

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FORUM

16 January 2019
10.00 am - 12.57 pm

Present

Planning Committee Members: Councillors Blencowe, Baigent, Green, Hipkin, Thornburrow and Tunnacliffe

Officers:

Principal Planner Nigel Blazeby
Principal Planner: Patricia Coyle
Committee Manager: Sarah Steed

Others in attendance:

3 representatives for the Applicant
2 representatives for the CamCycle
3 representatives for the South Petersfield Resident's Association
2 representatives for the Great Northern Road Residents Association

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

18/16/DCF Declarations of Interest

Opening Remarks by Chair

The Chair outlined the role and purpose of the Development Control Forum. He stated no decisions would be taken at the meeting.

Apologies

Councillor Smart provided apologies.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

18/17/DCF Application and Petition Details (18/1678/FUL / Station Area Redevelopment Blocks B2 And F2 Devonshire Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire

Application No: 18/1678/FUL

Site Address: Station Area Redevelopment Blocks B2 And F2 Devonshire Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire

Description: The proposed erection of two new buildings comprising 4,555sqm (GEA) of Class B1(a)/ Class B1(b) floorspace including ancillary accommodation/ facilities with associated plant, 136 cycle parking spaces, and 7 off-gauge cycle spaces for Block F2 and an Aparthotel (Class C1) comprising 125 suites, terrace, ancillary accommodation and facilities with multi-storey car park for Network Rail (total GEA 12,153sqm) comprising 206 car parking spaces and 34 cycle parking spaces for Block B2 with associated plant, hard and soft landscaping, new alignment of access from Station Road into Station Square and permanent access from Devonshire Road to the Cambridge Station Car Park restricted to emergency access to the railway and temporary access to parking during construction

Applicant: C/O Agent

Agent: Mr Anthony Child, Bidwells LLP

Address: Trumpington Road Cambridge CB2 9LD

Petition (1): CamCycle

Petition (2): South Petersfield Resident's Association

Petition (3): Great Northern Road Residents Association

Case Officer: Patricia Coyle

Text of Petition 1:

We the undersigned petition the council to convene a Development Control Forum in relation to planning application 18/1678/FUL Station Area Redevelopment Blocks B2 And F2, Devonshire Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire. We believe that this application does not take sufficient steps to prioritise sustainable transport as required by Local Plan Policy 80, nor improve road safety issues, either during or after construction. Furthermore, the development of this site as a multi-storey car park would contradict prior commitments to provide additional cycle parking for the station and would not fix problems of congestion and pollution along Great Northern Road. We do not object to the principle of development on this site, instead we offer recommendations to resolve our objections.

Cambridge Local Plan Policy 80 states that:

"Development will be supported where it demonstrates that prioritisation of access is by walking, cycling and public transport, and is accessible for all. This will be achieved by:

b. supporting public transport, walking and cycling to, from and within a development by:

1. giving priority to these modes where there is conflict with cars;
3. prioritising networks of public transport, pedestrian and cycle movement so these are the best and safest means of moving around Cambridge. Areas where public transport, pedestrian and cycle movement is difficult or dangerous will be improved and, where possible, have further capacity for these sustainable modes provided;
5. safeguarding existing and proposed routes for walking, cycling, and public transport, including the Chisholm Trail, from development that would prejudice their continued use and/or development."

This application does not meet the Local Plan requirements because it:

- fails to deliver a coherent, direct cycle route from Devonshire Road to the southern Busway cycle route, a central segment of the "Chisholm Trail", via the Cycle Point and station entrance,
- fails to prioritise sustainable transport because the design for the internal roadways gives better, more direct and higher priority access to motor vehicles for the station car park than for the cycle link from Devonshire Road end, and because there is no coherent Chisholm Trail cycle route across the Station Square,
- fails to fix the outstanding problems with highway safety in the Station Square and Great Northern Road,
- undermines efforts to reduce air pollution and congestion at this central location because the proposed multi-storey car park will attract car drivers from miles around the area and because the proposals still put 10,000 daily motor vehicle movements on Great Northern Road in front of people's homes.

We believe that it is wrong to construct a multi-storey car park at this location, and this application would be a missed opportunity to reduce congestion and pollution at this site. The station will be without this parking capacity for the period of the construction anyway, which simply demonstrates that it is unnecessary. The residents' parking schemes now in place on the east side of the railway, in conjunction with the long-established schemes on the west side, mean there are no issues with parking displacement. This application should be seen as an opportunity to reduce peak hour motor traffic and air pollution, in line with the council's goals to improve air quality and reduce congestion.

