edge identified for planting are under the parapet of the bridge and as such, are unlikely to receive much in the way of rainwater and have lower light conditions. If planting is carried out here, then careful plant selection will be needed for success.

Planting triangle on the east side. Again check height of CCTV to ensure that planting will not interfere with camera view.

We require details of all sizes, species, densities of plants and preparation of planting areas. After care and replacement of planting failures.

Archaeology

The proposed development site lies adjacent to Henlow Landscape Park (HER 6993). Whilst the park itself is archaeologically sensitive and represents a locally identified heritage asset, there is at present nothing recorded in the Historic Environment Record for the application area. As the proposed development is unlikely to have an impact on archaeological remains or on the significance of a heritage asset, no objection to this application on archaeological grounds.

Determining Issues

The main considerations of the application are:

1. Principle of Development
2. Impact of Development on Character and Appearance of the Area
3. Impact of the Development on Neighbouring Properties
4. Biodiversity Issues
5. Highway and Safety Implications

Considerations

1. Principle of Development

The proposed development is assessed against Policies DM3; DM4 and CS1 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

Policy CS1 of the Central Bedfordshire and Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009), states that Arlesey is categorised as a '*Minor Service Centre*'. As such, it is expected that the town will grow to bring forward large-scale new mixed-use development, including significant improvements in levels of service and local traffic conditions, together with substantial areas of new publicly accessible green infrastructure.

This site lies outside the Settlement Envelope, therefore Policy DM4 is relevant. In outside settlements, where the countryside needs to be protected from inappropriate development, only particular types of new development will be permitted in accordance with national planning guidance, such as (PPS7-Sustainable Development in Rural Areas). It is considered the proposed land use is not settlement related for example, community facilities or related to agriculture or considered to be part of the countryside.

Although the application site area extends onto a designated Wildlife Site, such as the Henlow Lakes, it is not considered the proposal would have any significant bearing on the application site, in terms of adverse impact on biodiversity issues and the Council's Ecologist has therefore, not raised any objection(s) in this regard.

In the Council's Development Management Committee (DMC) meeting of 21st July 2010, the Committee resolved to approve another application submitted for 390 car parking spaces (ref: CB/10/00938/FULL), following the officer recommendation to refuse the application. Although the application site also lies outside the *Settlement Envelope*, the Committee considered the development as having a justifying 'need' for such provision near the station south of the railway platform, due to the existing and prevailing car parking problems associated with unauthorised parking, which is causing undue danger to other road users and nearby residents. It is considered therefore, that additional car parking provision for 75 spaces is not required as the applicant (Network Rail), currently operates a similar provision to the east of the railway platform. As such, no identified 'need' has been made to the Council, even though, a need for additional car parking at Arlesey Station as identified in the '*Infrastructure Audit and Core Strategy*' is a material consideration, but this application has not demonstrated or considered such an additional requirement for more parking, taking account the proposal for 390 spaces already approved.

Based on the current situation and insufficient details submitted to support this application, together with a lack of justifiable need and credible mitigating measures on this site, it is considered this development cannot be supported therefore, the principle of development is unacceptable for reasons given above.

2. Impact of Development on Character and Appearance of the Area

The proposed development, by virtue of its position within the floodplain, is considered unacceptable as it is likely to result in adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, as the area needs to be protected from inappropriate development.

As the proposed site lies outside the settlement envelope of both Arlesey and Henlow, the proposed car park which would be sited along the corridor of the River Hiz, together with proposed flood lighting, may have visual adverse impact.

3. Impact of Development on Neighbouring Properties

The proposed development does not adjoin any residential properties. The nearest residential properties are situated in Old Oak Close, which is at a considerable distance away across the railway foot bridge to the east of the Station. As such, there would be no adverse impact on any residential property.

4. Biodiversity Issues

It is advised that the Council has, within its *duty to conserve biodiversity*, that it has exercised its functions under 'Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006', to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

It is advised that the updated phase 1 habitat survey submitted, is considered satisfactory as the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the nature conservation value of the site. The report identifies a number of enhancement opportunities and makes recommendations in section 4, these should be followed in particular the need for a 5m buffer zone and SUDs system to protect the riparian corridor. The development of a construction environmental management plan(CEMP), is proposed which would guide working practices on the site. Lighting should be directed away from the river corridor and lights buffered to ensure minimal light spillage.

5. Highway Safety Implications

It is advised the proposal is for the construction of a new car park to provide 75 spaces and 6 motorcycle spaces to be accessed through the existing access arrangements serving the car park for mobility impaired users. A provision of a footway along the south access road is also proposed.

The Council has in the recent past erected timber posts to prevent parking on the grass areas adjacent to the access road however, where no restrictions exist, parking takes place.

A parking assessment was carried out, the results of which are contained in the Traffic Impact Assessment. However, the total amount of existing spaces as shown on drawing No 223386/T/100, are inaccurate as the bays are too small to allow for a car to park and leave room to manoeuvre. In addition, no assessment was made of the existing car park to determine whether or not it is used to its full capacity. However, following a site visit on the 26th of April 2010 at 11:00 and parking on the access road was to the existing full capacity of 81 spaces. 43 free spaces were surveyed in the existing car park. The reason for this may be price and for eastbound traffic convenience as well. Accordingly and if the free spaces in the existing car park are ignored, the demand for additional parking at the west of the railway will be equal to the existing capacity on the access road which is 81 spaces.

In terms of traffic generation, none additional will be generated as the proposal will replace the existing on-street parking that will be restricted with the introduction of a footway along the length of the south side access road and parking restrictions as proposed and shown on drawing No 223386/C/100 Rev 01. Accordingly, the proposal on highway grounds, is satisfactory.

However, it needs to be borne in mind that there is another proposal for car parking for the station that proposes 390 spaces. If both proposals are to be approved, then the effect of the additional U turning movements at the A507/A6001 junction will add to those existing and therefore, each one of the proposal should include a full assessment of the exit junction onto the A507 and of the U turning movements that both proposals will generate.

It is important to note that the Highway Authority is currently working on a scheme to formalise the access road as a one way system to widen the pinch point on the southern slip road to accommodate caravans and commercial vehicles, to close the left out facility at the northern access, and with the exception of the bays on the north length of the access road to introduce parking restrictions along its length. No modifications to the southern access are included in the scheme. It is expected that the scheme is implemented in the current financial year.

Access to the new car park as stated before is through the access serving the car park for mobility impaired users which goes over the River Hiz on a bridge that is only wide to accommodate one way traffic movements and which may not be suitable to withstand heavy construction traffic. It is therefore, required to introduce priority signage and ways to give access to the heavy construction traffic.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission be refused.

Reasons for Refusal

The proposed development is considered unacceptable by virtue of its location outside the 'Settlement Envelope' and the adverse impact it would have on the character and appearance of the area and local landscape, due to visual intrusion, its scale and a lack of adequate justification for additional car parking, given the approval of a 390 space car park nearby. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policies DM3 and DM4 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

Notes to Applicant

DECISION

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