

**GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL**

**COMMITTEE** : **PLANNING**

**DATE** : **3<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 2015**

**ADDRESS/LOCATION** : **IMPERIAL GATE BUSINESS PARK,  
CORINIUM AVENUE, GLOUCESTER**

**APPLICATION NO. & WARD** : **14/01163/FUL**

**EXPIRY DATE** : **4<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2015**

**APPLICANT** : **ROBERT HITCHINS LTD**

**PROPOSAL** : **PARTIAL DEMOLITION, ALTERATION,  
EXTENSION AND REFURBISHMENT OF  
EXISTING BUILDINGS B & C. ERECTION  
OF A NEW OFFICE BUILDING AND  
ASSOCIATED CAR PARK AND  
LANDSCAPING. ALTERATIONS TO  
EXISTING ACCESS, SERVICE ROAD AND  
PARKING AREAS.**

**REPORT BY** : **JOANN MENEAUD**

**NO. OF APPENDICES/** : **1. SITE LOCATION PLAN**

**1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 This application relates to existing commercial land at Imperial Gate Business Park, located off Corinium Avenue between Barnwood Point and the Unilever site. Specifically the application relates to Buildings B and C and an area of adjoining grassed land between the buildings and the large Unilever refrigerated building. Historically the site has been known as the Atchinson Topeka site and the buildings as Topeka House and The Bureau.
- 1.2 The application proposes two elements: firstly, works to buildings B and C including some minor demolition, extension and general refurbishment including re-cladding and secondly the erection of a new four storey office building.

**2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 2.1 Permission has previously been granted for the erection of a new three storey office block on this site in 2005. (reference 03/00522/FUL)

### **3.0 PLANNING POLICIES**

- 3.1 The statutory development plan for Gloucester remains the 1983 City of Gloucester Local Plan. Regard is also had to the policies contained within the 2002 Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan which was subject to two comprehensive periods of public consultation and adopted by the Council for development control purposes. The National Planning Policy Framework has been published and is also a material consideration.
- 3.2 For the purposes of making decisions, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that policies in a Local Plan should not be considered out of date where they were adopted prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework. In these circumstances due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 3.3 The policies within the 2002 Local Plan remain therefore a material consideration where they are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 3.4 Relevant policies in the Second Deposit Local Plan 2002 are:

FRP.6 Surface Water Run Off – Requires that new developments deal appropriately with surface water.

FRP.10 – Noise – States that development likely to generate noise which, in its location, is unacceptable either in volume, or duration will not be permitted.

BE.1 – Scale, Massing and Height – Proposed development should be of materials, scale, massing and height which sits comfortably with the height of adjacent buildings and the surrounding built environment.

BE.6 – Access for all - City Council seek to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are adequately catered for in new developments

BE.7 Architectural Design – Sets design criteria for new developments.

BE.9 Design Criteria for Large Commercial Development – Sets criteria for ensure a high standard of design for new development.

BE.21 - Safeguarding of Amenity – Planning permission will not be granted for any new building, extension or change of use that would unreasonably affect the amenity of existing residents or adjoining occupiers.

TR.1 Travel Plans and Planning Applications – Major commercial, service and educational proposals and developments that would generate a material increase in traffic will require the submission of a Travel Plan.

TR.9 Parking Standards – Appendix 4 of Local Plan

TR.12 - Cycle Parking Standards – Requires that secure covered cycle parking will be provided within the development in accordance with the Council's standards.

TR31 Highway Safety – Seeks to ensure that new developments deal satisfactorily with road safety issues

E.4 - Protecting Employment land – Planning permission will not be granted for any development that involves the loss of employment land unless the land has limited potential for employment and the developer is able to demonstrate that an alternative use, or mix of uses offers greater potential benefit to the community.

3.5 In terms of the emerging local plan, the Council has prepared a Joint Core Strategy with Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Councils and published its Pre-Submission Document was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014. Policies in the Joint Core Strategy submission document have been prepared in the context of the NPPF and are a material consideration. The weight to be attached to them is limited by the fact that the Plan has not yet been the subject of independent scrutiny and do not have development plan status. In addition to the Joint Core Strategy, the Council is preparing its local City Plan which is taking forward the policy framework contained within the City Council's Local Development Framework Documents which reached Preferred Options stage in 2006.

