

Agenda Item 7

S24/1180

Proposal: Construction of an extension to the existing car park, comprised of 146 parking bays, including 11 accessible bays, and 8 EV charging parking bays.

Site Address: Station Road, Stamford

Summary of Information Received:

- Representation from Stamford Town Council
- Additional public representation

Representation from Stamford Town Council

A formal written representation has been received from Stamford Town Council which objects to the application scheme.

The comments are as follows:

“Following a review of the proposed car parking charges increase, it was recommended that there should be a further assessment completed on the future capacity requirements for additional parking in Stamford. This was ratified at the SKDC Cabinet meeting on September 24th. This can be noted in point 6 of the minutes. Therefore, we would like to object to the current application until the revised assessment has been completed – once this assessment has been received, we will comment further”.

Additional representation

An additional public representation has been received, which objects to the proposed development, and raises the following material planning considerations:

- Increased parking capacity in Stamford will suppress demand for public transport and therefore does not comply with parts of Policy ID2.
- Questions whether the proposed development makes effective use of vacant land within the centre of Stamford.

Officer Evaluation

The suitability of the site for the proposed use has been considered as part of the main Officer Report. The site is understood to have been vacant since October 2010 and has not been subject to any planning applications for alternative uses other than as a car park. The Local Planning Authority have a duty to assess the proposals as submitted, and should not consider whether alternative uses for the site may be more appropriate.

With regards to the requirement for additional parking within Stamford, as set out within the main Officer Report, the application has been accompanied by a Transport Assessment which has assessed the occupancy levels of the existing Cattlemarket Car Park. The completed surveys indicates that the existing car park exceeds the capacity during lunchtime hours, particularly during market days. Therefore, the proposed development would increase the availability of off-street parking within the town centre, and therefore reduce the likelihood of congestion within the town centre.

Whilst the comments made in relation to encouraging public transport use are noted, it is Officers' assessment that ensuring that there is sufficient parking capacity within the town centre does not directly suppress the use of public transport. Encouraging modal shift to public transport is dependent on a multitude of factors, including ensuring that public transport is cost-effective and convenient for use. In the context of this, the provision of adequate parking capacity and, therefore, the removal of congestion within the town

centre may enable the provision of a more timely public transport system. In this context, it is Officers' assessment that the application would accord with Policy ID2 when taken as a whole.

Finally, the comments from Stamford Town Council are noted. As referenced above, the application has been accompanied by a Transport Assessment which has considered the need for additional parking within Stamford; this assessment has included the completion of parking surveys in November 2023. The resolution of Cabinet in September 2024 relates to the completion of updated parking surveys to consider the impacts of changes to parking charges on the availability of parking within the District, and any associated impacts on local businesses.

It should be noted that planning applications should be determined on the basis of the evidence available at the time of determination. In this context, the resolution of the Committee to request a 6-monthly review of parking capacity does not override the obligation for planning decisions to be made in a timely manner. The evidence available at the time of determination of the current application indicates that there is an existing capacity issue within Stamford, and therefore, there is a clear need for additional capacity to be delivered.

Recommendation

Taking all of the above into account, the recommendation remains to authorise the Assistant Director – Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions.