

HJOA/18-02501

19 December 2019

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Dear David,

**Re: Langstone Technology Park - APP/19/00703 – Comments following meeting of 05 December 2019
regarding parking access and protected trees**

Thank you for meeting to discuss the pending application at Langstone Technology Park, reference APP/19/00703. I have set out below the substantive elements of our discussion, which related principally to the car parking layout and access points, the northern-eastern access route between the north and east car parks, and the impact of this access on the two recently protected Norway Maples.

The discussions have resulted in number of amendments to the scheme proposals, which are illustrated on the plans below:

- Existing Ground Floor Plan – ref: 4046A-150 Rev A
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan – ref: 4046A-200 Rev F
- Site Plan – ref: 4046C-110 Rev F
- Site Plan with Footways – ref: 4046C-111 Rev A
- Units 01-05 Floor Plans – ref: 4046C-200 Rev D
- Units 01-05 Elevations and Typical Section – ref: 4046C-205 Rev E
- Units 06-09 Floor Plans – ref: 4046C-2210 Rev F
- Units 06-09 Roof Plan – ref: 4046C-211 Rev E
- Units 10-12 Floor Plans – ref: 4046C-220 Rev F
- Units 10-12 Roof Plan – ref: 4046C-221 Rev D
- Proposed Layout Plan – ref: 4046-152 Rev N
- Parking and Access Management – ref: 4046-158 Rev A
- Car Park Layouts Sheet 1 – ref: 4046-155 Rev E
- Car Park Layouts Sheet 2 – ref: 4046-156 Rev E

These plans are submitted to the local authority as amendments to the scheme, and supercede previously submitted revisions. For ease of reference, the principal changes to the scheme, illustrated on the drawings, can be summarised as follows:

- The installation of traffic management, by way of a barrier and drop-plate at two locations;

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- Clearer annotation and minor layout amendments (including necessary changes to the application “red line”) in order to address comments made relative to pedestrian access;
- The inclusion of five trees in the north-eastern part of the site by way of compensation for the loss of some of the trees that have recently been subject to a Tree Preservation Order, and
- The illustration of Southern Water infrastructure.

Parking Access

During our earlier meeting on 14 November, it was recommended that methods were explored to review the potential to restrict entry into discrete areas of the car park from the eastern access (via Langstone Road) during the AM peak. In order to discourage traffic turning right across the northbound lane of Langstone Road, the provision of traffic controls to restrict access to parking areas in the AM peak from the east would be encouraged.

Notwithstanding our view, as set out within the Transport Assessment included within the application, that there will be no demonstrable increase but a reduction in the level of queuing as a result of the proposal, we have sought to address this concern in order to ensure that the applicant is being as neighbourly and co-operative as possible. This is in spite of the fact that such restrictions on parking/access will have a detrimental impact on the future commercial marketability of Langstone Technology Park.

Our proposed solution is shown in the appended drawings. We are proposing installing barriers and flow plates in two locations, which will restrict access to all car parking spaces shaded red on the Parking Access and Management Plan during the AM peak:

- On the north-eastern access between the north and east carparks; and
- On the eastern side of the entrance to the proposed new industrial development.

These barriers will be in operation during the AM peak between 7:30 and 9:00. While active they will restrict traffic flowing from east to west, but will not restrict traffic flowing west to east:

- 100% of parking will be accessible from the west; of which
- 29% of parking will be accessible from the west only; with
- the remainder being accessible from both the west and east.

Parking locations (and, by extension, available points of access) will be allocated to occupiers using a pass/permit scheme.

Precise parking space figures are given in the table below.

Access point	Spaces
Accessible from the east only	0
Accessible from west only	543
Accessible from both east and west	1,342
Accessible from west	1,885
Total spaces on site	1,885

We note that this arrangement was welcomed during the meeting. Subject to review by statutory consultees, we therefore consider the matter to be resolved in light of our proposed strategy.

Trees and Northern Access Route

Tree Preservation Order 2101/2019

On 30 October 2019, a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) reference 2101/2019 was made protecting several trees on the site:

- T1 – Silver Maple;
- G1 – 2x Ash;
- G2 – 2x Norway Maple.

Neither T1, nor the trees at G1 are expected to be affected by the proposed scheme. The Norway Maples at G2, however, are currently proposed for removal in order to accommodate the proposed link between the north and east car parks.

The proposed link is a vital part of the redevelopment proposals, and will allow for significantly improved traffic flows through the site, as well as ensuring that more parking spaces are easily accessible from the western entrance (in the context of the proposal above). The current proposal will also convert part of the existing fire tender route (currently grasscrete or equivalent) to a fully serviceable private road.

Alternative Development Proposal

The client and the development team have undertaken a review of potential alternative layout options and whilst none of these were satisfactory the “least worst” option, which we still feel is detrimental to the Park and its environs, was presented to development control officers. Instead of the existing fire tender route being part retained and upgraded to provide access to the eastern car park access would be via a new ramp onto the deck of Building 1000 and another ramp down into the eastern car park.