Instead of a multi-storey car park, the B2 structure should be re-designed to be an extension of the Cycle Point. The Train Operating Company Greater Anglia has a requirement in their Franchise Agreement to deliver an additional 1,000 cycle parking spaces at Cambridge by 2021; this development should be used to satisfy that commitment.

Instead of prioritising motor traffic along the Chisholm Trail, the design of the roadways should prioritise walking and cycling movements, and there should be a convenient, clear and safe cycling route north/south through the entire station complex, including between blocks B2/F2 and linking with the Cycle Point

Text of Petition 2

We the undersigned wish to petition for a Development Control Forum to allow residents representatives to discuss with the applicant, planning officers and Councillors how the above application could be improved.

We have particular concerns regarding

1. The proposed temporary car park access on Devonshire Road as the street already takes a heavy flow of traffic. We wish to explore if the existing access could be retained by phasing the development.
2. The loss of the protected tree belt between Devonshire Road and the existing surface car park. Further what provision is the developer making to provide long term landscaping to shield the new development from existing residential houses in Devonshire Road.
3. That the proposed buildings exceed the parameters in the 2010 outline permission both in size and height and this produces an overbearing development for the area. We wish to explore ways this could be mitigated.
4. The development will occupy land best suited for a future extension of the cycle park. Expansion will undoubtedly be needed, given forecast growth in footfall through the station. Cycles are already fly-parked on Devonshire Rd because of (perceived) poor accessibility at the Cycle point, and this problem will worsen when it fills up.

Text of Petition 3

This is a petition asking Cambridge City Council to hold a Development Control Forum in relation to the following Planning Application:

Application No. 18/1678/FUL

Site Address: Blocks F2 and B2 at CB1. Current station car park at the end of Great Northern Road

The grounds for asking for a Forum on this application are as follows:

We believe the planning application does not meet the following planning policy clauses:

- Policy 35: This development, its construction and the traffic produced and services required during its use will lead to significant adverse effects and impact on health and quality of life from noise.
- Policy 36: This development, its construction and the traffic produced and services required during its use will lead to significant adverse effects on health, the environment or amenity from pollutions and malodourous emissions to air.
- Policy 36: This development, its construction and the traffic produced and services required during its use will have an adverse effect on air quality in the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
- Policy 56: This development will create a street that do not respond to its primary level of use (residential) by allowing vehicular traffic to dominate.

We strongly believe there are changes that could be made to overcome our concern such as but not limited to:

- Re-route the traffic to the station square to Station Road.
- Restrict the number of parking spaces on the multi-storey car park.
- Allow deliveries to the new buildings from Devonshire Road.
- Limit the height of Block F2 to match the adjacent Block F.

Case by Applicant

- 1) 9 pre-application meetings had taken place with officers and 4 meetings with the Design and Conservation Panel.
- 2) A public consultation had also taken place and the scheme had been amended following this consultation.
- 3) The outline planning permission for the site was issued in 2010. Buildings F2 and B2 were part of a masterplan which has evolved since 2010.
- 4) The existing building was due to be demolished soon.
- 5) The F2 scheme was originally consented for residential use but the new use was more enabling.

- 6) The scheme improved current cycle and pedestrian links.
- 7) The proposal was to build on the current surface car park.
- 8) There was nil impact on traffic as the overall net number of parking spaces remained the same.
- 9) There had been discussions about reducing the number of car parking spaces but Network Rail was not currently in a position to do so.
- 10) The proposals improved the north / south links to Devonshire Road.
- 11) £500,000 would be given to the Chisholm Trail through a s106 contribution.
- 12) Rail replacement buses had been moved to the bus interchange rather than using the surface car park.
- 13) Looked at the junction link with Devonshire Road in terms of traffic calming and it was proposed that there should be a table top system as it was a key cycle corridor.
- 14) A new vehicular access would be created onto Station Road.
- 15) The key change to the operation of Station Square was the new taxi zone. A new in / out system had been modelled for transport impacts looking at the interaction of pedestrians crossings and movement of buses. This had been modelled for the base year and 5 and 7 years based on the growth of passengers that would use the station. In all scenarios this worked for pedestrians.
- 16) This was a car free development in terms of the office and hotel development. There would be an increase in the number of drop offs and pick-ups for the hotel and office use.
- 17) An error was found within the Traffic Assessment numbers in the 24hr table, a detailed technical note would be provided to Planning Offices to clarify this.
- 18) The Air Quality Assessment showed a slightly beneficial impact because of the redistribution of taxis.
- 19) There was the potential for the multi-storey car park to be converted to a multi-storey cycle park in the future which could provide 2918 cycle parking spaces.
- 20) The B2 development was proposed to be developed first.
- 21) Referred to a temporary access off Devonshire Road to access the Station Road car park. It was noted that the access could be maintained off Great Northern Road but that access off Devonshire Road would be required for the later part of construction.

