

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: West/Centre Area **Ward:** Micklegate
Date: 19 June 2008 **Parish:** Micklegate Planning Panel

Reference: 07/01726/FUL
Application at: 25 George Hudson Street York YO1 6JL
For: Variation of condition 6 of planning permission 04/02949/FUL to allow 10 ground floor car parking spaces to be used as secure contract parking (existing conditions requires short term parking only) (re-submission)
By: Oakgate (Newcastle) Ltd
Application Type: Full Application
Target Date: 14 September 2007

1.0 PROPOSAL

Application Site

1.1 This application concerns the ground floor car park at George Hudson Street/Tanner Row. The first floor and above levels of the car park are used as a public car park. The ground floor level has a separate access and is currently used for servicing and deliveries, it is closed (via a security shutter) otherwise, due to issues over the security of the ground floor units which front George Hudson Street. We are advised that the car park presently holds Safer Car Park Status, a scheme operated/awarded by the police. The car park would not be able to meet this standard were the ground floor space be opened to the public.

Proposal

1.2 Condition 6 of the approved application for the refurbishment of the car park (approved 6.8.04, reference 04/02949/FUL) asked that the 32 car parking spaces at ground floor were used for short stay only (no more than 5 hours), to prevent the creation of long stay commuter parking in the city centre.

1.3 It is asked by the applications that 10 spaces in the ground floor car park are made available for staff car parking. White Young Green (WYG) are set to occupy unit 5 of the building (the unit that fronts Tanner Row) and have asked for 10 spaces to be used for unrestricted vehicle parking. The business will occupy 851.6 sq m office space and employ around 100 staff.

Relevant planning history

1.4 A previous application (07/00646/FUL) to use all of the 32 car parking spaces at ground floor level for staff parking for Northern Rail, was refused under delegated powers in April 2007. Refusal was on two grounds 1) that it would add to private commuter parking in the city centre, which is contrary to the Local Plan and 2) that it would be contrary to Governments national objectives, as set out in PPG13: Transport, which seeks to promote more sustainable transport and reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

1.5 The application is brought to committee at the request of Councillor Merrett whom advises that the proposed use of the car park for long stay parking is contrary to council policy.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

Areas of Archaeological Interest City Centre Area 0006
Conservation Area Central Historic Core 0038
City Boundary York City Boundary 0001
DC Area Teams Central Area 0002
Floodzone 2 Flood Zone 2 CONF
Listed Buildings Multiple (Spatial)

2.2 Policies:

CYT16 Long stay car parks

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

Highway Network Management

3.1 It is our understanding that (Local Plan) policy TP16 "Long Stay Car Parking" is still current, however, we are prepared to consider a departure from the policy provided it can be justified. It is noted in this instance that although the number of parking spaces only represents 10% of the workforce priority must be given to compliance with DDA requirements and provision for "servicing vehicles" operating from/responding from the offices as a base.

3.2 The submission should be reinforced with a Company Travel Plan which details measures to be taken by the applicant to reduce the reliance on the motor car as the prime mode of travel to/from work. Such measures could include: -

- encouraging cycling by providing secure, covered cycle storage facilities
- subsidised public transport - the site is very convenient for 3 of 5 current Park + Ride routes, many other local and distant bus services and the railway station
- car sharing schemes.

3.3 The Travel Plan should be robust, workable and enforceable but no guarantees are offered as to its acceptability.

Planning Panel

3.4 No response.

Publicity

3.5 The application was publicised by site notice and letters of neighbour notification. The deadline for comments was 24.8.07. No representations received.

4.0 APPRAISAL

4.1 Key issues

- Use of car park for staff car parking within city centre
- Conservation area impact

4.2 Relevant policies of the Local Plan

- T16 seeks to reduce the level of private commuter parking spaces in or adjacent to the city centre. This shall occur through negotiation as proposals come forward. A main objective of the Local Plan is to reduce peak hour car trips, which cause congestion and environmental pollution. Preferably long stay spaces, when in demand, shall be accommodated on park and ride sites.

4.3 The ground floor car park area is presently underused space. It is not utilised as retail/commercial space due to lack of demand; the applicants have struggled to let the units at ground floor level. At present the ground floor area is used for the servicing and deliveries for the Red Chilli restaurant, previously also for the Organic Supermarket, which is now closed. The space is also available for cycle parking.

4.4 The amount of car parking deemed appropriate is established in appendix E of the Local Plan. For business uses in the city centre 1 space per 45 sq m is set as the maximum allowed. This proposal involves 852 sq m, which equates to a maximum of 19 spaces. The applicant is only requesting the use of 10 spaces, which is a reasonable amount. A certain amount of space is required for operational vehicles, which carry significant amounts of safety and technical equipment and are required to be available to respond to call outs, which could be emergencies and at infrequent times. The travel plan submitted by White Young Green states that registered car sharers will also be allocated some of the car parking spaces.

4.5 The company moving to the premises have a travel plan which seeks to limit private vehicle travel. In addition to the benefit of the site location (to public transport), the travel plan promotes cycling through providing cycle spaces and shower facilities onsite, a business subscription to the whizzGO car club will be considered, and car-sharing shall be actively promoted.

4.6 The site is within the conservation area. The application does not contain any proposals that would affect the conservation area.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Although the proposal involves allowing a limited amount of commuter parking in the city centre, it is considered this is justified. The amount of spaces required is reasonable for the size of office space it will provide for. The prospective tenants (WYG) have also advised that the spaces will predominantly be allocated to essential operational vehicles and commuters who are registered car sharers.

5.2 This proposal is significantly different for the previous application at the site which sought to use 32 spaces in the ground floor car park for commuter parking, which was deemed to be unjustified and contrary to policies which seek to deter private car use (see paragraph 1.4). This proposal would not encourage private car use and through the travel plan, which shall be subject to review, WYG would be taking a pro-active role in reducing private car dependency.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions

1 PLANS2 Apprvd plans and other submitted details - Ground floor plan PL400 K received 20.7.07

2 The development hereby permitted shall comply with the measures set out in the White Young Green Travel Plan, dated 21.11. In particular 2.4 which advises there will be (only) 10 car parking spaces available, M5 which relates to the provision of showers and changing facilities for cyclists, and M20 which advises that of the 10 permitted car parking spaces preference shall be given to members of the car share scheme.

The travel plan shall be reviewed and updated accordingly, as specified in the travel plan.

Reason: to promote sustainable modes of transport.

3 No more than ten of the spaces in the ground floor car park shall be made available for long term car parking.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to discourage private commuter travel which is contrary to national and local policy to promote sustainable modes of transport.

4 The additional car parking spaces at ground floor level shall be for short stay purposes only, with a maximum permitted stay of 5 hours at any one time.

Reason: In order to prevent the creation of additional long stay commuter parking within the city centre, in accordance with Policy T16 of the City of York Deposit Draft Local Plan.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal, subject to the conditions listed above, would not cause undue harm to interests of acknowledged importance, with particular reference to the conservation area and national and local initiatives to reduce private car travel and promote other means of more sustainable transport. As such the proposal complies with Policy T14 of the City of York Local Plan Deposit Draft.

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