3.6 On adoption, the Joint Core Strategy and City Plan will provide a revised planning policy framework for the Council. In the interim period, weight can be attached to relevant policies in the emerging plans according to

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies; and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework

3.7 All policies can be viewed at the relevant website address:- Gloucester Local Plan policies – [www.gloucester.gov.uk/planning](http://www.gloucester.gov.uk/planning); Gloucestershire Structure Plan policies – [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2112](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2112) and Department of Community and Local Government planning policies - [www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/).

#### **4.0 PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS**

4.1 The application has been advertised with a press notice and site notice and individual letters sent to neighbouring businesses. No letters of representation have been received.

4.2 The full content of all correspondence on this application can be inspected online via the Councils website or at the reception, Herbert Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, prior to the Committee meeting.

## **5.0 CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 City Archaeology Officer - This site has been subject to an archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation. The evaluation identified no archaeological remains and demonstrated that the site has been substantially disturbed. I am therefore content that significant archaeological remains are very unlikely to be damaged or disturbed by the proposed development. As such I advise no condition is required with regard to archaeology.
- 5.2 City Drainage Officer - The general principles of the surface water drainage are acceptable however a fully detailed system should be required by condition.
- 5.3 Urban Design Officer – States that the overall scale of the new building is acceptable and the uplift of the area will be noticeable when the new cladding is applied. Raises some questions regarding future maintenance and window reveals.
- 5.4 Highway Authority – Comments are awaited.

## **6.0 OFFICER OPINION**

- 6.1 The main issues for consideration with this application relate to the scale, design and appearance of the new and re-furbished buildings, the likely traffic generation arising from the proposal, the provision of parking and drainage.

### Scale, Design and Appearance

- 6.2 The buildings B and C are very much a product of their time and now have a very dated appearance. Constructed of brick and concrete with coloured panels and rows of windows of uniform design within each elevation, their design is very boxy with a linear appearance and horizontal emphasis. The roofs are flat with a prominent rooftop plant room and water tanks.
- 6.3 The application proposes to reclad the buildings using both a rain screen cladding system and insulated render, the installation of new windows and brise soleil shading systems, the replacement and redefining of the existing entrance block, the erection of a new external staircase, the introduction of new glazing to the entrance and the recladding of the plant room.
- 6.4 In principle I consider that the proposed works are to be welcomed. They will transform the appearance of the building resulting in a modern and contemporary appearance and a significant improvement and updating of the site when viewed from adjoining buildings, and particularly from Corinium Avenue. Samples of all new materials have been requested and should be available for viewing at committee.

- 6.5 The new building is to be located on an existing grassed area located between Building C and the Unilever storage building and adjacent to an existing car park area. The proposed building is L shaped with the main elevation and entrance fronting Corinium Avenue. The building would provide, at ground floor level an undercroft area for parking as well as cycle storage, bins, services, shower areas, stairs and lifts. Above the undercroft there would be three floors of office accommodation and a plant area above. The main element of the building would be 17 metres in height rising to just under 20 metres at the highest point over the plant area. Internally the building would provide approximately 4000sqm of floor area. The proposed materials will reflect those proposed for the refurbishment of the adjoining buildings to give a cohesive appearance across the site.
- 6.6 In addition to the parking proposed within the undercroft area, new parking would be provided around the new building both adjacent to the existing car park and adjacent to the perimeter fence along the boundary with the footpath/cycleway that runs parallel with Corinium Avenue. Additional works are proposed to the access off the service road and into the current parking area around Building B, together with a re-configuration of the wider parking areas. The proposal results in the provision of an additional 105 spaces as detailed on the current plans, together with additional secure cycle storage both free standing and within the undercroft area.
- 6.7 To put the scale of the new building in context, the highest part of the neighbouring buildings B and C is just under 16 metres in height and Unilever just under 30 metres in height. The smaller two storey element at the front of the Unilever building is about 14 metres in height. I consider that the scale and design of the new building is totally acceptable when assessed in the context of the adjoining buildings and that the building would sit comfortably in this location.