- 22) In response to concerns raised about landscaping and the removal of trees which currently screened the existing car park, 4 additional trees had been proposed to be planted with some additional hedging which was 1.2m in height.
- 23) The original building B was a single long continuous building which had 2 car park entrances off the northern access road, it was 18m high which equated to 6 residential floors.
- 24) Building F2 was originally consented as a residential building; a residential use would impact on neighbours by overlooking. Believed the proposed uses were much more neighbourly than those consented. The proposed building was higher than the outline consent by 0.95m to accommodate the proposed new use. The building was broadly going to be used between 9am-6pm and would not be used in the evenings or at the weekends.
- 25) Building B2 was proposed to be 6 storeys as per the original consent, the B2 building was 200mm taller than the Ibis hotel.
- 26) Both buildings would provide an active frontage.
- 27) The applicants had worked hard with officers as the buildings were in the Conservation Area. The building stepped down closer to Carter Bridge and was curved to provide a soft transition.

Case by First Petitioners

- 1) The current situation at the station was a car park of taxis which was intolerable for residents and people accessing the station.
- 2) The planning process was meant to be thinking about the future and he questioned if the station square should look as it was proposed and said it was not sufficient to swap around traffic.
- 3) Asked members of the public to send in comments via social media about the station square:
 - a) It was a 'traffic soaked sewer' with no safe route through and was horrible for pedestrians.
 - b) Very little thought given to how cyclists should safely cross the square.
 - c) No sensible route to get from Station Square to Devonshire Road.
 - d) Asked why a car park was required at the station.
 - e) Bus stops were very far away.
 - f) Would be helpful to have a clear delineated bike path.
 - g) Getting to the bike park was truly terrible, watch out for taxis.
- 4) On the southern arm of the mini roundabout, the applicant stated that there would be approximately 7.549 vehicle movements, this would not

meet sustrans guidance this would mean the area may not be able to become part of the cycle network.

- 5) Questioned why a car park was needed; sustainable transport mode shift was the answer. A multi-storey car park would prevent cycle park extension.
- 6) Could not rely on future conversion of the car park to a cycle park as it was not part of the application.
- 7) Referred to a blind spot at Devonshire Road.
- 8) The design would create the 'cyclist came out of nowhere complaint' and 'sorry I didn't see you'.
- 9) This would create car priority for people driving to the station.
- 10) Devonshire Road was congested already the temporary access would add to this.
- 11) Referred to policy 56 and 80 which prioritised public transport.
- 12) Commented that they wanted to work with the applicants. Public transport was strong in this location and the application needed to build on this and make it stronger.

Case by Second Petitioners

- 1) Commented that they had lived in Cambridge for 30 years and nothing had prepared the Petitioner for the traffic in Devonshire Road. There was a blind corner in the middle of the road. Speeding was the norm. Cycling up the street was hair raising.
- 2) People used Devonshire Road as a short cut so that they did not have to cycle on East Road.
- 3) At the top of the road was Mill Road crossing which was simply too narrow for cars to turn safely.
- 4) The volume of traffic, speeding and the narrowness of the road added to noise and air pollution levels.
- 5) Cars mounted the pavement and left pedestrians nowhere to go.
- 6) Temporary access for the development for 2 years was not safe or acceptable as on a blind corner.
- 7) In relation to landscaping, the proposal put forward by the applicant at the forum to provide extra trees and hedging was a positive contribution, although it was noted that some of these fell outside of the 'red edge' planning application area.
- 8) Expressed concern that the temporary access could be sought to be made permanent and asked that the work access was completely removed. Commented that there was currently no access to the site now via Devonshire Road so queried why this was required.

- 9) Noted that the building heights proposed were significantly increased to those included in the outline planning application. Building B2 was 3m higher and building F2 was 2.9m higher.
- 10) Commented that Devonshire Road was in the Conservation Area and that some houses on the road were over 125 years old. The development was overbearing and created overlooking concerns.
- 11) A 'brick and concrete canyon' was being proposed, if the scale was reduced that would be good and the design could be further improved by additional landscaping.

