

09/00708/FUL: CONSTRUCTION OF CAR PARK ASSOCIATED WITH HOTEL AT GREAT  
NORTHERN RAILWAY HOTEL, STATION ROAD, PETERBOROUGH

VALID: 02.07.2009

APPLICANT: CRE8 UK LTD

AGENT: DAVID SHAW

REFERRED BY: CLLR TRUEMAN

REASON: LOSS OF GARDEN GROUND

DEPARTURE: NO

CASE OFFICER: NICK HARDING

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## 1 SUMMARY/OUTLINE OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The main considerations are:

- The acceptability of additional car parking spaces
- The loss of landscaping and impact on trees
- Design for security

The Head of Planning Services recommends that the application is APPROVED.

## 2 PLANNING POLICY

In order to comply with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies set out below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Development Plan Policies

Relevant policies are listed below with the key policies highlighted.

#### **The Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement)**

CC12 Proposal for any development which would prejudice the comprehensive redevelopment of the opportunity area will not be permitted

**CC15 Within the city centre new car parking for existing development is limited to that which serves the operational requirements and needs of motorists with mobility difficulties.**

T1 New development must not unacceptably impact on any element of the transportation network.

**LNE9 New development should protect and retain trees and natural features that make a positive contribution to the environment, and make adequate provision for landscaping of the site.**

DA11 The vulnerability to crime must be satisfactorily addressed, in the design, location and layout of proposals.

### Material Planning Considerations

Decisions can be influenced by material planning considerations. Relevant material considerations are set out below, with the key areas highlighted:

PPG13 Planning Policy Guidance for Transportation seeks to integrate planning and transport, and to use a package of measures to promote sustainable transport choices.

## 3 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Retrospective planning permission is sought for the creation of 30 additional car parking spaces on the site to be used for hotel and rail users. The car parking area was formerly part of the garden area of the hotel.

#### **4 DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

The application site is located within the City Centre boundary and Railway Station Opportunity area, as defined by the Peterborough Local Plan. It is also located adjacent to the Primary Public Transport corridor of Bourges Boulevard.

The land uses surrounding the site are the former royal mail sorting office to the north, the railway station to the west, and to the south a taxi rank, multi-storey car park and surface level station car park. Bourges Boulevard bounds the site to the east, beyond which is the Queensgate shopping centre and associated car parks, and the bus station.

The application site consists of the Great Northern Hotel building, its car park and garden areas. The hotel is currently closed and undergoing refurbishment works, however it is understood that it is proposed to re-open shortly. The hotel was originally built in 1852, and was further extended in 1859, and the 1970's.

#### **5 PLANNING HISTORY**

No relevant planning history

#### **6 CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS**

##### **INTERNAL**

**Head of Transport and Engineering** – Recommends refusal of the application as the development will result in an overprovision of parking in a city centre area. A travel plan to encourage a modal shift away from the car should be implemented before increasing on site car parking.

##### **EXTERNAL**

**Senior Architectural Liaison Officer** – There have been a number of recorded crimes of vehicles and occupants using the ground of the hotel in the last 12 months. In view of this history of crime on site it is considered that lighting levels of the new car parking areas should be of a good standard. Without adequate lighting, it is believed that car crime would not only continue, but that it would increase.

**Peterborough Civic Society** – Are disappointed at the loss of the garden area which they considered provided an important setting to the hotel and provided a valuable amenity area. The southern car park has been sensitively designed and implemented with good materials, with an appropriate degree of retained landscaping. The Society's aim is to see the retention of the hotel and so accept that for viability reasons, car parking for the hotel and for income is required. On this basis, support is given to the proposal.

##### **NEIGHBOURS**

2 Letters of objection have been received from 2 residents raising the following issue:

- The land was formerly used as garden ground for the hotel for many years, and was a welcome feature of the site and should not be lost for car parking. Permission should be refused and the land re-instated as garden.

##### **COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Trueman raised concern about the loss of the hotel garden ground, and the unauthorised nature of the works that have already taken place on the site. He opposes the application and considers the garden and pond should be reinstated.

**a) The provision of car parking**

This application seeks planning permission for 30 additional car parking spaces on the site for hotel and rail users, taking the total number of spaces on site to 97. The applicant argues that when events previously took place at the hotel there was a shortage of car parking on site, with users parking on the grass areas, access ways and distant car parks. The applicant advises that this is because the adjacent multi-storey car parks of the Queensgate centre were not available for patrons to use at that time as they closed too early and before the events finished, and the railway station car parks, due to their daily pricing structure, were also not an appropriate alternative.

Unlike a series of other recently refused car park applications the hotel site is located in close proximity to the railway station, bus station, cycle network and taxi rank, therefore there are many opportunities for users of the site to travel sustainably and by other modes of transport other than the private car. However, despite the availability of these other sustainable travel options the hotel has found that, due to the nature of their use and late night operations and when the sustainable travel modes are not so readily available or patrons for personal safety reasons preferred to bring their car, the number of car parking spaces on site was not sufficient.

