

**Report to District Development
Management Committee**

**Report Reference: DEV-006-2015/16.
Date of meeting: 10 June 2015.**



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Planning Application EPF/0294/15 – Council Depot site and Adjacent Land off Langston Road, Loughton IG10 3UE – Reserved matters application for the redevelopment of site for retail park with associated landscaping, car parking, ground remodelling works, retaining wall structures and two accesses off Langston Road (EPF/2580/10).

Responsible Officer: Jenny Cordell (01992 564481).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendation:

(1) That Members consider an Officer recommendation to GRANT planning permission subject to the further conditions below in addition to those imposed under outline permission EPF/2580/10 and the associated legal agreement:

- 1. The development hereby permitted will be completed strictly in accordance with the approved drawings nos:
8917 PL 001, 8917 PL 002 H, 8917 PL 003 A, 8917 PL 004 A, 8917 PL 005 C, 8917 PL 006 B, 8917 PL 007 B, 8917 PL 008 B, 8917 PL 009 A, 8917 PL 010 A, 8917 PL 020 A.**
- 2. The development shall be carried out and maintained thereafter in the materials identified in the application unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The permitted materials are identified on drawings 8917 PL 008 B and 8917 PL 005 C and comprise for the parking area: Brushed concrete road surface, Tarmacadam parking areas and concrete paving slabs in neutral finish. Materials permitted for the building comprise: Metal profile roof in light grey, flat panel cladding in silver and dark silver, terracotta blocks, dark grey panels.**
- 3. No development shall take place, including site clearance or other preparatory work, until full details of both hard and soft landscape works (including tree planting) and implementation programme (linked to the development schedule) have been submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall be carried out as approved. The hard landscaping details shall include, as appropriate, and in addition to details of existing features to be retained: proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other minor artefacts and structures, including signs and lighting and functional services above and below ground. The details of soft landscape works shall include plans for planting or establishment by any means and full written specifications and schedules of plants, including species, plant sizes and proposed numbers /densities where appropriate. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting or establishment of any tree, or shrub or plant, that tree, shrub, or plant or any**

replacement is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective another tree or shrub, or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 and any superseding act, no signage shall be erected on the application site beyond that approved as part of this application, without the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority.
5. Each unit hereby approved shall have no more than one fascia sign on each elevation. The size of each fascia sign for the units shall not exceed 11m in length by 3.3m in height, and the lettering and logos contained within shall not exceed 1.1m in height. The fascia signs shall not protrude above the ridge of the unit by more than 0.6m and the signage shall be downlit or internally illuminated only unless installed on the south-eastern elevation fronting the M11, where no illumination is acceptable.
6. The maximum luminance of the fascia signage granted consent by this Notice shall not exceed 600 candelas per square metre.
7. The maximum luminance of the totem signs granted consent by this Notice shall not exceed 1000 candelas per square metre.
8. Any signage erected facing the south-eastern elevation facing the M11 motorway shall at no time whatsoever be illuminated unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
9. Prior to the commencement of works the developer shall submit details of proposed lighting intended for the retail park, including position, direction of lighting and spread of any overspill lighting. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved particulars unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
10. Prior to the first occupation of the development the access arrangements, vehicle parking and turning areas as indicated on the approved plans shall be provided, hard surfaced, sealed and marked out. The access, parking and turning areas shall be retained in perpetuity for their intended purpose.

Planning Report:

Application Site

The application site comprises the Council owned Langston Road Depot, which includes a depot and MOT Testing Centre and has 3 large buildings and areas of hard standing and also the adjacent site, which has historically been referred to as the 'T11' site, due to a designation within the 1998 Local Plan, which identified this site as a lorry park – Policy T11 has since been deleted.

To the south of the application site, separating it from the M11, is an area of land which is in private ownership.

To the east of the site lies the Loughton Seedbed Centre – a development of small and medium sized commercial/industrial units and to the west a BMW garage.

