

Planning, Transport & Sustainability Division
Planning and Rights of Way Panel 25th March 2014
Planning Application Report of the Planning and Development Manager

Application address: (Former) Ford Motor Co, Wide Lane			
Proposed development: Use of the existing buildings at the rear of the site as a vehicle repair centre and export distribution centre with alterations to the existing buildings. Changes to the secure fence line of the existing Mansbridge Road car park to enlarge the vehicle storage area with new perimeter fencing, barriers, lighting columns, CCTV and associated works.			
Application number	14/00028/FUL	Application type	FUL
Case officer	Stephen Harrison	Public speaking time	15 minutes
Last date for determination:	07.04.2014	Ward	Swaythling
Reason for Panel Referral:	Major planning application subject to objection	Ward Councillors	Cllr Mintoff Cllr Turner Cllr Vassiliou

Applicant: Ford Motor Company Ltd	Agent: Rolton Group Ltd
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Recommendation Summary	Conditionally approve
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Community Infrastructure Levy Liable	Not applicable
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Reason for granting Planning Permission

The development is acceptable taking into account the policies and proposals of the Development Plan as set out below. Other material considerations as set out in the report to the Planning and Rights of Way Panel on 25th March 2014 have been considered and are not judged to have sufficient weight to justify a refusal of the application, and where applicable conditions have been applied in order to satisfy these matters. The scheme is therefore judged to be in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and thus planning permission should therefore be granted. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority offered a pre-application planning service and has sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner as required by paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

Policies - SDP1, SDP4-SDP19, SDP22, NE3, CLT8 and REI9(ii) of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review (March 2006) and policies CS6, CS7, CS13, CS18, CS19, CS20, CS24 and CS25 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (January 2010).

Appendix attached			
1	Development Plan Policies		

Recommendation in Full

Conditionally Approve

1.0 The site and its context

- 1.1 The Ford Motor Co. site in Swaythling has been a vehicle assembly plant since the 1950s and ceased operating in July 2013. It occupies some 44 acres. Currently the site benefits from unrestricted manufacturing use and is designated in the Local Plan Review for B1, B2 and B8 employment uses (Policy REI9 refers). There are high-level discussions ongoing regarding the future of the principal site of which this application site forms a small part.
- 1.2 The site comprises a series of large warehouse and manufacturing sheds within a secure perimeter fence. The site is bounded to the north by the M27, to the east by Stoneham Cemetery Road and the cemetery and allotments beyond. To the south the site is bounded by the residential neighbours of Walnut Avenue, and to the west Wide Lane separates the operational site from its associated parking.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the associated development needed to use a small selection of the existing buildings at the rear of the site as a vehicle repair centre and export distribution centre on behalf of Ford. The main buildings will remain unaffected and no additional floor space is proposed. The proposed use itself is consistent with the established use of the site and does not require further permission, although the proposed alterations to the existing buildings and changes to the secure fence line of the existing Mansbridge Road car park (to enlarge the vehicle storage area and the associated barriers, lighting columns and CCTV) will require planning permission.
- 2.2 The works requiring planning permission comprise:
 - The re-cladding of the existing buildings with Kingspan Goosewing Grey cladding;
 - The remodelling, with additional security fencing, of the Mansbridge Road car park; and
 - The new security gatehouse(s).
- 2.3 As the site boundary exceeds one hectare the application should be treated as a major planning application. As the application is the subject of third party objection – albeit concerning the ongoing use – it requires a Planning Panel determination.
- 2.4 With regards to the use itself the applicants propose to use a small part of the site closest to the M27 for vehicle repairs and distribution. Two employment shifts will operate creating, initially, some 70 jobs with the site operating generally between 6am and 10pm, although the established use is unrestricted.