Case by Third Petitioners

- 1) Commented that not many changes had been made regarding Great Northern Road. There were 470 flats and residents had formed a Residents Association.
- 2) The Great Northern Road was usually packed with taxis.
- 3) Referred to policy 56, Great Northern Road was a residential street which was different to Station Road. Asked that traffic was moved to Station Road.
- 4) Traffic was the cause of problems for air and noise pollution.
- 5) All deliveries were proposed to go through Great Northern Road and asked that deliveries to offices be restricted to office hours.
- 6) The north side of Great Northern Road had 4 storey buildings and commented that the proposed development would be 2 storeys higher than existing buildings.
- 7) Delivery lorries caused congestion on Great Northern Road.
- 8) If a car park was provided then cars would park in it.
- 9) Asked for the height of block F2 to be limited around block F1 so that it did not increase the canyon effect, this would be more neighbourly.
- 10) Commented that Brookgate had given assurances that existing issues for residents would be resolved in this planning application but they weren't.
- 11) The applicant said that there would be negligible impact on noise levels but he disagreed and commented that noise levels would only get worse.
- 12) Residents were ready to engage but did not feel that they were being listened to and believed that a better area could be created.

Case Officer's Comments:

- 1) Consultation responses had been updated on the website.
- 2) Environmental Health had some concerns regarding noise and air quality but proposed conditions to address their concerns.

- 3) County Council Highways had only provided a consultation response the day before the forum meeting and this needed to be reviewed further. There was due to be a £35,000 contribution towards Brompton bike docking stations, which would be reviewed after a certain period of time.
- 4) The Great Northern Road was currently in private ownership and was not part of the public highway.
- 5) There was scope for discussion about bus / rail interaction improvements.

Case by Ward Councillors

Councillor Robertson spoke as a Ward Councillor on behalf of local residents. He made the following points:

Buildings

- 1) The outline consent from 2010 was for the two blocks to be used for residential purposes and this should be adhered to in view of the need for housing in Cambridge
- 2) The proposal for the multi storey car park to be converted to a cycle park would work better if there was a link to the existing cycle park (above ground) so that when the first cycle park was full, people could walk across to the new one without having to go back down to the ground. He asked if this had been considered.
- 3) Block B2 (beside the railway) was proposed to be higher than the 2010 consent. This should be reduced in height by a storey and towards the north stepped down to avoid dominating and taking sky light from the houses in Devonshire Road.
- 4) Block F2 was proposed to be further from Ravensworth Gardens than as consented in 2010. This was a good move but the new proposal was for the building to make the road between B2 and F2 narrower. This would create an even worse canyon effect for that road. Great Northern Road already suffered from this. The F2 building line should be moved back to the line envisaged at outline stage.
- 5) Blocks G1 and G2 were accepted in 2010 and the applicant said they had no plans at this stage to build them. They would further dominate and over look the Devonshire Road houses and applicant should be required to confirm that plans to develop these blocks will be permanently given up.

People Movement (ie pedestrians, cyclists and those in vehicles).

- 6) The development of blocks of offices and flats had exceeded that envisaged at the original outline consent. There were no pedestrian crossings anywhere in the CB1 area (though there was approval for one on Great Northern Road). If the change to allow hackney taxis to enter and leave the square from Station Road was agreed then a pedestrian crossing would be required to enable pedestrians to cross Station Road (somewhere between Tenison Road and the station) because although there was currently little traffic on this section of road this would no longer be the case.
- 7) Asked if a distinction was made between hackney taxis and hire cars when the traffic count was conducted. He suspected there was not because in counting vehicles all those marked as taxi/hire cars were difficult to identify separately. This was important because the current proposal was that only the hackney taxis contracted with Abellio Greater Anglia would be allowed to use the new entrance exit to Station Road from the square. All hackney taxis and hire cars should be allowed to use this new facility because otherwise there will not be enough vehicles moved off Great Northern Road.

Devonshire Road

- 8) It was not clear whether it is proposed that construction traffic would use Devonshire Road to access the site. If so then it should all be required to only use the road from Tenison Road to the new temporary access, and not access via Mill Road and the long, narrow stretch of Devonshire Road from Mill Road
- 9) If temporary access to the station car park was allowed then a junction would be created on the sharp bend in Devonshire Road which was already a safety hazard for cyclists in particular. Traffic lights should be provided on this temporary junction to manage this issue more safely.
- 10) The proposal to create a permanent emergency access to the station from Devonshire Road should not be accepted. There was no provision at present and it would risk it being brought into use other than for emergency use in future. It would also mean far less landscaping was possible at this point.