Policy CC15 seeks to limit the provision of car parking spaces in city centre developments encouraging the shared use of existing car parks, and improving accessibility by means of transport other than the car before allowing new car parking. The applicant has looked into the possibility of sharing nearby car parks but the pricing structures and opening hours have proved to be unsuitable. The sites location is very sustainable in close proximity to the bus and train stations and adjacent to cycle routes and taxi ranks, therefore it is difficult to see how the applicant could improve the accessibility by means other than the car any further. The implementation of a travel plan to help encourage people to car share, cycle, use public transport etc is the only additional measure that the applicant could consider.

Policy CC15 states when it is not possible to share existing car parks, the number of new spaces should be that which serves the operational requirements of the business and the needs of motorists with mobility difficulties.

Using Peterborough City Council parking maximum standards the number of spaces for this development should be 81, therefore the hotel currently has a shortfall of 14 spaces. However the proposed development would result in an overprovision of 16 spaces, and will not just be used for the operational needs of the development; the applicant proposes to allow the car park to be used for rail users and hotel users. This is in line with the policy objective of shared use of the car parking spaces and will assist in the use of journeys by train.

Whilst the addition of car parking spaces on this city centre site is not strictly in accordance with Policy CC15 of the Local Plan, on balance it is considered the addition of 30 spaces, to meet the specific needs of this development and which can be used for railway car parking is in this instance considered to be acceptable. A condition requiring a travel plan to be implemented to encourage more sustainable modes of transport is also recommended.

**b) Landscaping and impact on trees**

The extended car parking areas on site are within the rooting zone of a significant number of trees, most notably a linear group of Lime trees on the southern boundary of the premises, Tree Preservation Order reference 4.1992. It is highly likely that the construction of these parking areas would have resulted in harm to the shrub planting and trees directly adjacent, as the removal of topsoil and construction of the parking areas could have caused significant root severance and compaction to the tree roots. The potential for harm to the trees has already occurred and cannot be reversed, and the true consequences of this development on the trees would not be able to be identified for some time, potentially years.

There has been loss of a garden on the site, however it is considered that the significant elements of the original hotel pleasure garden have been retained, and the new parking areas are well screened from the public realm. In addition the garden could have been significantly altered in ways that did not require

planning permission, so it would not be possible to insist that the garden be reinstated in its entirety. To maintain adequate screening and to improve the setting of the hotel a comprehensive landscaping scheme, including repair and refurbishment of boundary railings together with specimen tree and shrub planting would be appropriate. This could be secured by a planning condition. There is a large tree opposite the station which has had much of its crown removed. This tree should be completely removed and replaced with at least three limes to complement the existing specimens, which are likely to have been part of the original pleasure garden.

Whilst the damage to the existing trees and shrubs on site is regrettable, it is considered that in this instance, a comprehensive landscape scheme and replacement planting would be an acceptable mitigation measure. On this basis the proposal is considered to be in accordance with LNE9 of the Local Plan.

#### c) **Design for security**

There is a history of car crime on the site. It is considered this would not only continue but increase with the provision of additional car parking spaces on the site. The use of appropriate lighting in the new car parking areas would be an appropriate measure to assist in reducing the vulnerability to crime, and could be secured by means of a planning condition. This addresses the concern raised by the Police Architectural Liaison Officer.

Subject to the implementation of appropriate lighting, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy DA11 of the Local Plan.

## **8 CONCLUSIONS**

Subject to the imposition of the attached conditions, the proposal is acceptable having been assessed in the light of all material considerations, including weighting against relevant policies of the development plan and specifically:

- a) The proposal is acceptable and would not be contrary to any land allocations in the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement) 2005.
- b) Subject to the implementation of an agreed Travel Plan (to be secured through condition) involving the promotion of cycle and bus travel, this proposal for car parking provision above the maximum number of spaces normally permitted via Local Plan Policy, will mitigate pressures on the local road network without significant discouragement of other modes of travel. The car parking will also be a shared facility for use of rail users as well as hotel patrons. The development thereby accords with policies CC15 and T1 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement) 2005.
- c) The proposal would not have any significant adverse impact upon highway safety and convenience. The development thereby accords with policies T1 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement) 2005.
- d) a comprehensive landscape scheme and replacement planting would be an acceptable mitigation measure against the regrettable damage caused to existing landscaping. On this basis the proposal is considered to be in accordance with LNE9 of the Local Plan (First Replacement) 2005.

