

Division(s): Didcot South

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**PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE –
24 OCTOBER 2011**

**CONSTRUCTION OF A TEMPORARY WORKS COMPOUND (FOR A
TEMPORARY PERIOD OF 2 YEARS) IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE
REDEVELOPMENT OF DIDCOT PARKWAY STATION FORECOURT
– COMPOUND TO INCLUDE OFFICE AND WELFARE
ACCOMMODATION, CAR PARKING, MATERIALS AND MACHINERY
STORAGE AND PERIMETER LIGHTING**

**Report by Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Growth &
Infrastructure)**

Location: Land at Station Road, Didcot

Applicant: Oxfordshire County Council

Application No: R3.0103/11

District Council Area: South Oxfordshire

Introduction

1. Planning permission was granted by this Council in 2009 for the redevelopment of the existing forecourt at Didcot Parkway railway station in order to create a new transport interchange. The latter is part of a programme of investment in strategic transport infrastructure by both the County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council that will support the growth and economy of Didcot and Science Vale UK. As part of this development, a temporary works compound is required for the duration of the contract. This application seeks permission for that temporary compound.

Location

2. The site lies centrally in Didcot just over 300 metres to the south east of Didcot Parkway Station. The town centre is about 150 metres further to the south.

The site and setting (see plan)

3. The site is located on the eastern side of Station Road and measures 0.27 ha in area (84 metres long by 29 metres wide). There are residential properties immediately opposite the site on the western side of Station Road (15.5

metres away). This area is designated as the Station Road Conservation Area (the application site is not within the Conservation Area). There are dwellings immediately to the north (the gable end of the nearest property in White Leys Close is 9.5 metres away). To the east is the service yard for the nearby Sainsburys Superstore.

Details of the development

4. The site was previously used as a temporary construction compound for the redevelopment of Didcot town centre. It is enclosed by a solid wooden fence with two metal gates at the north and south ends of the site. Access is into Station Road.
5. Within the works compound would be a site office, a meeting room, canteen and toilets along with storage areas for machinery and materials. Perimeter lighting would be provided for the health and safety of site operatives and visitors. All the buildings would be single storey. Stockpiles of materials would not exceed 3 metres. The majority of deliveries of materials will be directly to the work area at the station, but it is proposed that some materials (such as pallets of bricks and paving) which cannot be stored securely at the point of use, be delivered to the site compound for secure storage.
6. Ten car parking spaces would be provided within the site. Electricity would be by mains connection; there would be no generators used within the compound.
7. Entry to the site would be direct from Station Road by means of the gate in the south west corner of the site. Vehicles would leave the site via the existing opening in the north west corner of the site. This one way flow should help improve safety both within the compound and on Station Road.
8. Works on the station forecourt are due to start shortly and are scheduled to be completed by May 2013.

Consultation responses and representations

9. *South Oxfordshire District Council* (Planning and Environmental Health) – No objection subject to the following conditions:
 - no maintenance of vehicles or heavy machinery to take place within the compound;
 - no screening or crushing of aggregate in the compound;
 - all activities relating to the compound to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Construction Environmental Management Plan and Site Waste Management Plan.

Didcot Town Council – No response received.

Environment Agency – Proposal is deemed to have a low environmental risk so no individual response to be made.

English Heritage – No comments to offer. Application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance.

County Archaeologist – Site lies in an area of some archaeological interest. However, the small scale nature of the proposals do not justify a detailed archaeological response.

County Ecologist – No wildlife interest therefore no comment.

Highway Engineers (Drainage) – No surface water from within the site should enter onto the highway or into the highway drainage system without a (temporary) licence to drain it. Temporary soakaways and/or SUDS could be considered.

Transport Development Control – No objections subject to the following conditions:

- 1) proposed gates should not open outwards onto Station Road;
- 2) details of works at the site entrance e.g. dropped kerbs to be submitted and agreed;
- 3) measures to be implemented to ensure there is no mud brought onto the highway;
- 4) no parking of vehicles on Station Road opposite the site exit.

Third Party Representations

10. Three responses have been received from local residents. Two of the responses, whilst not objecting to the application, raise concerns about the hours of operation at the site (i.e. will there be evening and weekend working); and whether the evaluation exercise relating to possible alternative sites for the compound has been properly carried out (they suggest that the Foxhall Road Car Park (about 500 metres to the west of the Railway Station, over Foxhall Bridge) would be more appropriate in that it would have less of an impact on neighbouring residential properties (in terms of traffic, parking and noise) would have a minimal impact on the local environment. One of the responses requests that if permission is granted for the Station Road site, conditions should be attached to cover the following issues:

- Trees on site to be retained
- Working hours restricted to:

Monday-Friday	7.30-18.00
Saturday	7.30-13.00

 No Sunday or Bank Holiday working.
 (These are similar to those in place at the site when the town centre was redeveloped).
- Banksmen to be used when vehicles enter Station Road.
- Number of parking spaces within site to be maximised to reduce need for parking on Station Road.

