

**PLANNING - PRE-APPLICATION DEVELOPER PRESENTATION**

16 March 2011  
10am

**Attendees:**

Cllrs Brown, Blair, Dixon, Nimmo-Smith, Tunnacliffe, Walker, Tunnacliffe and Walker

**Officers:**

Peter Carter - Principal Development Control Manager  
Tony Collins – Senior Planning Officer  
Sophie Pain – Planning Officer

<b>FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL</b>
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**1 APOLOGIES**

None

**2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None

**3 PRE-APPLICATION BRIEFING BY THE DEVELOPER –  
Travis Perkins Depot, Devonshire Road**

**Presenters:**

Heini van Niekerk – Grafik Architecture  
Mark Mann – Savills  
Jim Adams - Travis Perkins  
Stuart Bailey – Explore Living  
Chris Abel – Explore Living  
Tim Smith – Structa  
Heulwen Livesey – Hodgson Group  
Mark Cooper – MCA  
Matt Lee – Liz Lake

The proposal to downsize the existing Travis Perkins depot from 3 acres to approx 1 acre including the demolition of existing buildings. It is proposed to redevelop the remaining 2 acres with a residential development of 43 units (1&2 bed apartments and 2&3 bed houses) with a central public open space and associated roads and parking.

Travis Perkins would like to move their depot to a more commercial site on the edge of the city, but have not as yet found a suitable location. The scale and colour of the new depot will be more in keeping with the area, with the HGV traffic significantly reduced. The site has been designated for housing within the 2006 Local Plan and abuts the Mill Road & St Matthews Conservation Area.

Member questions:

Cllr Walker described the scheme as an interesting design and enquired as to how much affordable housing would be provided.

This would be subject to a viability assessment according to Mark Mann. The design team have so far not run the figures regarding the number of units and there would need to be a dialogue with the City Council's Housing officers to establish local need.

Cllr Blair stressed that the requirement was clearly set as 40% affordable units and that the housing mix would need to accord with the SPD. Too often according to Cllr Blair, affordable housing is treated as an after-thought.

Heini van Niekerk described the proposed total of 43 units in terms of the space provided, as more generous than the density stipulated by policy.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith enquired as to any liability aspects relating to the block of flats built at such close proximity of the railway line. (Greater detail was then shown in the form of floor plans with access to the flats from the railway side and access to the open space via the stair tower, with views from the terraces.)

Cllr Tunnacliffe enquired as to the proposed parking provision as Devonshire Road is seen as an area with heavy cycle usage and limited parking.

(Parking would be on a 1:1 basis with no visitor parking.)

Cllr Walker enquired as to the line of the proposed future 'Chisholm Trail' cycle route and the reason behind bringing the route through the site when it was originally intended to follow the railway line.

According to Mark Mann, the County Council following discussions, had requested the development be set back. The new proposed route will prevent a significant portion of land from being sterilised.

Cllr Tunnacliffe asked as to the spaciousness of the rear elevation and whether residents would feel a sense of confinement so close to the railway fence.

According to Heini van Niekerk, the circulation core provides a wide access and coloured panels have been added as a simple feature as part of the journey. (The distance between the building and railway boundary is 2.5-2.7meters but may appear closer from the balconies.) Mark Mann reminded all that as this area is in fact service track and not the main railway line, rail traffic would not be as busy as initially envisioned.

Cllr Dixon enquired as to the installation of lifts and provision of cycle parking.

There are currently no lifts provided, but according to Heini van Niekerk these could be catered for within the circulation cores. Cycle parking is provided at ground floor level, with garages considered wide enough to store both cars and bicycles. Refuse storage has been looked at again following a recent public meeting.

Cllr Walker enquired as to the public open space and whether there would be any issues with the maintenance of an area that would be both private but publicly accessible.

There would be no problem according to Heini van Niekerk, but that this central space was the only public space provided on site.

The design team asked whether in terms of the trees along Devonshire Road, whether this was an opportunity to create something more special. The current planting could be described as creating an alley effect of damp, dark space. An argument could therefore be made for the felling of the existing trees to replace them with smaller flowering trees, to create a more urban effect.

