
SUBJECT DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REPORTS ITEM 8
REPORT OF Head of Planning & Building Control

APPLICATION NO.	P08/E0158
APPLICATION TYPE	Full
REGISTERED	13.02.2008
PARISH	Henley-on-Thames
WARD MEMBERS	Ms Joan Bland Miss Lorraine Hillier
APPLICANT	M Makower & Co Ltd
SITE	118 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames
PROPOSALS	Construction of new warehouse building
AMENDMENTS	One
GRID REFERENCE	475268/181758
OFFICER	Mr T Wyatt

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is referred to Committee as the Officer's recommendation conflicts with the views of the Town Council.
- 1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is located to the rear (north) of 118 Greys Road, which is used for offices and storage. The site is a small area of open land, which is nominally used for car parking associated with 118 Greys Road and is sandwiched between existing residential properties in Sherwood Gardens to the east and King James Way to the west. The surrounding area is dominated by residential development although a small shopping area exists immediately to the south of 118 Greys Road at the junction of King James Way and Greys Road.
- 1.3 This application represents a revised scheme for the development further to the withdrawal of a previous application, P07/E1558.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks permission for the erection of a warehouse building that would measure 7.5 metres in width, 20 metres in length and 3.5 metres in height with the eaves level height being 2.5 metres. The external walls and roof of the building would consist of profiled metal sheeting. The building would be used as a warehouse facility for the storage of textiles in connection with the applicant's business. The storage of textiles currently takes place lawfully within the first floor of the adjacent building, 118 Greys Road. The relocation of the textiles to the new building would allow the first floor to again be used for office space.
- 2.2 Compared to the previously withdrawn application, the current scheme has been reduced in length by 5 metres and reduced in width by 0.5 metres allowing the building to be moved away from the boundary with the residential properties in Sherwood Gardens by this distance to one metre overall. The vehicular access

arrangements for the building would be the same as currently exist in respect of the wider site.

2.3 A copy of the proposed plans is **attached** as Appendix B whilst a copy of the plans relating to the previously withdrawn application, P07/E1558 is **attached** at Appendix C.

3.0 **CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Henley-on-Thames Town Council** – The application should be refused for being ‘over intensive, out of keeping, unneighbourly and poor design’.

3.2 **Henley Society** – Objects due to the proposal being unneighbourly and due to restricting vehicle movements on the site.

3.3 **OCC Highways** – No objections subject to conditions.

3.4 **Monson (Drainage Consultants)** – Details of surface water drainage need to be agreed prior to development commencing.

3.5 **Forestry Officer** – Concerns are expressed regarding the impact of the development on adjacent trees.

3.6 **Neighbours** – Ten letters of objection received:

- inappropriate development
- impact on neighbouring amenity through additional noise and general disturbance
- overbearing and overshadowing effects
- increase in traffic
- impact on highway safety
- design and materials not in keeping with the surrounding built form
- impact on adjacent trees
- impact on views

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 P07/E1558 - New warehouse building. Withdrawn prior to determination on 23 January 2008.

4.2 P00/S0007 - Extension to ground and first floor. Move existing fire escape spiral stair to new position. Planning Permission granted on 22 February 2000.

4.3 P96/S0012 - The continued use as offices, warehouse and ancillary accommodation without complying with condition 6 of planning permission P87/S0464. Planning Permission granted on 16 March 1998.

4.4 P87/S0464 - Scheme C. Extension to existing premises to provide additional space. Improvements to access from King James Way. Planning Permission granted 09 December 1987.

5.0 **POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

5.1 Adopted Structure Plan 2016 Policies:

- G1 – General Policies for Development
- G2 – Improving the Quality and Design of Development
- T8 – Development Proposals
- H3 – Design, Quality and Density of Housing Development
- E1 – Provision for Employment Development

- 5.2 Policies of the Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP):
- G1 – General Restraint and Sustainable Development
 - G2 – Protection and Enhancement of the Environment
 - G6 – Promoting Good Design
 - C9 – Landscape Features
 - D1 – Good Design and Local Distinctiveness
 - D2 – Vehicle and Bicycle Parking
 - D3 – Plot Coverage and Garden Areas
 - D8 – Energy, Water and Materials Efficient Design
 - E2 – Employment in Henley, Thame and Wallingford
 - E4 & E5 – General Employment Policies
 - T1 & T2 – Transport Requirements for New Developments
- 5.3 Government Guidance:
- PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
 - PPG4 – Industrial, Commercial Development & Small Firms
- 5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance
- South Oxfordshire Design Guide December 2000 (SODG)
- 6.0 **PLANNING ISSUES**
- 6.1 The planning issues that are relevant to this application are:
1. The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
 2. The impact on neighbouring amenity.
 3. The impact on trees
 4. Highway considerations

The Impact of the Development on the Character and Appearance of the Surrounding Area

- 6.2 The site for the proposed building lies in the north eastern corner of the land associated with 118 Greys Road. The main building is a substantial 2 storey red brick, flint and tiled development that has been heavily extended. The building dominates the immediate street scene in King James Way but is relatively unobtrusive from Greys Road due to the screening effects of the parade of shops located at the junction of King James Way and Greys Road.
- 6.3 The proposed new building would be sited approximately 70 metres from Greys Road and would be screened from public views from this road by the existing development on the site. The building would be sited some 30 metres from King James Way and would again largely be screened from public view by existing two storey residential development. Therefore, there would be limited public views of the development from the surrounding public highways and the proposal would not be prominent in the street scene. Views of the development would be largely confined to private views from existing residential properties in King James Way and Sherwood Gardens.
- 6.4 The design of the building is clearly functional in terms of its proposed use as a warehouse facility. The proposed materials are also a reflection of this use and are not in keeping with the facing materials of the surrounding development, including the main building at 118 Greys Road. However, due to the limited visual impact of the proposal, and the nature of the proposed use, it is not considered that the facing materials would cause detriment to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area.

