



APPENDIX C – 17/06446/FUL

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 December 2018

by **K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th January 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/W/18/3200721

LRO 7 High Street, Marlow SL7 1AY

The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.

The appeal is made by Mr S Westwell (Coursetype Ltd) against the decision of Wycombe District Council.

The application Ref 17/06581/FUL, dated 9 June 2017, was refused by notice dated 15 February 2018.

The development proposed is the erection of a 2 storey detached office building.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a 2 storey detached office building at LRO 7 High Street, Marlow SL7 1AY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17/06581/FUL, dated 9 June 2017, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr S Westwell (Coursetype Ltd) against Wycombe District Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the public parking capacity within the town and the effect of any displacement parking.

Reasons

4. The appeal site forms parts of an open yard at the rear of a bank. It is evident that this area is utilised for parking as is the remainder of the yard that is outside of the appeal site. In August 2018 the Council granted planning permission for the erection of two dwellings on the appeal site.

This would result in the loss of the parking spaces that are currently used on the section of the yard that forms the appeal site. That being so, I consider that the loss of the appeal site as parking provision is not a substantive matter for this appeal.

5. The development would result in the provision of office accommodation without any on-site parking provision for staff or visitors. In applying the Countywide Parking Guidance the Council considers that the appeal development would generate a requirement for 7 spaces.

6. The Council commissioned a parking review for Marlow, which was published in 2016. This showed that there was some spare capacity in the town's car parks during the day but that certain car parks, including Liston Road which is very close to the appeal site, are full at peak times. The report also predicts an *increase in demand when account is taken of the expected growth in housing and retail development within the town. This indicates that the capacity of the car parks would be exceeded at peak times which is particularly due to the increase in retail development. I note that recent housing and retail development has taken place in the town.*

7. The report also indicates that there is little evidence that any of the car parks are used for commuter demand (ie those who arrive in the morning and leave their car all day until returning in the evening). Without any cogent evidence to the contrary I must conclude that the appeal scheme is unlikely to result in any significant increase in the demand for parking within the existing public car parks. Nor would there be any significant reduction in the availability of the car parks, including the one at Liston Road, for short-term users. It follows that the appeal development would not affect the vitality or viability of the town centre and the associated economic considerations.

8. Marlow is a town which is served by public transport and there is a significant amount of housing located within walking and cycling distance of the site. As such it is likely that some future employees would have the opportunity to travel to work by means other than a private vehicle. However, it is still also likely that some employees would travel in their own vehicle. I observed that the town centre and nearby streets were subject to parking restrictions through yellow lines and short stay parking (between 1 and 2 hours).

9. There is evidence that commuter's park in the residential streets surrounding the town centre. The development would only attract a modest increase in parking need. I appreciate that high levels of on-street parking can be inconvenient to local residents which can have an adverse effect on their general level of amenity. However, with the very small parking demand that would arise from the appeal development the effect of this would not be significant.

10. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that development should only be refused on highway grounds if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. I have not been provided with any evidence that significant commercial development within the town is expected so that there would be a significant cumulative impact.

11. I therefore conclude that the development would not have any significant effect on the public parking capacity within the town or through displaced parking. The development would comply with Policies G8 and T2 of the Wycombe District Local Plan 2011 and Policies CS5, CS19, and CS20 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. Together, these Policies seek to ensure

development does not materially increase traffic problems, that greater use of walking, cycling and the use of public transport is encouraged, that there is appropriate provision for parking, allowing for on-site parking below specified standards where appropriate, and that the amenity of residents is safeguarded including in terms of disturbance from traffic.

Conditions

12. I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant plan as this provides certainty, but it is not necessary to refer to the site survey plan. A condition is required to ensure archaeological matters are dealt with adequately. To be effective this must be a pre-commencement condition. In the interests of the *character and appearance of the area it is necessary for details of external materials and boundary treatments to be approved. To comply with the Council's policies it is necessary to ensure the building is constructed to meet an excellent water efficiency standard.*

13. No parking is proposed for the appeal building and the appeal site is tightly drawn around the building footprint and a modest area at the rear. It is therefore not necessary to control the parking provision on the adjacent land.

Conclusion

14. The proposal would accord with the development plan when it is considered as a whole. For the above reasons I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

K Taylor

INSPECTOR