

S/2019/1728/MAF – 152 & 154 Watling Street, Towcester, NN12 6DB

Parking Statement

Notwithstanding supporting information submitted as part of the application in the previous iterations of the Planning and Heritage Statement, submitted during the course of the application, and our letter dated 28th November 2019, the following is submitted as extra information to state the situation regarding parking and more importantly, a review of the parking situation based on the current planning use of that as a Club.

Current Use

It is clear that whilst the current use is one of Sui Generis in terms of its classification and it is therefore hard to assess the current parking requirement against that proposed given the Use Class. Notwithstanding, given the general use of the site is one of a member's club whereby people meet and have a drink etc. it is not unreasonable to equate the current use to that of a 'drinking establishment' in order to gauge the required parking provision in the adopted NCC Parking Standards document as it is clear within this document that the all other Sui Generis Uses listed do not relate to the this use (bus station, rail station, cash and carry, conference facilities, show rooms etc.) at all.

From the Parking Standards document, a 'drinking establishment' comprises the following parking standards: -

Class A4: Drinking establishments

Public houses, wine bars or other drinking establishments

Use	Vehicle	Cycle	Motorcycle/scooter	Disabled
A4	1 space per 14 sqm	1 space per 60 sqm for staff plus 1 space per 60 sqm for customers	1 space + 1 per 20 car spaces (for 1 st 100 car spaces), then 1 space per 30 car spaces (over 100 car spaces)	10% of the total car parking spaces

The Building

The application site is comprised of the existing buildings of No.152 and No.154, on the eastern side of Watling Street, which runs through the centre of Towcester.

The building has previously been used by the Towcester Conservative Club and is comprised of office space and function rooms, along with a 4-bedroom apartment, all spread over ground, first and second storeys. There is also a courtyard area to the rear of the site.

The existing floor space of the site is 839sq.m.

Parking Assessment

The Parking Standards would require the provision of 1no. parking space per dwelling, along with a further space per dwelling for visitor parking. In total, this would lead to the requirement of around 18 spaces for the 15 unit x single bedroom scheme.

In comparison, if we were to use the figures as laid out under 'drinking establishments' as shown on the previous page, it would equate to a demonstrably higher figure than that proposed for the flatted scheme. In essence and based on pure floor area of the building, there would be a requirement for 60 parking spaces. Even though the Parking Standards do not distinguish between bar area, toilets or other areas within the document, to be reasonable in our approach to working out the current situation, even if we were to divide the existing floor area up so that we only took a third of the current floor space (circa 280sq.m), it would still, under the terms of the Parking Standards, generate some 20 required parking spaces and that is without taking into account the current flat on-site (which would generate 2 spaces on its own). This is still more than that proposed here.

Whether or not the Use Class is appropriate to the proposed development, it is clear that even when one reduces the floorspace as shown, it still comprises a need for more spaces than what the proposed use does.

There are other factors which should be given appropriate weight in this case: -

1. The application site is within walking distance of the key services and facilities of Towcester centre, as well as bus stops which provide regular services to surrounding towns. As such, Towcester is regarded as one of the most sustainable locations in the area, which is reflected in the spatial strategy which directs development to the urban area of Towcester.
2. The Parking Standards do not provide any flexibility for where sites are sustainably located, paragraph 105 of the NPPF notes that when setting parking standards, factors such as this should be taken into account.
3. Given the type of development proposed, which is also a factor listed within paragraph 105 of the NPPF, typical occupiers of 1-bedroom apartments are less likely to own cars. It is also likely that people may choose this development due to the opportunity to not need to rely on the use of a car, and those who do rely on a car would be less likely to choose a site with no parking provision.
4. It is also considered that if there were any parking demand from within the site or for visitors, there are a number of public car parks across Towcester and one directly to the rear of the site, which could be used by occupants or visitors if required.

Given all of the above it is considered that the lack of on-site parking provision is satisfactory in this particular case, especially when taking into account the context of the site and type of development proposed based on the current use generated. It is also considered that the absence of on-site parking provision would not compromise highway safety given the low likelihood of occupants owning cars and the presence of car parks in the surrounding area.

Overall, given all of the above, it is considered that the proposed development is in full accordance with Section 9 of the NPPF, would not compromise highway safety, and would contribute to achieving a modal shift towards more sustainable modes of transport.