

Item No. 30/04	Classification OPEN	Decision Level PLANNING COMMITTEE	Date 04.03.2003
From DEVELOPMENT & BUILDING CONTROL MANAGER		Title of Report DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	
Proposal Erection of a six storey self-storage centre with associated parking and vehicular access		Address Former HMSO Print Works Amelia Street SE17	
Ward Newington			

1. **PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To consider the above application which is for committee consideration due to the number of objections received.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Grant Permission.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The application proposal is for the construction of a six storey building comprising of a self storage facility. The proposal is to be completed in two phases, with the rear element comprising Phase 2. There is an existing single storey industrial unit on the site which was used as a printing works for HMSO which was vacated in April 2000. The property is situated in an employment area. To the north and east are industrial buildings, including the Newington Industrial Estate. To the east and west are mixed use developments on Walworth Road and Amelia Street, with some solely residential properties in Amelia Street.
- 3.2 Prior to the submission of this application a proposal was submitted for the redevelopment of this site and 11 Steedman Street to the north for a mixed use development comprising of live work units, housing, offices and a six-storey self storage building. This has been held in abeyance due to conflict with policies in the Draft Deposit Unitary Development Plan. A further application for a mixed use development was received in December 2002. There is no other planning history for this site.
- 3.3 The proposal comprises of a building with a footprint measuring approximately 29 metres wide with a length of 35 metres. The building is to have a slightly pitched roof measuring approximately 20 metres to the eaves. The proposal was originally submitted as a seven storey building. A light well is provided between phases 1 and 2, adjacent to offices at 144 to 152 Walworth Road. All six floors will provide self storage with a reception area and staff facilities on the ground floor.
- 3.4 The applicant's agent has supplied a comprehensive list of proposed internal materials that are used in all their premises. No details of external materials have been submitted, however, these can be conditioned. An indicative coloured drawing has been provided which shows a panel clad building in various blue and grey colours.
- 3.5 Externally a 'dropping off bay is provided' to the front, together with 7 parking spaces, cycle racks and motorbike parking. A small amount of planting is to be provided at the vehicular access point. The external parking, loading areas and vehicular access have been amended

in line with the Traffic Groups comments.

4. FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 Main Issues

The main issues in this case are the appearance of the proposal in the street scene, impact on amenity of adjoining occupiers, Council's policies in relation to employment and preferred industrial locations and suitability of a self-storage building in this location.

4.2 Planning Policy

The property is located within an Employment Area.

Southwark Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

Policy E.2.3 Aesthetic Control - Complies appearance, height and design of building considered acceptable.

Policy E.3.1 Protection of Amenity - Partly complies, proposal may affect the light of occupiers of offices at 144-152 Walworth Road.

Policy B.1.1 Protection of Employment Areas and Identified Sites - Complies.

Policy T.6.3 Parking Space in New Developments - Complies, seven parking spaces, bicycle and motorbike parking provided.

Within Preferred Industrial Locations and Elephant and Castle Opportunity Area

Southwark Draft Deposit Unitary Development Plan

Policy 3.14 Quality in Design - Complies, design, height and scale all acceptable.

Policy 3.15 Urban Design - Complies, building is considered to be of a high quality.

Policy 3.2 Protection of Amenity - Complies.

Policy 1.4 Preferred Industrial Locations - Complies, proposal is for a Class B Use and will provide some employment, albeit limited.

Policy 5.6 Parking - Complies, adequate provision provided.

4.3 Consultations

Site Notice: 28 October 2002

Press Notice: 31.12.2002

Consultees:

Units 1-24 (cons) Newington Industrial Estate, 152-178, 186, 186A, & 184 Crampton Street;
Queens Head, 2/16, 9, 52-66 Amelia Street
11, 12, 13, 14 & 15 Iliffe Yard; 89-96 (cons) Iliffe Street
144-152, 140, 142 Garage 120/138, 182/202 Walworth Road
Traffic Group; Public Protection; Design Officer

Replies from:

62 Amelia Street -

- Building at seven storeys is out of scale and unsightly.
- Block the view from roof terraces and windows of the overlooking flats.
- Traffic - site is opposite a busy entrance to the police station, it will both add to the congestion and freight traffic situation.
- No benefit to local residents.

60 Amelia Street -

- Loss of view, other large commercial buildings already erected contributing to noise from existing commercial uses and the railway line.
- Traffic issues, additional congestion, 5 actual accidents, concerns about pedestrian safety in particular elderly and children.
- Additional pollution from car emissions and light pollution.
- Goes against the policies of the GLA in terms of commercial and residential interests, traffic and environmental issues.

(Photographs enclosed of views from flats)

140-142 Walworth Road -

- At 7 storeys the building is disproportionately tall, out of scale with area, in particular historic town hall building.
- Local authority should provide additional parking ie multi-storey car park. Associated car parking is insufficient for a 7 storey building.

London Borough of Southwark, Education Directorate -

Concerned about loss of daylight and creation of a sense of enclosure for the offices on the Walworth Road.

