

Item (1)	Land at Station Yard, Hungerford.
Title of Report:	Proposed erection of 30 flats with associated car parking and coffee shop, with external amenity space. Oakes Bros Limited. Application number 18/00837/FULEXT.
Report to be considered by:	District Planning Committee
Date of Meeting:	11 July 2018

To view the plans and drawings relating to this application click the following link:
<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=18/00837/FULEXT>

Purpose of Report: For Committee to determine the application.

Recommended Action: To note the resolution made by Western Area Planning Committee on 27th June 2018 and resolve to approve the application, subject to conditions and a Section 106 obligation.

Reason for decision. The decision has District-wide implications which are of equal relevance in Eastern and Western Area Planning locations.

Key background documentation: Planning Committee agenda report dated the 27th June 2018 to Western Area, draft minutes of that meeting, and the planning case file. Core Strategy for West Berkshire 2006 to 2026.

Key aims.	To ensure broad consideration of all the interests relating to development across the District.
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Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Hilary Cole
E-mail Address:	Hilary.cole@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	29 th June 2018.

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Michael Butler
Job Title:	Principal Planning Officer
Tel. No.:	01635 519499
E-mail Address:	Michael.butler@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy:	The decision requires the Council to consider the application of a balance to the intentions of different policies within the Core Strategy.
Financial:	The Council will receive a contribution towards cycle store provision at Station yard –£30,000.
Personnel:	Nil
Legal/Procurement:	Legal will be involved in the completion of the s106 planning obligation.
Property:	Nil.
Risk Management:	Consideration of the specific circumstances by DPC is appropriate as the decision in one part of the District could conceivably be quoted District-wide in attempts to support similar application cases.
Equalities Impact Assessment:	Nil.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Application number 18/00837/FULEXT was submitted to the Council on the 19 March 2018. It is a full application to redevelop the existing temporary private car park at the Station Yard, to a new 5 storey scheme of 30 flats with associated undercroft parking (33 spaces) , with 9 of the flats (30%) being affordable. Associated with the proposal is a communal amenity space to the rear, and a new coffee shop for the public on the west aspect of the site. Vehicular access will continue to be from Station Road.
- 1.2 The application site is within a defined protected employment area [PEA] as designated under adopted policy CS9 in the Core Strategy. This means that any non employment generating use approved on the site will not be consistent with that policy: clearly, housing is not employment generating, (beyond initial construction) so would, if approved, be contrary to the policy. The Council constitution requires that the District Planning Committee considers applications where there is a possibility of conflict with a policy that would undermine the Development Plan and where there is a district-wide public interest.
- 1.3 The appended Western Area Planning Committee agenda report, sets out the reasoning by officers as to why in this case, policy CS9 does not need to be the dominant planning policy consideration in these specific circumstances. To summarise the reasoning is as follows.
- a) A recent appeal decision on land in the same PEA in 2017 was allowed, for housing. The Inspector in his decision letter made it clear that there was no justification to reject the appeal, on the basis of continuing to protect

employment land, when the land had been vacant for some considerable time and had been marketed for employment uses for a considerable time, to no avail: the same situation applies at the current application site. In addition, he noted the advice in para 22 in the NPPF on this issue. This notes that planning authorities should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use, where there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for that purpose. Where this is the case applications for alternative uses, should be treated on their merits.

b) There are clear regeneration benefits arising from the project, should it be granted planning permission, which (inter alia) the local Town Council are fully supportive of, notwithstanding the loss of the car parking on the site. In addition, not only will more dwellings be built out in a very sustainable location, but there will be the advantage of 9 more affordable units in the town.

c) The economic vitality and viability of the local area will also be enhanced by the new coffee shop proposed, which will be a local community benefit.

d) Officer conclusions are that in the specific circumstances approving a residential scheme on the Station Yard PEA, does not undermine the protection of the remaining CS9 sites in Hungerford, such as at Charnham Park, and nor will it undermine similar PEA sites in other parts of the District

- 1.4 Officers are recommending that the application be approved, subject to the necessary Section 106 planning obligation noted in the report and the full recommendation. DPC Members' attention is drawn to the objections raised by the Transport Policy Officer and GWR, in response to the permanent loss of the 96 space car park on site, identified as valuable to train users/commuters in particular. This was an issue carefully considered by Officers in making the recommendation and by Members at Western Area Planning Committee, as the minutes will show.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the District Planning Committee delegate authority to the Head of Development and Planning to grant approval of application number 18/00837/FULEXT, subject to conditions as noted in the attached report and subject to the prior completion of the s106 obligation to deliver the 9 affordable housing units and the £30,000 cycle parking contribution.

3. APPENDICES

- 1 - Western Area Agenda Report 18/00837/FULEXT on the 27th June 2018.
2 - Draft minutes of the above meeting for item 2.