- 6.5 The height of the building is very modest in relation to much of the surrounding development, and this would further limit the visual impact of the development and would ensure that it would be clearly subservient to the height of adjacent buildings and the considerable bulk and massing of the main building at 118 Greys Road.

The Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

- 6.6 The building would be sited on a narrow strip of unused land sandwiched between existing flats in King James Way and sheltered retirement housing in Sherwood Gardens. Both the flats and the retirement housing have relatively small gardens and the building would be between 5 and 10 metres away from the rear elevations of the closest residential properties.
- 6.7 The site would be separated from the boundary with Sherwood Gardens by a 2 metre high timber boarded fence. A further one metre gap would exist between the boundary and the side elevation of the building. The eaves level of the building would be 0.5 metres above the fenceline with the ridge extending a further one metre in height. The building would be highly prominent from Sherwood Gardens and due to the length of the building (20 metres) along the boundary, the building would overlap the rear elevations of three of the adjacent bungalows. However, although the building would be clearly visible in views from the rear of the bungalows, it is not considered that the development would result in significant harm to the occupiers of the bungalows. This is because of the modest height of the development and the one metre gap between the development and the boundary with Sherwood Gardens. The eaves would only be 0.5 metres above the fenceline whilst the ridge would be sited just under 5 metres from the boundary. Therefore, the highest part of the building, which has been kept as low as possible due to the shallow pitch of the roof, would be a reasonable distance from the neighbouring residential properties. This would ensure that the overbearing and overshadowing effects of the development would be kept to a minimum.
- 6.8 The building would be between 0.6 and 1.7 metres from the boundary with the adjacent flats in King James Way. These properties have relatively deep rear gardens of between 8.5 and 14 metres and as a result the proposed development would not be excessively overbearing or cause significant overshadowing of the internal accommodation areas of the adjacent properties. The building would again affect the outlook from the flats but having regard to its modest height it is not considered that significant harm would be caused to the adjacent occupiers.
- 6.9 It is proposed to use the building for the storage/distribution of fabrics. This use will result in traffic movements in the environs of the building, however, such warehousing and commercial office use is already taking place from the main building and the site of the proposed building includes part of the car park associated with the existing building. Therefore, traffic movements are already taking place in the area of the proposed development, and it is not considered that the proposal would result in a material increase in the type or number of traffic movements associated with the site.
- 6.10 There are 5 existing employees associated with the use, which is already taking place on the site. The proposal would maintain this employment level on the site and therefore, the proposal would have a neutral effect in relation to on-site activities associated with the business. The applicant has stated that the amount of warehousing/distribution on the site would remain as per the current situation with the displaced warehousing in the main building reverting back to an office use.
- 6.11 Therefore, the overall activity in relation to the operation of the storage/distribution use and the associated commercial vehicles would remain as existing. However, the

proposed development would move the locus of some of the warehousing activities to the area of the new building. This has the potential to impact on neighbouring residents to a greater degree due to the proximity of the development to residential property. However, having regard to the existing lawful use of the site and the associated commercial activities, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a material increase in noise and general disturbance to neighbouring residents.

- 6.12 The internal floor area of the building is relatively modest and the activity associated with the small floor area and the proposed use of the building for fabric storage is unlikely to generate a significant amount of activity or noise from within the building. The main impact will therefore be from external noise associated with traffic movements. The Environmental Health Officer has commented on the application, and provided that conditions to limit the hours of use of the warehouse are imposed on any planning permission there are no objections to the development in terms of noise pollution.

The Impact on Trees

- 6.13 There are very few trees within the application site, and there are no trees within the footprint of the proposed building. However, there are a small number of trees within close proximity to the proposed development. The Council's Forestry Officer is concerned about the impact of the development on the adjacent trees, particularly in relation to a silver maple within the garden area of the adjacent flats to the west, 2/2a King James Way. Special construction measures would need to be employed within the root protection areas of the adjacent trees, and this can be secured by condition as well as generic tree protection measures.

Highway Considerations

- 6.14 The development would result in the loss of 6 parking spaces leading to a total number of 38 spaces remaining on the site. The applicant has provided details of existing parking levels, which amount to approximately 25 cars on a typical day. Therefore, the loss of the parking spaces should not result in insufficient parking provision. The applicant has also advised that traffic movements associated with the warehousing use of the site are not anticipated to increase as the proposed use of the development is already occurring on the site. The displaced warehousing would revert to office use, which the applicant has advised would generate an additional 5 cars per day. There would be available parking space for this use.
- 6.15 In light of the above considerations the Highway Authority has raised no objections to the proposal subject to the maintenance of the visibility splays at the site's vehicular access off King James Way.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application proposal is generally in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and national planning policy, as the proposal would not cause any significant harm to the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area, to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, and would not be prejudicial to highway safety or the long term sustainability of adjacent trees.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That planning permission be granted, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Commencement within 3 years**
- 2. Samples of external facing materials**
- 3. No additional windows in west and east elevations**
- 4. Tree protection details to be submitted and approved prior to development commencing**
- 5. Arboricultural method statement for works within root protection areas to be submitted to and approved prior to development commencing**
- 6. Rooflights shall be fixed shut**
- 7. Details of fencing to be submitted and approved prior to development commencing**
- 8. Class B8 use only, no permitted change to Class B1**
- 9. Restricted hours of use**
- 10. Restricted hours of deliveries/collections**
- 11. Details of any external lighting to be submitted and approved in writing prior to development commencing**
- 12. Details of surface water drainage to be submitted and approved prior to development commencing.**

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