## **9 RECOMMENDATION**

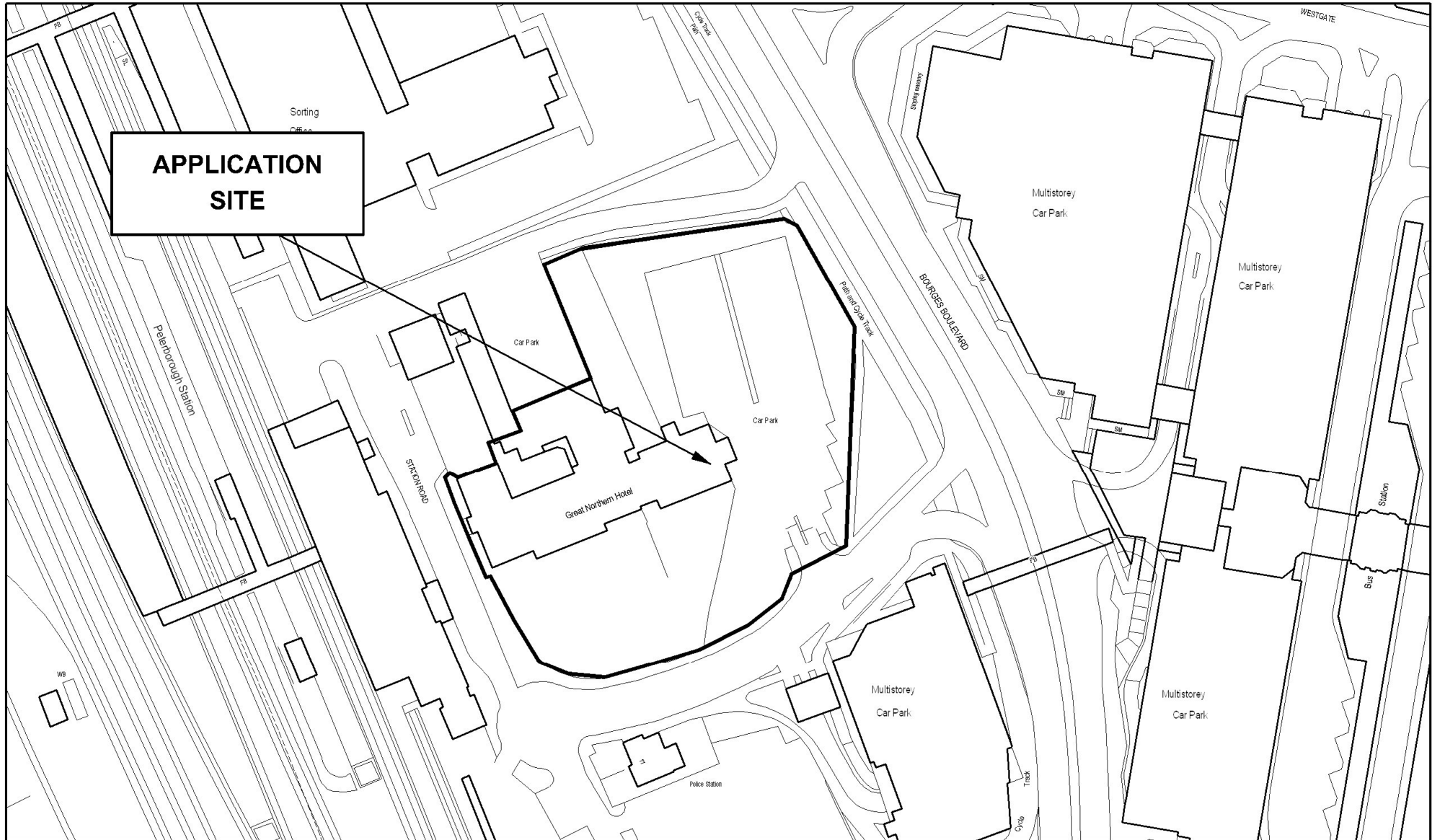
The Head of Planning Services recommends that this application is APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

- C1 Within 2 months from the date of this permission, or within other such period as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, details of the external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This lighting shall be implemented within 4 months of the date of this permission in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: In the interests of community safety in accordance with policy DA11 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).

- C2** Within three months from the date of this permission a scheme for the landscaping of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the landscaping scheme shall include details of hard landscaping, planting plans, written specification (including cultivation and other operations associated with tree, shrub, hedge or grass establishment), schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities and an implementation programme.  
Reason: In order to improve the visual amenity of the areas, in accordance with Policy LNE9 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).
- C3** If within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting of any tree or shrub that tree or shrub, or any tree or shrub planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, [or becomes, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective,] another tree or shrub of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.  
Reason: To ensure that the successful establishment of the landscaping scheme, in accordance with Policy LNE10 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).
- C4** Within three months from the date of this permission a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boundary treatment shall be completed within 6 months of the date of this permission in accordance with the approved details.  
Reason: In order to improve the visual amenity of the areas, in accordance with Policy LNE9 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).
- C5** Notwithstanding the details hereby approved, within 2 months from the date of this permission, a travel plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The travel plan shall include targets and proposals for promotional measures, incentives to encourage the use of public transport, cycling, walking and car sharing, together with a timetable for the implementation of each of these measures. The details approved shall be implemented in accordance with the timetable contained therein.  
Reason: To facilitate sustainable modes of travel, such as walking, cycling or public transport, rather than continued demand for these temporary parking spaces, in accordance with policy T1 of the Adopted Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement) 2005.

Copy to Councillors: Hussain, Khan, and Fazal.



**LOCATION PLAN 09/00708/FUL**

Great Northern Railway Hotel, Station Road, Peterborough

Scale 1:1250 Date 20/8/2009 Name MKB Department Planning Services

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