11. The third response received strongly objects to the proposal for the following reasons:

- The site has been used for several years as a site compound and local residents have had to put up with the disturbance it generates for that length of time.
- Screening/vegetation is not sufficient to alleviate noise pollution and noise levels will be unreasonable.
- Proposal will generate dust which will impact on immediate area.
- Adverse visual impact of the site and light pollution at night.

Relevant Planning Policies

12. Planning applications should be decided in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
13. The Development Plan comprises the South East Plan (SEP) and the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP). Central government however has made it clear that it intends to abolish regional strategies. Whilst this intention is a material consideration, legislation to achieve this is at an early stage of development in the parliamentary process, and therefore the weight attached to that intention is limited accordingly.
14. All relevant policies are listed in the policy annex attached to this Committee Agenda. The key issues relate to:
 - The need for the development.
 - The impact of the development on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties.

SEP policies CC6 and CC7 and SOLP policies DID10, T4, T5, EP2, EP3 and CF2 are particularly pertinent to this proposal.

Comments of the Deputy Director (Growth & Infrastructure)

15. Redevelopment of Didcot Parkway Railway Station forecourt was granted back in 2009 in accordance with Policies DID10, T4 and T5 of the SOLP. Policy DID10 supports 'development related to the expansion of railway transport services and the improvement of interchange facilities' and Policies T4 and T5 support proposals 'which improve public transport facilities and access to rail services'. Work is due to commence on the forecourt improvement shortly and a contractor's compound is an essential requirement to enable this project to happen.
16. As part of the submission of this application the applicant has provided information on the various alternative sites that have been assessed as possible temporary compounds for the station forecourt works. A number of these are within the existing forecourt site itself but were rejected because of lack of space and the difficulties this would create in phasing the construction work.
17. One of the alternatives considered was the railway's Foxhall Road car park (about 500 metres to the west along Station Road and over Foxhall Bridge –

see plan 2). This option is the one suggested as the most preferable location by one of the respondents as they consider that it would have less of an impact on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. It is acknowledged that the impact on residential amenity would be less at the Foxhall Road Car Park but this site would be significantly further from the forecourt redevelopment site than the Station Road site and it would have a significant impact on railway car parking provision and disruption to the general operation of the station. For these reasons it was rejected as an option.

18. The application site is currently unused but has been used as a construction compound in the recent past. It is conveniently located for the station forecourt work area and should allow the project to be delivered in a shorter timeframe by reducing the physical impact on the station itself. Whilst having some amenity impact on the houses to the west of Station Road (and the Conservation Area), this impact is mitigated by the existing fencing and vegetation screen. The site can be reinstated very quickly and a temporary (2 year) period is proposed.
19. The visual impact of activity at the compound can be mitigated by repairing and repainting the existing boundary fence and ensuring that any existing planting is retained. Lighting is proposed within the compound but light spillage should be minimised by the use of modern light cowl arrangements to direct light down and into the compound rather than outside. Noise has been mentioned as a concern; the site adjoins the Sainsburys Superstore serving yard which has deliveries throughout the day and late into the evening and it is located close to the main shopping area and cinema. With these activities taking place, the compound should not increase noise levels significantly. The District Environmental Health Officer (whose views are incorporated into the formal response from SODC) has indicated that he has no objection to the proposal subject to conditions to cover issues such as maintenance of vehicles, crushing of aggregates and operations to comply with the submitted Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).
20. The CEMP is a site management document which outlines the steps the contractor would follow to ensure that, whilst working on site, there is no detriment to both the health and safety of staff and third parties, including neighbours, and to ensure that impacts on environment and amenity are minimised to an acceptable level. This document can form part of the documents approved as part of any consent given.
21. The proposed comprehensive improvements to the forecourt at Didcot Parkway Railway Station is part of a programme of investment by the County and District Councils to improve transport infrastructure as part of the growth and economic development of Didcot. A construction compound is required to facilitate these improvements. I consider that the use of this site as a construction compound is acceptable for a temporary period and that amenity and environmental impacts particularly on nearby residents can be adequately mitigated. It accords with Development Plan policies therefore and permission is recommended.

Recommendation

22. It is **RECOMMENDED** that Application No. R3.0103/11 (for the construction of a temporary works compound (for a temporary period of 2 years) in association with the redevelopment of the Didcot Parkway Station forecourt) be approved subject to conditions to be determined by the Deputy Director (Growth and Infrastructure) but to include the following matters:
1. Detailed compliance.
 2. Temporary permission – 2 years only.
 3. All activities relating to the compound shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Construction Environmental Management Plan and Site Waste Management Plan.
 4. No screening or crushing of aggregate in the compound.
 5. No maintenance of vehicles or heavy machinery to take place within the compound.
 6. Site entrance/exit gates to open inwards only.
 7. Details of works to site entrance/exit points (e.g. provision of dropped kerbs) to be submitted, agreed and implemented before site brought into use.
 8. Measures to be implemented to ensure there is no mud/debris brought onto the highway.
 9. No parking of vehicles on Station Road particularly opposite the site entrance.
 10. Existing shrubs/trees on site perimeter to be retained.
 11. Working hours be restricted to 08.00-18.00 hours Monday-Friday, 08.00-13.00 hours Saturdays. No Sunday or Bank Holiday working.
 12. Existing boundary fence to be repainted and repaired where necessary.
 13. Surface water drainage details to be submitted and agreed.
 14. Any stockpiles of materials shall not exceed 3m in height.
 15. Lighting details to be submitted and agreed before site is brought into use.