- 2.5 The application suggests that the Vehicle Repair Centre (VRC) will initially deal with 20 vehicles/day progressing to a maximum of 50. The deliveries and removal of vehicles will come in from Wide Lane by transporter. Initially the applicant suggests some 7 transporters/day will be required with a maximum of 17 required as the business grows.
- 2.6 The second part of the proposal involves an Export Distribution Centre (EDC) with vehicle jet washing. This part of the business will require five 40ft trucks/day to collect vehicles for export that would be parked awaiting collection on the existing Mansbridge Road parking area to the east of the site. This parking area is to be remodelled to provide 97 staff parking spaces (reduced from 408 existing) accessed from Mansbridge Road, with an increased secure parking storage area for some 440 vehicles awaiting export. All commercial vehicles will leave the site from Wide Lane rather than Mansbridge Road, which was the case when Fords were operational.

3.0 Relevant Planning Policy

- 3.1 The Development Plan for Southampton currently comprises the “saved” policies of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review (March 2006) and the City of Southampton Core Strategy (January 2010). The most relevant policies to these proposals are set out at **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 Saved Local Plan Review Policy REI9 safeguards the site for B1b (Research and Development), B1c (Light Industry), B2 – (General Industry) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) with ancillary offices.
- 3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force on 27th March 2012 and replaces the previous set of national planning policy guidance notes and statements. The Council has reviewed the Core Strategy to ensure that it is in compliance with the NPPF and are satisfied that the vast majority of policies accord with the aims of the NPPF and therefore retain their full material weight for decision making purposes, unless otherwise indicated.
- 3.4 **SCC Planning Policy Officer** - The policy team do not have concerns with the proposed use.

4.0 Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 Various applications associated with the growth of the Ford Motor Company from the 1950s with the site’s use for manufacturing, including the Spitfire aircraft, pre-dating the planning system. In 2002, Ford stopped producing passenger cars in the UK, leaving the Southampton made Transit as their only British-made vehicle. In 2009 it is reported that there were some 500 employees at the site.

5.0 Consultation Responses and Notification Representations

- 5.1 Following the receipt of the planning application a publicity exercise in line with department procedures was undertaken which included notifying adjoining and nearby landowners, placing a press advertisement (17.01.14) and erecting a site notice (17.01.14). At the time of writing the report the **City of Southampton Society** have raised no objection, and 2 representations have been received from surrounding residents. The following is a summary of the points raised:

- 5.2
- When Fords made Transits the completed vehicles used to leave the site via Mansbridge Road causing traffic jams – particularly during the morning peak. Request that vehicles leaving the site do so out of peak traffic times. The Mansbridge Road access needs improved signage and enforcement of the 10mph traffic speeds.

Response

- 5.3
- The current proposals will use Wide Lane to bring vehicles in and out of the site. The remodelled Mansbridge Road car park will still be used for staff access (as was the case with Ford) although the trip generation is greatly reduced (97 staff parking spaces reduced from 408 previously). As such, the concerns raised have been addressed by these proposals.

- 5.4
- Assurances wanted that the proposed VRC will not jeopardise existing residential amenity in terms of noise and air pollution.

Response

- 5.5
- As the proposed business fits within the established use of the site for vehicle (manufacture) repairs and distribution the planning system cannot add further controls to the site. Any statutory nuisance created will be dealt with by other legislation. That said, officers have visited the site with colleagues from Environmental Health who are satisfied that the proposed operations, being enclosed within existing (and improved) buildings some 270 metres from the nearest neighbour will not have a significant impact on existing amenity.