The rear part of the site does lie within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The whole of the application site lies within area designated by the Local Plan for business and general industrial uses.

Description of Proposal

This application seeks reserved matters consent for the redevelopment of the site with a retail park which will have a maximum retail floor space of 12,915m² as secured by the legal agreement accompanying the S106 with the outline application.

The proposed retail park would comprise a linear building sub-divided into 15 units (12 large units and unit 7 is sub-divided into 3 smaller spaces). There are restrictions preventing provision of a pharmacy or post office.

Retailers within the park are intended to be predominantly A1 comparison retailers (*Comparison retailing is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods*), although the application proposes that up to 1,000m² of the gross internal floor area may be used for the purposes of A3 retail (e.g. restaurants, cafes). The submitted Retail Statement also indicates that the units may accommodate a small amount of Class A1 convenience goods sales (*Convenience retailing is the provision of everyday essential items, including food, drinks, newspapers/magazines and confectionery*).

The units provide a footprint of 8,818sqm, with the ability to provide a mezzanine floor above to create the additional space as permitted by the previous legal agreement.

The proposed buildings would be grey, sheet metal structures with metal profile hipped roofs, slightly staggered to provide variation and double height glazing to the front. The maximum height is 11.6m and the maximum length of footprint is 243m in length.

Relevant Planning History

Planning Applications - Council depot site

EPF/0730/08. Outline application for development of the site for B1 and/or B2 and/or B8 use. Approved 03/07/2008 but not implemented.

EPF/2580/10 – Outline for the redevelopment of the site for retail park with associated landscaping, car parking, ground remodelling works, retaining wall structures and two accesses off Langston Road – Approved subject to conditions and S106.

Planning Applications - T11 Site

EPF/1450/06. Outline application to develop the land for mixed B1, B2 or B8 uses. Approved 12/10/2006 but not implemented.

EPF/1884/08. Reserved matters application for proposed Data Centre. (Mixed B1/ B8) - Details of access, appearance, layout and scale (Revised application). Approved 22/12/2008 but not implemented..

Planning Policies

The following policies from the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations are relevant to this site,

CP1 - Achieving Sustainable Development Objectives
CP2 - Protecting the Quality of the Rural and Built Environment
CP3 - New Development
CP6 - Achieving Sustainable Urban Development Patterns
CP7 - Urban Form and Quality
CP8 - Sustainable Economic Development
CP9 – Sustainable Transport
GB2A - Development in the Green Belt
GB7A – Conspicuous Development
RP4 - Contaminated Land
E1 - Employment Areas
E2 - Redevelopment/ extension for business/general industrial uses
E3 - Warehousing (in respect of E2)
DBE1 - Design of new buildings
DBE2 - Effect on neighbouring properties
DBE3 - Design in Urban areas
DBE4 - Design in the Green Belt
DBE9 - Loss of amenity
LL10 - Adequacy of provision for landscape retention
LL11 - Landscaping schemes
ST1 - Location of development
ST2 - Accessibility of development
ST3 - Transport Assessments
ST4 - Road Safety
ST6 - Vehicle Parking
ST7 - New roads and extensions or improvements to existing roads
I1A - Planning Obligations

The provisions and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework are also relevant to this application.

Summary of Representations

146 neighbouring properties have been notified of this application and a site notice was erected at each entrance to the site.

The following responses have been received:

LRA LOCAL PLANS GROUP: We object to this application – we are very concerned about the proposed lighting of the signage facing the M11, which would be visually intrusive and out of keeping so close to Green Belt land, and would pose a distraction and hence a hazard to drivers on the M11, which is otherwise unlit on this stretch.

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL: The Committee was concerned by the impact of lorries making deliveries to the retail park on local roads, especially the A1168 (Chigwell Lane) and the A121 (Church Hill/Goldings Hill leading to the High Road and Epping New Road A104), as these were regularly congested. Members also commented that as one of the units had been split into three, there were now fifteen units proposed, which would increase the number of lorry deliveries to the site. The Committee asked for a condition to restrict delivery lorry routes so the site could only be accessed from the M11.

