

Memo

From: Darren Cook, Transport Development Control Floor 1 North Rear Civic Offices Bridge Street Reading RG1 2LU
To: Susanna Bedford 0118 9372023 susanna.bedford@reading.gov.uk
Date: 31st January 2017
Re: Consultation on Planning Application

Application Number: 162144

Application Type: Pre Application Enquiry

Address: BBC Caversham Park Peppard Road Caversham Reading RG4 8TZ

Proposal: Partial demolition of existing buildings, renovation and conservation of listed Caversham House (to facilitate change of use to C3 dwellinghouse use) and development of new residential (C3 use class) units.

Transport Comments

The proposal is to partially demolish the post war buildings, restore and change the use of the Grade II Listed stately home to residential use and develop new residential dwellings and a care home on parcels of land around the site. In total the proposal will comprise approximately 220 residential dwellings, of which 47 would be provided in the redeveloped stately home. In addition to this 45 retirement apartments are proposed adjacent to the main building.

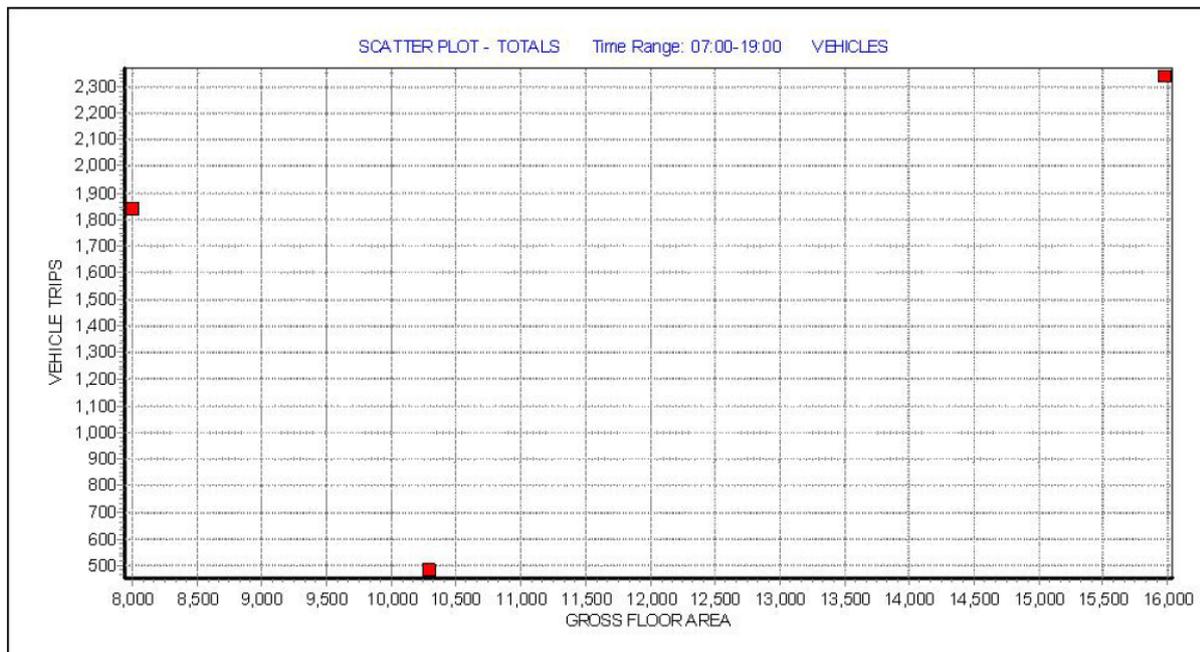
A Transport Statement (TS) has been submitted to accompany this proposal and my comments are as follows:

Trip Generation

The existing site is currently operating at a reduced level, with the site previously offering round the clock services and employing in the region of 800 staff. However it should be noted that if the site were utilized as a standard B1 office it could generate more intensive trip generation to and from the site.

In order to provide a representative assessment of the trip generation that the existing B1 office use at the site could generate, trip rates have been derived from the latest available TRICS database and I am happy with this process.

I have reviewed the parameters selected by the applicant and can confirm that they are acceptable. However, of the sites that have been selected I have concerns regarding two of them as they are provided with in excess of double the parking provision than that of the application site. This will result in inflated trip rates for the existing use and are therefore not comparable. This is highlighted by the scatter plot below.