Consultation Responses

- 5.6 **SCC Highways** - No objections

- 5.7 **SCC Sustainability Team** – Whilst the development does not have to achieve BREEAM Excellent under core strategy policy CS20, all development should be designed in a way which minimises their overall demand for resources in accordance with local plan policy SDP13. Under core strategy policy CS20, all development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless it can be demonstrated this is not appropriate in a specific location. To demonstrate that the development has met these policy requirements, it is recommended that the development endeavours to meet the standards as set out in BREEAM for the following topics:

- Man 02 Responsible construction practices
- Man 03 Construction site impacts
- Ene 03 External lighting
- Mat 02 Hard landscaping and boundary protection
- Wst 02 Recycled aggregates
- Pol 03 Surface water run off

- 5.8 *Note: As the works do not create new buildings, and the use is established, it is not deemed reasonable or necessary to impose additional CS20 requirements.*

- 5.9 **SCC Economic Development** – No objections

- 5.10 **SCC Environmental Health (Pollution and Safety)** - As the vehicles will be entering and leaving via Wide Lane I have no objections to this application.
- 5.11 **SCC Environmental Health (Contaminated Land)** - The proposal for the change of use to a vehicle repair centre and export distribution centre. This is not regarded as a sensitive land use; however, the mobilisation of contaminants that may be present on the site could present a risk to human health and/or the wider environment during the construction phase. The history of Southampton City presents many potential contamination hazards to much of the land in its area. Land contamination hazards associated with car assembly uses includes inorganic chemicals, metals and metalloid compounds and hydrocarbons. Consequently there exists the potential for such hazards to significantly impact upon the development. Therefore, it is recommended that, in accordance with policies SDP1 and SDP22 of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review and paragraph 121 of the National Planning Policy Framework if planning permission is granted conditions are imposed.
- 5.12 *Note: As permission relates purely to the associated works rather than the vehicle repairs themselves it is not deemed reasonable to impose conditions for a full contaminated land survey. Instead, a condition is recommended that is triggered in the event that unsuspected contamination is uncovered.*
- 5.13 **SCC Ecology** – No objection to the proposed development provided the lighting is installed as shown on the submitted plans.
- 5.14 **SCC Heritage** – No objections to this application.
- 5.15 **SCC Landscape and Development Manager** - There are a number of concerns which did not seem to be shown in the plans we have been sent.
- How will the site be secured? Will there be easy access for allotment holders, does the applicant realise they will need to allow allotment holders access 24/7? Currently we have a system with a chain with two locks on it. One end is a fords lock the other is an allotment padlock, which means we can get in at any time. We will need something similar on any new gates.
 - What is the detail of the fence and exactly where is it proposed to put it? SCC own the strip of woodland along the north-west edge, which we will need access to, to maintain. The fence is show on the cemetery side of the trees, which is ok, but I think we need more details of construction to ensure no damage occurs to this strip of woodland. Timing will also be important as they should not be disturbing birds in nesting season.
- 5.16 *Note: The applicants have confirmed that the existing access arrangements for the allotments will be maintained and the plans show the proposed changes to the fence line.*

- 5.17 **BAA** – No objections subject to the following advisories:
- 5.18 Cranes - It is likely that cranes may be used for part of the reroofing works. Crane use will be heavily restricted in this location due to the close proximity to Southampton Airport. As per guidance issued in the British Standard Code of Practice relating to the use of cranes, the developer should get in touch with the airport to discuss the requirement for cranes and other tall construction equipment, at least one month before the proposed work is due to start.
- 5.19 Public Safety Zone - Part of this development falls within the Southern PSZ. In certain circumstances, the Local Planning Authority may be required to consult with the DfT on this development. As the site use will remain the same, I have no concerns over the impact on the Public Safety Zone.
- 5.20 Lighting - The lighting scheme has been amended to comply with Airport Operators Association guidance. If any light is deemed to be confusing or distracting to aircrews after installation then there is provision under the Air Navigation Order to ensure that the lights are extinguished or rectified as a matter of urgency.
- 5.21 Building Height - It is noted that this development will be taking place within the existing footprint of the site and within existing building structures. If any part of the development will go higher than the existing buildings or structures (including aeriels) then the airport must be re-consulted due to the impact on obstacle limitation surfaces.
- 5.22 **Hampshire Constabulary** – For the main part I am satisfied with the new security fence and gate measures proposed but there are 2 areas which I am not entirely clear about. Firstly, drawing 13-0162/G/100 T2 Employees Parking and Secure Storage Area, on the right side of the drawing states "all existing perimeter security fencing to secure parking area to be removed and replaced with new" Does this also refer to the fencing either side of the single track vehicle access alongside the M27 and the allotments? Secondly, Where are the security gates to prevent access to the compound from the same 'single track'? Secure gates will be required somewhere and if new security fencing is not proposed along this track then I suggest an additional security gate and blocker is installed at some point along the 'north' perimeter where new security fence is shown. Also for Fords consideration; razor wire topping is proposed for the new security fencing and whilst this does have benefits, it does have potential weaknesses in that it can be cut or bent to allow access and it does degrade over a period of time. if you are also minded not to accept it on the grounds of aesthetics (not sure how viewable it is to the public) then I suggest an alternative would be to fit a 'rotary spike' topping which is effective, durable and less obtrusive.
- 5.23 *Note: These comments have been shared with the applicants who may chose to take them into consideration as part of their commercial assessment of the project.*
- 5.24 **Environment Agency** – No objections raised but suggest an environmental permit may also be required.