#### Parking and Access

- 6.8 The site is accessed directly off Corinium Avenue with an access that is shared with the buildings at Barnwood Point and can only be accessed from the eastbound carriageway from Walls roundabout. The Unilever site has a separate access further east along Corinium Avenue. Within the site itself service roads run around the perimeter of the application site.
- 6.9 The supporting information states that the new building is likely to generate 632 vehicle movements per day with the peak hours of 8am to 9am comprising 87 vehicles and 5pm to 6pm comprising 75 vehicles. The daily movements represent a 2.1% increase in the traffic using Corinium Avenue which in 2013 was just under 30,000 vehicles per day.
- 6.10 Issues relating to the level of parking required, the potential impact of the additional traffic upon the local highway network and the requirement for a travel plan are currently being discussed with the Highway Authority and the applicant and Members will be updated at the meeting.

### Drainage

- 6.11 The site for the new building comprises an existing grassed area. The erection of the new building and construction of additional parking results in the complete loss of the grassed area and an increased area of hard standing. The new building would also be sited on top of the existing storm water pipe system which it is proposed would be diverted around the new footprint.
- 6.12 The Drainage Engineer has discussed the details of the required drainage with the applicant to ensure that surface water run off from the site is dealt with via an appropriate system. The general principles of the proposed system are that surface water run off would be discharged via gullies and permeable paving, which would be directed to an attenuation tank and chamber that would control the flow and rate of discharge to the adopted surface water sewer. The attenuation is designed to provide for the 1 in 100 year event plus 30% for climate change. Overall the proposals are acceptable in principle although a condition is proposed to require the submission of the fully detailed system.

### Other issues

- 6.13 The site has been subject to an archaeological field evaluation which demonstrated that the site had been subject to previous disturbance and no archaeological remains were found. Therefore no further archaeological work is required.
- 6.14 The site has also been subject to an ecological assessment which concludes that the mown grassed area, small trees and planted shrub areas have little ecological benefit. New planting is proposed and a condition requiring full landscaping details is proposed.
- 6.15 Given the location of the site within a well established industrial/commercial area the proposal should not give rise to any impacts upon amenity of adjoining properties. In this respect I do not consider that conditions restricting hours of operation or hours of delivery are necessary in this location. A construction management plan to deal with issues such as wheel washing and parking for contractors will be required by condition.

### Conclusions

- 6.16 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that where regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.17 Whilst not formally allocated within the 2002 Plan, the site lies within an existing commercial area located off Corinium Avenue. The scale and size of the new building is considered acceptable and will bring new employment opportunities into the area. The proposals to refurbish the existing buildings will have a positive impact on their appearance from both within the site and from the wider area. In this respect the proposal complies with the principles within the National Planning Policy Framework which seek to promote

economic growth, to accommodate the needs of business and encourage environmental enhancements. Other issues relating to drainage, impact upon neighbouring uses, archaeology and ecology are all considered acceptable although some further details will be required by condition.

- 6.18 Matters relating to the impact of the additional traffic generated by the proposal and the provision of sufficient parking to serve the development are still being discussed with the Highway Authority but these should be resolved shortly and Members will be updated at the meeting.

Human Rights

- 6.19 In compiling this recommendation we have given full consideration to all aspects of the Human Rights Act 1998 in relation to the applicant and/or the occupiers of any affected properties. In particular, regard has been had to Article 8 of the ECHR (Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence) and the requirement to ensure that any interference with the right in this Article is both in accordance with the law and proportionate. A balance needs to be drawn between the right to develop and use land and buildings in accordance with planning permission and the rights under Article 8 of adjacent occupiers. The issues raised by neighbours have been carefully considered and together with the measures required by and restricted by the conditions to be attached to the permission, the decision to grant permission is considered to be an acceptable balance between the presumption in favour of development and restricting the visual presence of the pole upon surrounding properties.

**6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER**

- 6.1 That planning permission is granted with conditions to include those detailed below together with others that may be considered necessary as detailed within the late material report:

1. Commencement of development with 3 years.
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.
3. Submission of detailed drainage system.
4. Submission of external materials
5. Construction management plan including wheel washing, contractors parking, working hours.
6. Details of landscape planting and external seating.

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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Person to contact: Joann Meneaud  
(Tel: 396787)





**14/01163/FUL**

**Building B And C  
Imperial Gate Business Park  
Corinium Avenue  
Gloucester  
GL4 3BW**

**Planning Committee 03.03.2015**