This layout presents a number of challenges which we have set out below:

- A proposed ramp can only be accommodated to the far east of the northern (lower) carpark owing to the fact that the site slopes downhill from east to west. Were the ramp to be proposed further west, it would not be possible to accommodate a ramp that meets building regulation gradient requirements.
- Any ramp connecting the two carparks will be prohibitively steep and would require significant re-profiling of the northern car park. The proposed new parking (on land occupied by Building 1000) is set upon a reinforced concrete slab, and it is not possible to dig/break through it. The northern car park is set considerably below the height of the new parking spaces (approximately 3.1m), and will need to be raised in order to allow for the ramp connecting the two to be at a regulation-compliant gradient.
- The aforementioned re-profiling is not only undesirable in terms of practicality and cost, but it would also raise potential issues given that the works would take place in part above Southern Water infrastructure (as illustrated on drawing ref: 4046A-200 Rev F).
- A revised route through the eastern carpark to the northern (lower) carpark and vice versa is convoluted and will make access for existing and proposed parking spaces in the north east corner significantly less accessible from the west. This – in tandem within the steepness of the ramp - makes it likely that most employees will seek wherever possible to access the Park from Langstone Road.
- Notwithstanding issues with layout and accessibility, the retention of the trees necessitates removal of the 39 spaces from the north carpark. These will need to be relocated elsewhere in order to maintain the commercial attractiveness of the Park (potentially in less suitable locations, and not necessarily within the area covered by the western access restriction);
- In addition, the requirement to raise the northern (lower) carpark in order to achieve a regulation-compliant ramp gradient will bring the height of the north parking area and fire tender route to within the canopy of the protected trees, and it is therefore possible that – despite these measures – harm is still incurred to the Norway Maples.

The result of an alternative layout will be a prohibitively steep ramp and convoluted layout arrangement that makes access to the eastern car parks from the western entrance deeply unattractive to site users; and a loss of much needed parking that will need to be provided elsewhere in order to maximise the site's commercial marketability. In addition, it is also possible that the revisions will be unable to ensure that no harm will come to the Norway Maples (for the preservation of which alternative layouts have been assessed in the first place).

Retention of preferred option, and proposed compensation

In light of the above, we are proposing the strategy put forward at the beginning of this letter, with the proposed access restrictions described earlier. We note that this strategy was agreed in principal during our meeting. Such a proposal will require the loss of the Norway Maples, and we recognise the need for appropriate compensation.

We are proposing to provide, in compensation for the loss of the two Norway Maples, a group of 5 different height trees of Beach, Field Maple and Oak or Maple with a girth of 20-30mm (details on the precise type of tree can be reserved by a condition). These will give range of colour and height.

In term of size/maturity, we believe that the best choice would be semi-mature trees with an ideal girth of 20-30cm. These will establish better, settle faster and provide good strong growth. For the location, we propose placing them as indicated in the included drawing ref 4046A-200 Rev F. They will then be viewed by people arriving into the car park and via the footpath, helping to create a better ecological amenity for a wider public than the original position of the lost Norway Maples.

Other points arising

Consultee Responses

We also discussed consultee responses received to date, and reiterated that the absence of soft landscaping within the new industrial development is required in order to provide occupiers with the greatest level of flexibility possible in terms of how they make use of the forecourts (for parking, articulated lorries, etc.). The inclusion of trees within this area would drastically diminish flexibility and negatively impact on the units' marketability. We also drew attention to revisions within the revised plans submitted on 28 October, which addressed many of the comment that had been raised.

You affirmed that you would discuss this further with the officer, and seek to find a resolution.

Environmental Health Officer

Queries raised by the EHO regarding transport and air quality were mentioned, whilst the officer was content that the Air Quality Assessment was acceptable, discrepancies were noted in the report. We are reviewing our assessment, and will respond with clarification in due course.

Committee Meeting

Whilst firm dates for a meeting were not given, we note that the Council consider it likely that the application will be considered by the ordinary business committee, and not a special/extraordinary one.

We appreciate that, in light of the proposed loss of two protected trees, the description of development will need to be changed, and consultation re-commenced. However, we reiterate our desire that this process is carried out as expediently as possible in order to ensure the application appears before committee as soon as is possible.

Conclusion

The chief purpose of this letter is to set out the points of discussion covered during our meeting on 05 December, which may be summarized as follows:

- Following suggestion by the Council, we have revised the scheme to include parking controls within the site which will limit use of the eastern entrance in the AM peak;
- We have sought to devise a strategy to accommodate the protected Norway Maples, but any alternative solutions are highly unsatisfactory, and we do not consider it a sustainable option, especially in light of the local authority's clearly stated desire to increasing traffic flows into the site from the west;
- The preferred layout will see the loss of two protected trees, for which we are proposing compensatory planting which we consider to be substantial, appropriate, and in locations that will enhance the amenity of the site.

Yours sincerely,

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