

Supporting Statement

(Incorporating Design and Access Statement)

Application by Hallmark Estates (London) Ltd

**Site at the Former Green Dragon, Dragon Lane,
Whiston Prescott L35 2UF**

Planning and Law Limited

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Introduction

1. This Statement is made in support of an application by Hallmark Estates (NW) Ltd for the use of the application site as a surface car park (with 154 spaces).
2. The applicant is the owner of the site.
3. The site is occupied in part by a large existing car park, a demolished public house ("the Green Dragon" - previously unoccupied for some time), and a betting office (still occupied). As noted above a significant portion of the site is currently used as a surface car park in any event, but the application is to set the whole of the site out as a car park.
4. The following documents form part of the application:
 - Application Form dated 27/02/20
 - Site Location Plan
 - Topographical Survey Plan
 - Layout Plan, "Car Park Proposals" - H399/003/A
 - this Supporting Statement
 - Transport Assessment - SCP, February 2020
 - Car Park Management Plan, SCP

Planning History

5. The planning history for this site is unremarkable except for a number of applications for commercial development that were all either withdrawn or refused. This includes a proposal for A1, A2 and a fast-food restaurant which was refused on appeal by decision of 20 September 2016. Although the appeal was in respect of the form of development that is quite different from that which is the subject of this application. The Inspector's concerns were dealt with as follows
 - With regard to **character and appearance**, the extension of the existing car park is quite different from the proposal for commercial development. The reality is that the extension of the car park across the North of the site will not have a significant effect on the appearance of the site. A rebuilt brick wall across the North East boundary of the site will assist in this regard. The applicants would also expect a condition to be imposed regarding a landscaping scheme which would assist in breaking up the car parking layout when viewed from other directions.
 - The issue of **highway safety** is addressed below by way of the Transport Assessment, and it is concluded that the proposal could be safely accommodated in the existing highway network. (but see further below). SCP also supply a Car Park Management Plan.
 - The issue of **crime and antisocial behaviour** was raised, but this largely arose as a result of the commercial aspects of the proposal. It would be expected that a planning condition would be applied to any consent on the site requiring lighting and security details to be submitted and approved. The

reality is that the implementation of a properly serviced and laid out car park will assist in discouraging crime and antisocial behaviour, a problem which the existing situation exacerbates.

6. There was an application (06/00934/FUL) for temporary car parking refused in 2007, but it is the applicants view that this was a proposal that was quite different in nature to that which is now proposed (a temporary consent in relation to temporary offices during the construction phase of the Hospital.
7. However, the most important aspect of the planning history is the existence of a recently granted planning permission for use of the site for car parking for 135 cars (Application Reference 18/00364/FUL.
8. This consent extends the extent of car parking which was already present on the site, but it did not include the area occupied by the physical remains of the disused Green Dragon Public House.
9. The public house building has now been demolished which allows the whole site to be considered together as a surface car park. The footprint of the former public house is incorporated into the wider car park. The East corner of the site incorporates a landscaped area to form a focal point. There is public access on foot to the car park through this landscaped area and it is backed by a reconstructed and extended brick wall approximately 1.35 m high.

Neighbouring Uses

10. The most significant relationship with neighbouring uses is with the existing Whiston Hospital. Amongst other things, the hospital gives rise to a very significant demand for car parking, and although no formal agreement with the hospital exists in respect of the wider site it is understood that there is some level of agreement to allow the existing car park to be used by the hospital. It is believed that in the past construction vehicles relating to the hospital development have also used the car parking.
11. There is also a piece of land to the south of the application site, in separate ownership, in use as car parking, which gains its access across the application site. It is proposed that this would continue, and provision has been made to allow this to continue (see annotation 8 on the layout plan submitted).
12. At present the William Hills betting office continues to trade but it would be demolished under the current proposals. In actual fact planning permission already exists for its demolition as part of the recent planning permission for an extension of the car parking area (Application Reference 18/00364/FUL).

Ecological Issues

13. The 2019 consent application was accompanied by an ecological survey by ERAP.
14. The report, in its Summary, concludes the following at paragraph ix :

"Further surveys are required to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats at the site. Otherwise it is concluded that the proposal is feasible and acceptable in accordance with the ecological considerations and relevant

planning policy. The proposed development at the site will provide an opportunity to secure ecological enhancement for wildlife associated with suburban areas."

15. Subsequently activity surveys were carried out without identifying any activity that would cause any problems with regard to the demolition of the buildings. In this context it is important to note that planning consent was granted for the proposal which included the demolition of the current bookmakers, and this is the only building on site.
16. Taking everything together, and the fact that permission was subsequently granted for demolition of the bookmakers, there is no ecological interest in this site.

Transport and Highways

17. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment dated 26/02/20, and a Car Park Management Plan, carried out by SCP, transportation planning engineers. In its "Summary and Conclusions" the Assessment indicates that:
 - visibility in excess of 43 m in both directions can be provided (paragraph 7.4).
 - Personal injury data reveals no concern across the last five years (paragraph 7.5).
 - The impact of traffic arising from the latest scheme has been tested and relevant junctions will operate within their practical capacity within the future assessment year of 2025.
18. Accordingly, at paragraph 7.7 the report concludes as follows:

"Having regard to the above, it is concluded that there is no highway or transport related reason to withhold planning permission for the scheme and the proposed development is therefore recommended for approval"

Overall Conclusions

19. For the reasons set out above in this Statement the applicant respectfully believes that planning consent for a surface car park, as submitted, should be granted.