5.25 **Southern Water** – No objection to the proposals subject to conditions and informatives regarding the protection of the existing sewers.

6.0 Planning Consideration Key Issues

6.1 The key issues for consideration in the determination of this planning application are:

- i. Principle of Development
- ii. Design
- iii. Impact on Residential Amenity
- iv. Impact on Highway Safety

6.2 Principle of Development

The proposed use of these buildings for a vehicle repair and distribution centre is consistent with the established use of this strategic employment site. It is not the use for which planning permission is being sought, although the creation of some 70 jobs is welcomed, but the associated development to make the operations viable and workable.

6.3 Design

The proposed works to the existing buildings are necessary to update them and make them fit for the intended purpose. The works mainly involve re-cladding with the replacement of existing asbestos roofs. The proposed fencing to the secure parking area has been designed with security in mind, is similar to the existing boundary treatment and is screened from nearby residents and the public highway. It comprises 2m high mesh panels topped with razor wire. The impact of these associated works will be minimal given their location within an existing employment site and their limited nature.

6.4 Impact on Residential Amenity

The nearest residential properties are some 270 metres away. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has visited the site and has raised no objections. The proposed use will take place within the refurbished buildings and it is not anticipated that there will be any undue noise, odour or disturbance that wouldn't have been associated with the previous use of the site. Given the unrestricted nature of the existing site, its previous operations, and the limited nature of the works proposed for which planning permission is required, it is not considered reasonable to impose planning conditions restricting the hours of use or preventing egress onto Mansbridge Road.

6.5 That said, it is noted that the main concern from nearby residents concerns traffic leaving the site onto Mansbridge Road. The proposed plans show the existing exit point being closed to vehicles and retained for emergency escape (see plan ref: 13-0162/G/110 T1). The applicants have confirmed that the main access and egress for the commercial vehicles will be Wide Lane. A planning condition securing the new fencing is proposed as this will, by the way in which it has been designed, restrict egress and secure the necessary improvements required to satisfy the objectors and environment health officers.

6.6 As such the proposal will reduce the impact on the residents of Mansbridge Road and is considered to meet the requirements of Local Plan 'saved' Policy SDP1(i).

Impact on Highway Safety

- 6.7 The proposed physical works to the building take place within the existing site boundary. The fencing proposals will facilitate an increased secure parking area and a reduce staff car park. These changes will have no impact on highway safety and the wider use of Wide Lane, rather than Mansbridge Road, will be beneficial to local traffic. Full access is retained to both the allotment and the cemetery. The Council's Highways Officer has raised no objection to the proposals.