The Committee objected to the proposed signage facing the M11, which it considered was visually intrusive and out of keeping as it bordered green belt land, and could pose a danger to highway safety by distracting drivers.

Planning Issues

Matters reserved at outline were;

- i) Layout,
- ii) Scale,
- iii) Appearance, and
- iv) Landscaping.

This application therefore focusses on these aspects only and any new matters introduced as part of this application. In this instance, the only significant new issue arising relates to advertisements and illumination. The application is accompanied by more detail in this respect than would usually be expected, thus these issues have been considered in addition.

Matters have been raised by third parties regarding access and deliveries to the site. These matters have already been agreed at outline application stage, thus the Council can not revisit these issues. Whilst more units have been provided as unit 7 is now sub-divided into three, the gross area of retail space is unchanged from that previously approved and restricted in the S106 accompanying the outline application. Thus the number of deliveries to fill the floor space proposed should not differ as a result of the subdivision.

Layout

The site layout is broadly unchanged from that indicated at outline stage. The proposals provide for 360 parking spaces (of which 18 are disabled) and a further 18 motorcycles spaces and additional cycle storage all to the front of the site, before a linear retail building, subdivided into units and delivery access to the rear. The subdivision of unit 7 has resulted in the infilling of a central parking recess previously indicated, however the parking has been provided elsewhere onsite and the change is central to the site. The result is no significant impact to street scene or the wider scheme. Officers are satisfied that the layout accords with that which was anticipated and is acceptable in policy terms and functional for use.

Scale

The building height is 11.6m and the maximum length of footprint is 243m in length, this is as anticipated from the outline application. The scale of the building is not out of keeping in this location where larger commercial units are more common. The ground level here is at the lowest point before rising up towards the motorway and the proposed retail park would be viewed in the context of the Seedbed centre, the Higgin's building and other buildings along Langston Road.

The proposed scale of development raises no concerns in respect of street scene or impact to neighbouring commercial uses.

Appearance

The proposed development will visually appear akin to neighbouring commercial properties and those typically associated with a retail park. The materials palette is neutral making uses of grey tones and at ground floor concrete paving contrasting with terracotta blocks on the walls at ground level. The proposed materials palette coupled with the building articulation are sufficient to provide a functional and as much as possible, an attractive façade. Officers are satisfied that the elevational treatment, coupled with the set back from the highway and the rising ground level behind are sufficient to ensure the proposals have no adverse impact on the street scene or the wider character of the area.

Advertisements and fascia signage are incorporated in the proposal, making clear the overall appearance of the building at this early stage as oppose to further piecemeal applications

later. This is to be commended. This also allows signage to be more uniform across the site, contributing to the overall appearance and ensures flexibility for future leases, with units able to be occupied and trading without waiting for advertisement consent as long as fascia adverts remain as outlined in this application.

A number of concerns have been raised regarding advertisements. As such a number of conditions have been incorporated. In particular there is concern about illuminated signage facing the M11. As a result of the issues raised, Officers have recommended this signage is not illuminated and secured this by condition. Further conditions regarding site illumination overall have also been imposed.

Landscaping

The Council's landscaping officer has been consulted on this application and has requested a condition regarding hard and soft landscaping. Details available at this stage are sufficient to indicate landscaping is possible, but information supplied regarding landscape detailing conflicts between drawings and fails to be accompanied by an implementation programme linked to the development schedule. Thus more landscaping information is still required.

Retail areas typically have limited planting and landscaping due to their functional nature, but imposition of the landscaping condition will ensure that any provision made is meaningful and effective in a space that can be enhanced by landscaping.

Conclusion

In light of the above appraisal, the reserved details submitted are considered to reflect those agreed at outline application stage. The design, appearance, scale and landscaping information indicates the retail park can be successfully implemented without harm to the character and appearance of the area. The development accords with the relevant development plan objectives and approval is recommended.