

Memo

To	Stephen Irvine	Date	9 February 2016
From	Karen Heverin	Ext	3717
Subject	New car park drop-off facility, etc Huddersfield Road PA/337930/15		

Memorandum

Steve,

The proposal to introduce a new drop off car park, residents parking, introduction of traffic signals and alterations to the footpaths will impact upon the setting of a number of listed buildings, including No 25 and No 45,47 and 49 Huddersfield Road and the office building of the former Dobcross Loomworks.

The first consideration in the assessment of this application is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66(1) of the Act states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development that affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

In respect to Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Governance and Legal Director of English Heritage ('Legal Developments' Conservation Bulletin Issue 71: Winter 2013) states that the courts have said that these statutory requirements operate as '*a paramount consideration*' and '*the first consideration for a decision maker*'.

I have also considered Chapter 12 of the NPPF and Policy 24 of the Core Strategy. I have referred to guidance on settings and legal cases, particularly *Barnwell Manor v East Northamptonshire District Council 2014*, which expressed the necessity to give 'considerable importance and weight' to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings.

The proposals and their impact

I have considered the proposed changes and their impact on the designated heritage assets in turn. The proposals will have no direct physical impact on any listed asset. I have considered the proposals and believe they will lead to '*less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset*' as defined in the NPPF. As a consequence para 134 states '*this harm should be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal, including securing optimum viable use*'.

Introduction of traffic signal controls close to No 25 Huddersfield Road.

This will result in the siting of traffic lights close to, and within the setting of No 25 Huddersfield Road. I do not consider this will enhance the setting of the listed building. However, they are set in front of the neighbouring building and whilst they will be apparent in views of the building along Huddersfield Road and result in the further urbanisation of this area, I do not consider the proposal will result in substantial harm. Therefore, in weighing the less than substantial harm, the public

benefit of the proposal must be considered. In this instance, I understand this relates to safety concerns around the highway network within this area. I am not able to assess the suitability or need for this installation in relation to the highway safety requirements. However, I do consider the limited impact on the listed buildings should be part of the consideration.

Introduction of the residents car park finished in bituminous carriageway surfacing

I consider this proposal, to introduce a car park, will have a low level of detrimental impact on the views from and of the Grade II listed No.'s 45-49 Huddersfield Road. At present, the front elevation of these buildings, whilst set back from the road side, faces Huddersfield Road, and has views of a stone wall and fields beyond. The introduction of an expanse of bituminous carriageway surfacing will be of detriment to the current rural setting of the building and the green belt. Additionally, the stone wall separating the pavement from the land/car parking beyond has been removed. I consider that this has a detrimental impact on the setting of this and other listed buildings as it makes the views of the parking area more open. I consider the reintroduction of the stonewall would provide some screening of the car parking from the roadway and reduce the impact on the setting of the adjacent buildings.

Additionally, if the LPA were minded to recommend this application for approval, I consider the proposal could be improved by seeing an alternative finish to the car park, which would reduce its visual impact, such as the 'Grasscrete' alternative used elsewhere.

Introduction of the resident's car park in Grasscrete

This proposal will result in further encroachment onto Green Belt and this will impact on the rural setting of a number of building. However, I do consider that the use of Grasscrete will lessen this impact and therefore the harm is limited and should be weighed against the highway safety concerns.

Removal of stone walling and erection of timber fence to Huddersfield Road and the Access Road from Huddersfield Road to the former Loomworks site.

I consider this will have a detrimental impact on the setting of a number of designated and non-designated assets, including the listed properties on Huddersfield Road, the Dobcross Loomworks and remote views of and from the canal. The stone walls provide a traditional setting to these building and compliment the stonewalling prevalent in Saddleworth as a whole. They contribute positively and their loss and replacement with fencing, whilst resulting in less than substantial harm ,would not appear to have been justified from a public benefit perspective.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I object to the introduction of the fencing to replace stone walls, and the provision of a car park with bituminous carriageway surface and associated lighting, without any separation between this and Huddersfield Road. These overtly urban features will detract from the setting of a number of listed buildings and the proposals will be extremely prominent from elevated views across the valley floor.

As noted above, para 134 of the NPPF should be considered and the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

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