Informative:

- **Archaeological Informative.**

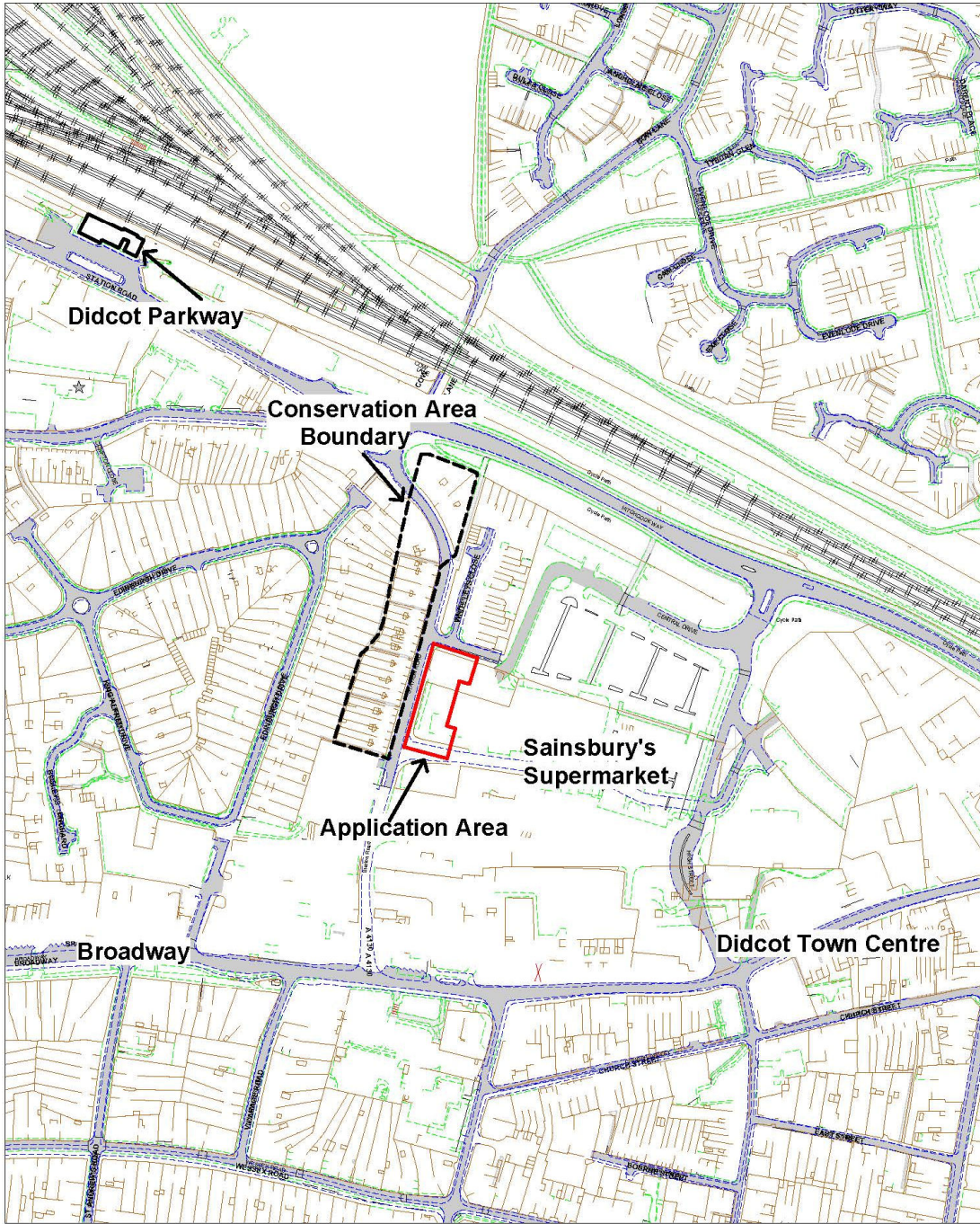
MARTIN TUGWELL
Deputy Director (Growth & Infrastructure)

File Ref. MW.0103/11

October 2011

Station Road, Didcot (Plan 1)

Application No: R3.0103/11



Station Road, Didcot (Plan 2)

Application No: R3.0103/11