7.0 Summary

- 7.1 The proposed development works are limited in nature and will have a negligible impact on existing residential amenity. The creation of some 70 jobs is a welcome result of the associated works hereby recommended for approval.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Planning and Rights of Way Panel approve the scheme with the planning conditions suggested below.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Documents used in the preparation of this report Background Papers

1a-d, 2b-d, 4 vv, 6a, 7a and 9a-b

SH2 for 25/03/2014 PROW Panel

PLANNING CONDITIONS to include:

01. APPROVAL CONDITION - Full Permission Timing Condition - Physical works

The development works hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date on which this planning permission was granted.

Reason:

To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).In accordance with plans

02. APPROVAL CONDITION- Unsuspected Contamination [Performance Condition]

The site shall be monitored for evidence of unsuspected contamination throughout construction. If potential contamination is encountered that has not previously been identified no further development shall be carried out unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Works shall not recommence until an assessment of the risks presented by the contamination has been undertaken and the details of the findings and any remedial actions has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Any changes to the agreed remediation actions will require the express written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure any land contamination not previously identified is assessed and remediated so as not to present any significant risks to human health or, the wider environment.

03. APPROVAL CONDITION – Fence Works

The fence works hereby approved shown on plan ref: 13-0162/G/107 T1 and 13-0162/G/110 T1, which restrict vehicle egress from the secure parking compound, shall be completed prior to the first use of the site for the associated uses and shall be retained thereafter whilst the site is used for the use described in the application.

Reason:

To reduce the impact of commercial vehicles leaving the site via Mansbridge Road to the possible detriment of highways safety and residential amenity

04. APPROVAL CONDITION – Southern Water

In the event that the proposals involve any below ground works the developer shall advise the Local Planning Authority of the measures that shall be undertaken to protect the public sewer and water mains prior to the commencement of these works.

Reason:

In the interests of protecting the City's existing water infrastructure.

05. APPROVAL CONDITION - Approved Plans

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed in the schedule attached below, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Note(s) to Applicant

Southern Water – Public Sewerage - Informative

A formal application for connection to the public sewerage is required in order to service this development. Please contact Southern Water, Southern House, Sparrowgate, Otterbourne, Hampshire SO21 2SW (Tel: 0330 303 0119) or www.southernwater.co.uk

Environmental Permit Informative

Please note that this development may require an Environmental Permit or an exemption from an Environmental Permit from the Environment Agency. The applicant must ensure that the operations at the site are in accordance with the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2008. The applicant is advised to contact the National Customer Contact Centre (NCCC) on 03708 506 506 or information can be found through the following link:

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/permitting/32330.aspx>

Under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 the operator of a waste site will require an environmental permit for the importation, storage and treatment of waste. The need for an environmental permit is separate to the need for planning permission. The granting of planning permission does not necessarily lead to the granting of an environmental permit.

POLICY CONTEXT

Core Strategy - (January 2010)

CS6	Economic Growth
CS7	Safeguarding Employment Sites
CS13	Fundamentals of Design
CS18	Transport: Reduce-Manage-Invest
CS19	Car & Cycle Parking
CS20	Tackling and Adapting to Climate Change
CS24	Access to Jobs
CS25	The Delivery of Infrastructure and Developer Contributions

City of Southampton Local Plan Review – (March 2006)

SDP1	Quality of Development
SDP4	Development Access
SDP5	Parking
SDP6	Urban Design Principles
SDP7	Urban Design Context
SDP8	Urban Form and Public Space
SDP9	Scale, Massing & Appearance
SDP10	Safety & Security
SDP11	Accessibility & Movement
SDP12	Landscape & Biodiversity
SDP13	Resource Conservation
SDP14	Renewable Energy
SDP15	Air Quality
SDP16	Noise
SDP17	Lighting
SDP18	Hazardous Substances
SDP19	Aerodrome and Technical Site Safeguarding and Airport Public Safety Zone
SDP22	Contaminated Land
NE3	Protected Species
CLT8	Southampton Sports Centre
REI9(ii)	Major Employment Sites

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Parking Standards SPD (September 2011)

Other Relevant Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012

The Southampton Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (September 2013)

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