Members' Questions and Comments:

The Applicant's Agent answered as follows in response to Members' questions

- 1) Traffic concerns would be directed to and considered by the County Council Highways Department who may propose conditions. It would be difficult to control traffic movements.
- 2) A full air quality and noise 24 hour assessment for Great Northern Road was has been submitted as part of the application.
- 3) Would check the extent of the impact on the air quality in Devonshire Road and what would happen during construction.
- 4) In relation to a hierarchy for road users, no preference should be given to one user over others.
- 5) Cambridge station was the busiest train station in East Anglia. Legally Network Rail required a car park.
- 6) Network Rail had agreements in place as part of their franchise to maintain certain car parking levels. Ministerial approval would be required to change parking levels. Agreed to provide a briefing note outlining Network Rail's responsibilities regarding car parking.
- 7) When taxis queued in the station car park they did not usually park in car parking spaces but queued in the aisles.
- 8) A plan had been agreed with Greater Anglia for rail replacement buses to use the bus interchange rather than the station car park. Current practice was to try and use Cambridge North station as a hub for rail replacement services and this would be the first option going forward.
- 9) They would look into alternative emergency access. Construction traffic would not use Devonshire Road, it would use Great Northern Road.
- 10) Would take away the issues raised about building heights.

Summing up by the Applicant's Agent

- 1) Had listened to the petitioners concerns about station square but had to be mindful of the constraints of the operator of the train station to operate a functional train station.
- 2) This was a car free scheme; minimum deliveries.
- 3) The increase in traffic from 2020 was with or without this development going forward.
- 4) The new access off Station Road would be a benefit.
- 5) Would be providing £500,000 towards the Chisholm Trail.
- 6) Would look at temporary access and how could optimise landscaping.

- 7) Commented on the mass and scale of the buildings and the bulk of building F2, the relationship to Great Northern Road and the relationship to the outline planning permission.
- 8) Would look at the practicality of permanently removing blocks G1 and G2.
- 9) There was a net gain of residential development as blocks I1 and I2 were converted to residential use.
- 10) Landscaping required further discussion.
- 11) Mass and scale further discussion to be had.
- 12) Review status of the original planning permission / Masterplan.

Summing up by the First Petitioners

- 1) Referred to a commitment to provide 1000 cycle parking spaces by 2020.
- 2) The design of Devonshire road link, the road hierarchy would put pedestrians first, just questioned why vehicles had been given priority.
- 3) Referred to a blind spot area which needed to be re-evaluated.
- 4) Referred to the taxi rank being moved.
- 5) Commented that Station Road needed a zebra crossing.
- 6) The question of congestion, noise and pollution by excessive vehicle movements needed to be addressed.
- 7) Had seen unsafe incidents and referred to the public's comments he showed during his presentation.
- 8) The square was simply parking for taxis.
- 9) Referred to taxis queuing on Station Road, he thought the intention of this scheme was to avoid this.
- 10) The public square did not have the public amenity value that the name intended.
- 11) Commented that there needed to be a segregated cycle route through the station and this could be done outside Sainsburys.

Summing up by the Second Petitioners

- 1) Was not happy with the new access into Devonshire Road.
- 2) Welcome the assurance that the access would not be used for construction traffic.
- 3) Expressed concerns about Devonshire road becoming an informal drop off and pick up area for the station.
- 4) Pleased with the changes made to landscaping.
- 5) Still queried why the emergency access was required.

Summing up by the Third Petitioners

- 1) Took on board the willingness to engage.
- 2) Understood that in planning terms this planning application could only deal with issues arising out of this planning application.
- 3) Questioned the 'red line' application site as the Applicant had confirmed that they could undertake landscaping outside of this area.
- 4) Made comments in relation to building F1 from F2.
- 5) The traffic impact was not negligible; he needed to understand which figures were correct in the transport assessment and what kind of taxis were being referred to.
- 6) Any more vehicles on the road would increase air and noise pollution.
- 7) Commented about the servicing of the bin stores and commented whether bin access and location could be reconsidered.
- 8) Asked why the railway could not be used for construction purposes.
- 9) Thanked the applicants for working with the petitioners and said he looked forward to working with them in the future.

Final Comments of the Chair

The Chair observed the following:

- Notes of the Development Control Forum would be made available to relevant parties.
- Welcomed the willingness of the parties to work together and agreed to facilitate a further public engagement meeting.
- Application to be considered at a future Planning Committee.

The meeting ended at 12.57 pm

CHAIR