Councillor Pidgeon - Objects to the proposal, considers it not suitable for the area in terms of its height. Wishes to see the area reclassified to include social housing.

Traffic Group- No objection to revised access drawing 1403-120N

Design Officer - No objection.

Public Protection - No objection.

Elephant Links - Site is within the Elephant and Castle Masterplan area where mixed use schemes are preferred.

4.4 **Planning Considerations**

4.5 **Land Use**

- 4.5.1 The application site is designated as an employment area in the Unitary Development Plan and as a Preferred Industrial Location in the Draft Unitary Development Plan. These policies aim to protect industrial uses and would not normally grant planning permission other than for Class B1 business (office and light industrial), Class B2 general industrial, Class B2 general industrial and Class B8 warehousing uses. The proposal is for a self-storage building (Use Class B8) and therefore complies with these policies. While there have been suggestions that a mixed use proposal would be welcomed, this would be contrary to Council Policy. One of the primary objectives of the Elephant and Castle Opportunity Area is an increase in commercial uses to provide more jobs.
- 4.5.2 The proposal is unlikely to employ as many people as the previous use but nevertheless will provide some employment opportunity. This type of storage facility is also often used by local businesses who need storage facilities for their archives etc, or additional storage space for products. Local residents have commented that it provides no benefits for the local community. However, local residents do often use such a storage provision to store possessions while rooms are being decorated or due to lack of space, particularly flats that often have little storage space.
- 4.5.3 A resident has indicated her objection to the proposal on the grounds that the proposal is for another commercial building. While there are residential properties in Amelia Street this site has been historically used for commercial/industrial uses, which are protected as such by Council policies.

4.6 **Appearance and Design**

- 4.6.1 Discussions took place with the Council's design team prior to the submission of the

application. The application was previously submitted as a seven storey building but was reduced on the advice of officers. It is considered that in design terms a building of this scale and bulk is appropriate in this location. The design of the proposed building is considered an improvement on the normal commercial 'shed' type buildings proposed. The building will be metal clad in various shades of blue and grey providing a bold and attractive building. Further details of materials are to be conditioned. The Council's design team have raised no objections to the proposal. Local residents and Councillor Pidgeon have raised concerns in relation to the scale and height of the building. Residents are also concerned about the use of a bright colour such as blue.

4.7 Highways Issues

- 4.7.1 The application has been the subject of revisions concerning the parking provision, loading/unloading bay and vehicular access. The parking provision of 7 parking spaces is considered sufficient for the proposal. This will allow provision for staff parking and users of the facility who may be visiting their storage area. Vehicle trips to this type of use are generally low, once the storage material has been deposited as generally people do not return until they need a particular item. Details of the number of vehicle trips have been supplied. This shows details of the applicant's site at Hammersmith where at the busiest times the centre attracts 8.6 vehicles an hour. The applicants have further stated that there will be no vehicles of 7.5 tonnes or over.
- 4.7.2 Residents have objected to the proposal on grounds of additional congestion and potential pedestrian and traffic hazards. Given the level of activity of the proposed development and that of the previous use it is considered that this proposal would not result in a pedestrian or traffic hazard. The Council's Traffic Group has raised no objections to the revised proposal.

4.8 Amenity of adjoining occupiers

- 4.8.1 The main objection raised by residents is in relation to the height and scale of the building affecting their views from windows and roof terraces. They state that a large proportion of the sky that they see will be blocked by the provision of a seven storey building, although it has now been reduced to six storeys. Members will be aware that a loss of a view is not a material planning consideration, however, creating a sense of enclosure would be. The two residents in Amelia Street are occupiers of a block of flats located on the corner of Amelia Street and Crompton Street. Between their properties and the application site there is the Newington Industrial Estate and a railway line serving Blackfriars station. There is a distance of over 70 metres from the application site and the flats. It is therefore considered that the proposal will not result in the loss of amenity for these residents in terms of creating a sense of enclosure.
- 4.8.2 An objection has been received from the Council's Education Directorate raising concerns that the proposal will result in the loss of light and creation of a sense of enclosure to their offices at 144-152 Walworth Road. The proposal is situated one metre from the boundary with their offices. A light well measuring 5.8 metres by 8 metres is proposed to allow light into the windows of the offices. Normally light issues are designed to ensure that new development does not affect the amenities of residential occupiers. They can be imposed in relation to commercial properties, but generally given less weight. There is a minimum distance of 5.8 metres between the rear office windows and the flank wall of the building as a result of the light well. It is not considered to have an adverse impact on the amenities of the commercial occupiers.
- 4.8.3 There are no windows in the flank elevation therefore there are no privacy issues in respect to the rear windows of the offices at 144-152 Walworth Road.
- 4.8.4 Other issues raised by residents in relation to the design and scale of the building and traffic issues have been addressed in the report above.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6. LOCAL AGENDA 21 [Sustainable Development] IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The proposal will bring back into economic use a vacant site.

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