In addition it is noted from Table 5.2 of the TS (below) that these trip rates propose an AM arrival rate of 273 vehicles and a PM departure rate of 268 vehicles, but the site only caters for 250 car parking spaces in total. Given the proposed number of trips and that all are to be undertaken in the peak hours would identify that the trip rates are inaccurate.

Table 5.2: Office Vehicular Trip Rates (per 100sqm) and Trip Generation (12,754sqm)

| | AM Peak (08:00-09:00) | | | PM Peak (17:00-18:00) | | | 12 hour (07:00-19:00) | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|-------|-----------------------|----------|-------|-----------------------|----------|--------|
| | Inbound | Outbound | Total | Inbound | Outbound | Total | Inbound | Outbound | Total |
| Trip Rates (per 100sqm) | 2.139 | 0.230 | 2.369 | 0.213 | 2.098 | 2.311 | 6.845 | 6.757 | 13.602 |
| Trip Generation (12,754sqm) | 273 | 29 | 302 | 27 | 268 | 295 | 873 | 862 | 1,735 |

Given that these two sites are unacceptable I am happy that the remaining site is used SC-02-A-17 to calculate the trips generated by the existing site and these illustrated in the table below.

| | AM Peak (8am-9am) | | | PM Peak (5pm-6pm) | | | 12 Hour (7am-7pm) | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------|-------------------|----------|-------|-------------------|----------|-------|
| | Inbound | Outbound | Total | Inbound | Outbound | Total | Inbound | Outbound | Total |
| Trip rates per 100m² | 0.602 | 0.049 | 0.651 | 0.029 | 0.631 | 0.660 | 2.351 | 2.352 | 4.703 |
| Trip Generation (12,754m²) | 77 | 6 | 83 | 4 | 80 | 84 | 300 | 300 | 600 |

I have also reviewed the trip rates for the proposed residential and this has been broken down into residential housing and retirement units. My comments on these are as follows:

Although some of the sites selected for the residential trip rates I am not fully agreeable with I have undertaken my own assessment and the trip rates I have calculated are extremely similar I am therefore happy that they are acceptable. A table illustrating the residential trip generation is below:

| | AM Peak (8am-9am) | | | PM Peak (5pm-6pm) | | | 12 Hour (7am-7pm) | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|-------|-------------------|----------|-------|-------------------|----------|-------|
| | Inbound | Outbound | Total | Inbound | Outbound | Total | Inbound | Outbound | Total |
| Trip rates per 100m ² | 0.112 | 0.337 | 0.449 | 0.270 | 0.129 | 0.399 | 1.781 | 1.867 | 3.648 |
| Trip Generation (220 residential units) | 25 | 74 | 99 | 59 | 28 | 87 | 392 | 411 | 803 |

Trip rates have been assessed for the retirement flats however the parking allocation for the vast majority of the selected retirement flats within the proposed TRICS Assessment is 0.5 spaces per unit approx., this is below the car parking standard stipulated within the Council's Parking SPD. It is therefore likely that the proposed retirement units could generate additional vehicle movements than those stipulated. Clarity on parking allocation for these units would therefore need to be confirmed prior to the agreement of any trip rates for this use.

It should also be noted that the majority of sites selected are not solely retirement units and TRICS identifies many of them as a Continued Care Retirement Community (CCRC). The sites include both residential (retirement) dwellings and continued care elements. Again, before I am able to agree any trip rates for this particular use I will need further clarity on what facilities will be provided to residents and any age restrictions that would apply.

Junction Assessments

The TS currently stipulates that the development would result in fewer trips to the application site and therefore no further assessment would have been required. However, as identified within my assessment the proposal would result in an increase in trips without the retirement flats being included. Until the trip rates are agreed for all uses I am unable to identify what further assessments may be required.

Access

Vehicular access arrangements are yet to be finalised, however the TS states that it is envisaged that approximately 184 of the dwellings, including those in the restored stately home, together with the 45 retirement apartments would be accessed off the existing vehicular access to the site off Caversham Park Drive, via Peppard Road.

This access does not appear to be sufficient in width and no drawings have been provided to confirm the width. If the existing access is less than a minimum of 4.8m in width to accommodate the two-way movement of a car and a refuse vehicle then we could only accept a development that generates a similar level of traffic generation to the existing use. This would need to be clarified if a full application is submitted.