Tony Collins stressed that this briefing was not an opportunity for negotiation and any attempt to do so would be inappropriate.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith requested that the analysis of the trees should be taken further and include the possibility of successful retention. Examples of unsuccessful retention should be studied, along with any resulting impacts.

Mike Mann summarised the presentation:

‘The design team have come up with options on the trees but accept the Member’s point on retention. In this instance, we do not believe the trees are of a high quality.

The scheme reflects the location, its enhancement with the reduction in noise for new and existing residents. The depot will be retained despite the exploration of alternative sites. An element of housing is provided but the scheme allows for expansion onto the Travis Perkins land should an alternative site for the depot become available in the future. There will be significantly reduced HGV traffic and will involve a significant Section 106 contribution.

#### **4 PRE-APPLICATION BRIEFING BY THE DEVELOPER - Intercell House, 1 Coldhams Lane**

##### **Presenters:**

Mark Mann – Savills

Jake Snell – Stock Woolstencroft

Stewart Deering – Reef Estates (current landowners)

Mark Mann and colleagues presented the application as shown in the accompanying hard copy. They emphasised that PPS4 would not require a needs assessment for this proposal, but that it had been felt prudent to undertake one.

##### **Members’ Questions:**

(Members questions are in light type, presenters’ responses in bold below.)

Cllr. Brown: (1) A significant number of traffic movements will be added. Is it not possible to develop the hotel without on-site car parking?  
(2) Will there be plant on the roof?

M.Mann: Premier Inn do require a certain level of car parking on-site. The level proposed is believed to strike the right balance between the need to discourage trips by car and the need to avoid increasing pressure on on-street car parking locally. A Travel Plan will encourage the use of non-car modes.

**Jake Snell: There will be solar panels on the five-storey section, but they will not be visible from the ground. There will be a screened plant enclosure on the four-storey roof at the rear of the site. There will be no plant on the six-storey section.**

Cllr Walker: Please elaborate on materials, surface finishes and aesthetics of the exterior.

**Jake Snell: It is planned to keep this as simple as possible. A soft buff brick is envisaged, with Trespa panels on the uppermost storey and in some of the window reveals. The ground floor will be glazed, and it is hoped to develop a design of local themes on the glazing. The windows will be larger than is typical in a budget hotel, full height, with more interest in the apertures.**

Cllr Tunnacliffe: Please elaborate on the idea of support for the Circular Bus.

**Stewart Deering: The potential applicants are very positive about the idea of supporting the Circular Bus, and a lot of work has been done on this already. The applicants are considering carrying out a study in association with other parties such as nearby retail uses. It is hoped to be able to support the bus route for a period of 18 months to 2 years, even if other stakeholders are not willing to contribute.**

(Here the applicants also repeated their belief that it was necessary to strike a balance on the number of car parking spaces provided, and that what was proposed was the correct balance. They also emphasised the importance of cycle parking, their intention to establish a partnership with a cycle hire provider, and another with a taxi firm.)

Cllr Dixon: Please comment further on the plan to support the Circular Bus in the light of the County Council's meeting next week which is recommended to discontinue the service.

**Stewart Deering: The potential applicants are willing to attend other meetings to elaborate on their commitment to support the service.**

Cllr Walker: Please elaborate on the plans for the streetscape. How much space is there for the trees shown, and how big will they grow?

**Stewart Deering: The applicants are anxious to embrace plans to improve the streetscape. Trees on Coldham's Lane would not be planes, but appropriate trees for the 4-5m space between the building and the footway. It is envisaged that they would grow to 10-12 metres in height.**

Cllr Tunnacliffe: Would it not be possible to match trees on the other side of Coldham's Lane?

Stewart Deering: This is possible. Landscaping will be discussed in detail with officers.

Cllr Brown: May we see a three-dimensional perspective from the east? How would the building relate to adjoining sites?

**(A paper version of the east perspective was shown to Members.) The design of the building will encourage stepping down to a lower level by future neighbours. Windows would be included only on the uppermost storey at the east side, which would allow later buildings to approach the site closely. On the Coldham's Lane side, the southern end elevation would contain windows, to encourage a break in the frontage at this point to allow pedestrian access to the centre of the wider site.**