

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Change of use of land to create a pay and display public car park with associated site works (temporary period of 5 years), The Rock and John Street, Bury.

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Planning, Design and Access Statement

Introduction

1. This statement is intended as a Design and Access Statement and concise Planning Statement combined.
2. The proposal is to seek retrospective planning consent for the use as a pay and display car park in conjunction with adjacent use on the former Paradise Mill site.
3. The site which is being currently used as a public pay-and-display car park fronts onto The Rock and John Street and forms the site of former buildings 181-183 The Rock and former Paradise Mill.
4. The pay-and-display car park accessed from The Rock has been in use for a short while, and the larger car park to the north since 2018 under a temporary planning consent for five years reference 62599. Both car parks have proved very popular with shoppers, and visitors to the town. The car park accessed from The Rock is also being used by larger vehicles (including vans) because parking bays have been laid out provide wider and longer than usual parking spaces and there are no "max headroom" barriers which restrict the use of other car parks in the area. It is therefore felt that there has been a positive take-up for the current use which demonstrates the demand for additional car parking in the area which provides a more comfortable layout for larger vehicles.
5. In terms of sustainability, the site is in a highly sustainable location, and car parking provision in this location will reduce vehicle congestion in the centre itself thus providing a beneficial service for workers, shoppers and visitors to the town centre.

Design Principles and Concepts

Amount

6. The number of spaces currently laid out on The Rock site is 32, two of which are disabled spaces. The remainder of the application site comprises 124 spaces, laid out as previously approved.

Layout

7. The plans accompanying the application show a rationalised layout of the combined sites set out around the existing access points from The Rock and access/exit onto John Street. The layout of the site fronting The Rock is effectively incorporated into the adjacent site and thus extended.

Scale

8. In terms of physical scale, the use is not as physically prominent as the previous buildings on the sites and is therefore in essence a lower scale use.

Landscaping

9. Existing landscaping features and established tree planting will be retained.

Appearance

10. The overall appearance of the car parking use is low key and as such does not dominate or introduce an incongruous feature into the street scene.
11. The site has been surfaced in materials matching existing materials on adjoining sites. The extent of the parking areas are denoted by precast concrete retaining blocks and parking spaces are marked out in thermoplastic lining to ensure efficient parking, whilst providing larger than usual parking bays to the car park off The Rock.

Access

Policy Adopted in Respect of Access

12. Access to the site facing The Rock will be from the existing access as a 'one way' system. Exit from this part of the car park is via the exit from the adjoining car park onto John Street. The car park to the north will continue to use the existing access and exits via John Street.

Consultation Relating to Access to the Development

13. There has been no consultation on the access.

Specific Issues Affecting Access to the Development

14. It is not believed that there are any specific issues which arise because of considerations of access.

Access to the Development from the Existing Transport Network

15. Access to the site, in this edge of town centre location, is excellent, and gives full, and easy, access to the existing transport network.

Main Points of Access and the Layout of Access Routes within the Site

16. The access points as noted above are existing. As the number of car parking spaces provided by the car park on The Rock is relatively small, and the access and exit operate based on a 'one way' system the development will not adversely affect the local highway network or road safety. The existing arrangements in relation to the larger car park to the north will remain as existing serving the car park which has been in operation for a number of years.

Maintenance of Access Features

17. On-site access will be maintained by the private company managing the car parks.

Issues of Relevance

It is important that vacant and cleared sites do not detract from the overall appearance of the town centres. If sites may remain undeveloped for some time, there should be consideration given to their temporary use or improvement prior to their long-term redevelopment. Therefore, cleared land awaiting redevelopment should, in principle, be considered for temporary uses including car parking subject to satisfactory boundary treatment, landscaping and access.

18. The application site falls within this type of site. Prior to being used as a surface car park the site comprised a low-level commercial building having various uses in the past. Continued commercial use was difficult to sustain in the current economic climate so the building was demolished with the relevant consents.
19. A suitable use therefore would be car parking, and the principle of the development should be acceptable. As noted above landscaping could be conditioned, as could boundary treatment, and it is considered that access is acceptable in the location intended.
20. In terms of the permanence of the application, it is the intention of the applicant that the site should be redeveloped for a more permanent use as part of the redevelopment of the wider area in the future. Therefore this application is for car park use on a temporary basis for five years.

Planning Policy

Places for Everyone (PfE)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document has been adopted and now forms a part of the development plan for Bury from 21/03/2024. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The policies of the PfE are therefore applicable to the assessment and determination of all planning applications from 21 March 2024.

The council has a desire for a comprehensive redevelopment of this area encompassing the application site, the former fire station site and adjoining land. Discussions have taken place with the Council's Estates Department, who have a significant ownership interest in the surrounding land, including the former Fire Station site and other adjoining properties. There is a clear mutual understanding of the longer-term objective to bring forward a comprehensive redevelopment across these combined landholdings. Considering the councils desire for a comprehensive redevelopment of this area encompassing the larger car park and the former fire station, this application is made for car park use for a temporary period of 5 years. Therefore, the following policies are assessed on this basis.

JP-S2: Carbon and Energy and JP-C2: Digital Connectivity

Given that a temporary consent would be acceptable to the council we do not agree that EV charging points are justified or necessary on the basis of a temporary use. The expense of installing the infrastructure required for EV charging points would be uneconomical given the potential revenue and the fact this would become redundant as part of any future development scheme.

In relation to JP-C2: Digital connectivity we do not feel this policy will apply to this proposal as this is not a building-led development, and therefore we feel the energy and digital connectivity requirements have no relevance.

Conclusion

21. This application is in the main retrospective and for a temporary period made to ratify the current operational use. We feel this use is compatible with the location of the site and will provide a supporting facility to the commercial/residential uses in the town centre. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully requests that retrospective planning permission is granted for the use of the site for car parking on a temporary basis.