At a minimum, pedestrian and cycle access would be taken via the existing site access at Caversham Park Drive and the proposed new access junction onto Peppard Road.

It has also been stressed within the TS that the masterplan for the proposed development will:

'Comply with best practice and be designed to ensure that priority is provided to pedestrian and cycle movements, minimising any potential conflicts with other traffic. The internal road network of the development will be designed to meet common desire lines and reduce the distances that pedestrians need to travel to access the existing off-site pedestrian and cycle links. The pedestrian and cycle routes within the development

will connect with existing facilities to ensure a comprehensive level of sustainability is achieved providing users of the site with a choice of modes of access.'

It is noted that although the site access is located within 400m and 600m of two separate bus routes some of the properties will have considerably further to walk to access these facilities. The furthest houses will be 835m from the south and northbound bus stops on Buckingham Drive and 980m from the east and west bound bus stops on Lowfield Road.

Admittedly there is little that could be done to reduce the walking distance to the bus stops on Buckingham Drive permeability could be provided for pedestrians and cyclists to access the bus facilities and this would also improve links to the Milestone Centre located to the northeast of the site on the opposite side of the carriageway of Lowfield Road.

The Milestone Center is a community facility that provides a nursery, playground, community events etc. as well as there being a building occupied by community squash court club.

This permeability would help promote alternative modes reducing car journeys to and from the site and would comply with the NPPF.

The TS has referred to The Institute of Highways and Transportation's (IHT's) guidance, Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot (2000) and provided a table identifying suggested acceptable walking distances specified within the document. I would however refer to the following points from the same document below:

3.23. Pedestrian desire lines (current and post-development) should be identified, between homes and key destinations, such as local shops, bus stops and schools. Existing movement patterns, where applicable, may give a good indication of desire lines but some may be obstructed by barriers. Paths worn across grass are good clues. These should then be translated into routes, whilst minimising walking distances and eliminating or reducing any deterrents. The success of this will vary depending on whether the site is a green field, or already partially developed hence possibly frustrating some desire lines.

4.11. For every three journeys made entirely on foot, one journey is made partly on foot, usually a combination of bus and walk (DETR, 1998). It is vital, therefore, that walking is seen as an integral part of the total transport system and that walking and other modes are planned and designed in an integrated way. Whilst total pedestrianisation may seem the ideal option for pedestrians, links to public transport, car parks, taxis and cycle parking will often be vital.

Permeability to the bus stops on Lowfield Road would therefore also comply with this guidance.

The remaining 36 units would be accessed via a new access junction onto Peppard Road between Caversham Park Drive and the Archive Centre. In principle I am happy that this is acceptable subject to the access having visibility of 2.4m x 43m in both directions and it is in the form of a bellmouth access 4.8m in width and with 4m radii. The internal network should be provided with 2m footways on both sides of the carriageway.

Parking

The exact car parking provision has not been stipulated but the TS states that the Councils parking standards will be complied with. I would stress that the Councils residential parking standards are required standards not maximums.

The National Planning Practice Guidance, March 2014 (NPPG) has shifted the requirements away from parking restraint and states “Maximum parking standards can lead to poor quality development and congested streets, local planning authorities should seek to ensure parking provision is appropriate to the needs of the development and not reduced below a level that could be considered reasonable.” This is especially the case for origin destinations such as a residential developments and the latest evidence clearly shows that a reduction in residential parking does not result in reduced car ownership but leads to various parking issues. The latest research document published in February 2014 by the Housing Minister at Westminster “Space to park” recommends 1 space per 1/2 bed dwelling, 2 spaces per 3/4 bed dwelling with at least a 20% provision for visitor parking on street. It is the government’s attention that this guidance should be followed. The document also clearly details poor design which has implications for safety such as driveways which are not long enough to accommodate a vehicle or roads which are too narrow to allow service vehicles though if vehicles are parked, both of which lead to footways being obstructed by parked vehicles. I would also be happy for this guidance to be used to address the proposed parking provision and the document can be found on the web at this address <http://www.spacetopark.org/>.

Cycle parking would also need to be provided in accordance with the Councils adopted standards.

General Comments

Refuse collection details should be provided with any full application and this should include tracking diagrams to ensure a refuse vehicle can enter and exit in forward gear.

If a full application is submitted the above points should be addressed.

Darren Cook
Transport Development Control Manager