

CABINET

25th February 2002

Gipsy Lane Brickworks, Site Development Guidance

Report Of the Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1) Consultation

The following detailed comments on the Site Development Guidance were made:

English Nature

English Nature were generally pleased with the document but had the following comments:

- Greater emphasis is requested on the importance of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
- The hedges and woodland screen adjacent to the SSSI should be of a natural composition, in keeping with the character of the SSSI and SINC.
- The re-grading of the surface and the diversion of any surface water away from the SSSI should be required to reduce a present drainage problem.
- A protected species survey should be carried out. If any species (such as badgers, great crested newts or bats) are found English Nature should be informed. Where possible the presence of any protected species should be safeguarded. If this is not possible adequate mitigation must be provided. Protected species licenses may be necessary to carry out the work.
- A concern that the buildings could be too close to the SSSI and an Environmental Impact assessment may be required.

Response

The Site Development Guidance has been amended to take on board English Nature's comments. An Environmental Impact Assessment has been requested. This, amongst other things, will consider the impact of buildings on the SSSI.

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency had the following comments:-

- The development as a whole should look at utilising the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems as the primary method of source control.
- Details of any existing foul and surface water sewers are required on the site.
- There are three landfill sites within 250 m of the proposed development. The Agency considers that there is a perceived risk that landfill gas could adversely affect the development.

Response

The guidance has been amended to promote the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems such as grass swales, retention/detention ponds and the use of porous hard surfacing. Reference will also be made to the location of three landfill sites within 250 m of the proposed development and advise that necessary precautions should take place to ensure that landfill gas does not adversely affect the development.

London Hamilton Holdings plc - (Owners of part of the site)

Acceptable uses within the eastern half of the site should include a health and fitness centre as well as local shopping facilities. It is requested that the final paragraph of Section 4, which deals with the complementary uses, should be amended as follows:-

“Uses which could be considered complementary to the employment area could include hotel and conference/exhibition facilities and small scale A3 uses, leisure uses and shopping facilities which would serve the employment area and visitors to the SSSI.

In addition, the Council will consider on their merits uses such as car dealerships and trade sales uses which will be assessed on the basis of the levels of employment they provide in this employment area.”

Response

This site is designated within the City Of Leicester Local Plan (Adopted 1994) as primarily an employment area. Policy E4 states that “Planning permission will normally be granted for development of B1, B2 and B8 uses, and not for changes to other land uses.” The City of Leicester Local Plan is currently being reviewed. Very few sites of any significant size remain in the city available for industrial development. The Gypsy Lane Brickwork’s Policy Area is one of only two sites of over 10 hectares still available. As a result the City Council intends to optimise the quality and quantity of jobs that result from the development of these areas.

Within the Eastern half of the Gypsy Lane Brickwork’s Policy Area it has been accepted that other uses that are complementary to a high quality business park and to the wider employment area will be considered on their merits.

The City Council does not support the provision of shopping and separate leisure facilities.

The Site Development Guidance will be amended to state: -

“Uses which would be considered as complementary to the employment area could include hotel and conference/exhibition facilities, central office and banking facilities, a children’s nursery and small scale A3 uses which would serve both the employment area and visitors to the SSSI.”

Novo Architects – (Acting on behalf of London Hamilton Holdings)

Architects then engaged on preparing the master plan for the site had the following concerns:

- Concern that the designation of a S.I.N.C should not prohibit development.
- The restriction of development within the eastern area to B1 and B2 uses, with complementary uses on up to 50% of the eastern site may result in uneconomic development.

Response

The Site Development Guidance accepts that some development can occur within the SINC. However, it is essential that nature conservation issues are taken into consideration when developing this area. The Site Development Guidance has been amended to make this clear.

In the Deposit Draft Replacement City of Leicester Local Plan it states within the eastern half of the Gipsy Lane Brick-works Policy Area, shown on the Proposals Map, planning permission will be granted for B1 (except major office development) and B2 uses. Other uses that are complementary to a high quality business park and to the wider employment area will be considered on their merits. The Site Development Guidance has been amended accordingly.

Northfields Employment and Development Initiative

- Request for the Northfields Employment and Development Initiative to be mentioned in the guidance to ensure that potential developers are made aware of the project so that links can be established at an early stage with the eventual developer.
- Request that part of the site is allocated for a business-training centre.

Response

The Site Development Guidance is primarily a land use-planning document. It highlights the uses and form of development that would be acceptable. A Business training centre would be a compatible use within the eastern part of the site. However, it is not possible to allocate a particular site within this document.

Local Residents and businesses

The Cromwell Residents Association broadly welcomes the Site Development Guidance. The following concerns were raised by local residents and businesses:-

- The visual impact of industrial units from residential gardens.
- The need to ensure that security is maintained to private rear gardens.
- The need for regulations to restrict the hours of work and the type of industry that will be acceptable.
- The need to ensure that the central open space does not become used for tipping.
- Consideration of the impact of additional traffic on Thurmaston Boulevard.
- The public open space should be provided adjacent to the existing residential area rather than in the central part of the site.
- The allotments are being used by Belgrave Allotment Society.

Response

The visual impact of industrial units on residential gardens is a legitimate concern. The Guidance has been strengthened by stating that the height of industrial units should not overshadow rear gardens or significantly reduce visual amenity. New development will be expected to provide a buffer zone adjacent to residential property.

Security is being maintained to the rear of property by ensuring that the open space is not provided at the rear of existing dwellings.

There is a need for an adequate supply of land for general and light industry as well as storage and distribution. As part of a detailed planning application consideration will be given to both the impact on adjoining properties and the hours of work.

The Site Development Guidance requires a management plan for the central open space as well as the provision of a fence to discourage tipping.

An Environmental Impact Assessment is being undertaken which, amongst other things, will consider the impact of additional traffic on Thurmaston Boulevard

The Site Development Guidance has been amended to state that the allotments are not disused.

2 Equal Opportunities Implications

The Guidance includes specific requirements to ensure that new development is accessible to all sections of the community.

3 Policy Implications

It is intended that the Guidance be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the City Of Leicester Local Plan.

4 Sustainability and Environmental Implications

The Guidance includes measures to encourage sustainability and protect the environment. It ensures that the SSSI is protected and enhanced and located within a larger central park that is overlooked by surrounding buildings. Drainage issues are covered and energy efficiency in the building design is also encouraged.

5 Crime and Disorder Implications

The Guidance includes measures to help engender public security. Development of the site, in the form of perimeter blocks with active street frontages, will provide good visual surveillance of the public realm and ensure that the backs of buildings do not face onto public open space.

6 Consultations

Arts and Leisure
Legal Services

7 Background Papers - Local Government Act 1972

None