


TM05 / 00959



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PLANNING &
 TRANSPORTATION
 Tonbridge & Malling B.C.
 04 OCT 2005

28 September 2005

Dear Ms. Johnson,

RE: COBDOWN HOUSE, LONDON ROAD, DITTON.
 Proposed B1 Development – Your Ref. TM/05/00959

Thank you for your letter of 2 September 2005 in connection with our Planning application for B1 development at Cobdown House. With apologies for the delay I would like to respond as follows.

1 Travel Plan.

At this stage only a small proportion of the new floor space planned for Cobdown has a known potential end user, Kent County Football Association in building A1. The remainder of the new floor space has, as yet, no known occupiers whilst Cobdown House itself is already occupied by a long term tenant. It would not be possible to impose any new obligations upon this tenant arising as a result of this Planning application. In view of this it is not possible to prepare a 'Green Travel Plan' tailored to specific users of the development.

I have therefore undertaken research to explore the present travel offer and prepared a document 'Travel Report' outlining these as options that would be available to occupiers of the development at Cobdown.

The research has shown that public transport options serving the site are quite good and from this I believe that it is possible and sensible to reduce the car parking provision from that contained in the original application to that indicated in PPG13, Annex D: Maximum Parking Standards.

The details of the revised proposals are contained in the Travel Report. The following is a summary of the principal points:

- Number of car parking spaces has been reduced from 106 to 91 (85 spaces plus 6 disabled access spaces). With 2,672 sq.m. of commercial floor space this equates to 1 space for each 31 sq.m. of floor space plus the six disabled access spaces. (PPG 13 provides for maximum of 1 space per 30 sq.m. plus disabled spaces).
- A number of parking spaces will be placarded as being for use only by multiple occupancy vehicles (say 2 persons or more) in order to encourage car sharing. These spaces will be slightly larger than standard spaces to facilitate easy access to both sides of a vehicle and will be located close to the building entrances.

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DESIGN ▲ CONSTRUCTION ▲ DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

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- The provision for secure cycle parking has been increased from 5 to 11. Additionally the buildings in each section of the development now include a shower room and changing facility for use by cyclists.
- Traffic calming will be introduced to the access road leading through the parkland to the development. This is covered under item 4 below.

The applicant will also seek to encourage the co-operation of tenants in the buildings in the following matters:

- Provision of an information pack to all occupiers of each part of the development giving details of transport options other than the private car. E.g. bus and train times and routes, cycle network, etc.
- Provision of an information pack to all occupiers of each part of the development outlining the health benefits of cycling/walking.
- Provision of arrangements for 'emergency travel home' for people who have arrived by public transport but encounter an unexpected need to travel from work at an unusual time.
- Set up a network between all occupiers to share information about locations of home addresses facilitating car sharing across the whole development.

The car parking that has been omitted is all taken from the grassed area to the west of Cobdown House, the number of spaces here being reduced from 38 to 23. In addition I have changed the access into this car park from immediately adjacent to Cobdown House to a location further to the west and off the access driveway.

The car park area is set down into the ground slightly (as indicated on the last issue of drawings) however the spoil from this excavation is now used to create a mound in front of the parking area to screen the view of parked vehicles. Given the undulating character of the ground at this part of Cobdown Park we feel this will be an attractive feature entirely in keeping with the nature of the grounds generally.

The reduction in number of spaces from this one location has created an imbalance in the proportion of spaces for each section of the development so I have introduced a set of steps linking the upper and lower parking areas so that spaces can be shared equitably between the various building elements.

By comparison with the 1998 Planning approval our current scheme places parking to the west of Cobdown House substantially behind the building line (the 1998 scheme parking extended substantially forward of the building line) and provides an effective screen to shield the view of the parked vehicles. The current scheme also has no parking directly in front of Cobdown House whilst the 1998 scheme included 9 cars parked across the full frontage of Cobdown House. I enclose a copy of the 1998 approval site layout plan (Keith Day Partnership drawing 1682/100) not as part of our application but to illustrate these points.

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2 **Tree Planting.**

As you know from our previous submissions we have given a lot of consideration as to the disposition, size and character of the new development at Cobdown to provide a scheme that is good quality in itself and that seeks to avoid harm to the setting of Cobdown House as well as to the parkland.

Much of this was outlined in our original supporting statement and is summarised as follows:

- Break down the scale of the proposed new buildings by reduction in size and simplified detailing (relative to 1998 approval).
- Place some building in the lower level area to the east of Cobdown House so that the new is subservient to the existing.
- Omission of Building C of 1998 approval (to west and in front of Cobdown House) which would have dominated Cobdown House and (now) would intrude upon the amenity of the four recent dwellings.
- Avoid land take as much as possible by placing some new building on top of the existing single storey part to the rear of Cobdown House.
- Consider carefully the design of the buildings to create good modern architecture using materials that harmonize and reflect the surrounding woodland whilst creating a link with the materials used in Cobdown House.

In view of these considerations we believe that it is not necessary to screen the view of buildings A1 and A2 either to avoid conflict with Cobdown House or to improve the view across the parkland. Indeed we believe that the buildings will contribute positively to the setting as a whole.

Notwithstanding this we are conscious of the concerns expressed by the Sports and Social Club and so, as an issue separate from the Planning process, the applicant intends to offer to provide funds direct to the Sports and Social Club to permit them to undertake additional tree planting in a manner they may choose jointly.

There has been contact between ourselves and the Sports and Social Club (they were good enough to call us shortly after the last Committee meeting). We await their return call to advise of times that would be convenient to them for a meeting and intend to pursue this matter at such a meeting. In the event that any further matters arise from such a meeting we will of course keep you informed.

3 **Site Plan.**

We enclose five copies of the site location plan with the red line application site boundary taken to the point where the driveway meets Station Road.

4 **Traffic Calming.**

We enclose five copies of Peter Brett Associates Traffic Calming Report and details.

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The same scheme was submitted to your authority in response to Condition 9 of the 1998 approval (TM/98/00782/FL). As you will know the scheme covered by the 1998 approval included substantially more commercial floor space (3,776 sq.m. then, 2,672 sq.m. now) and a much larger number of car parking spaces (232 then 91 now). The same traffic-calming proposal must therefore be seen as satisfactory in connection with the current less onerous scheme. To assist I have also enclosed copies of your authority's approval notice dated 21 November 2003 covering these details.

Notwithstanding this, as with the tree planting, we envisage traffic management as one of the topics for discussion with the Sports and Social Club. In the event that a better solution to traffic management evolves from these discussions we would of course pursue this with your authority prior to implementation of such measures.

5 **Alternative Access Routes.**

We have looked into the access rights across the parkland and enclose a copy of an extract from the Land Registry plan showing the alignment of such rights.

As you will see the rights are limited to those shown on the application documents and so it is not possible to offer any alternative. Additionally the scheme is of a scale that would almost certainly render the provision of a new access to a different alignment uneconomic.

We enclose five copies of each of the following documents for inclusion with our Planning application:

Drawing 817.10E	Site Plan showing revised car and cycle parking.
Drawing 817.11C	Lower Ground Floor Plan showing revised car and cycle parking and shower/changing facilities in buildings.
Drawing 817.12D	First/Upper Ground Floor Plan showing shower/changing facilities in buildings.
Drawing 817.14D	Upper First Floor Plan showing revisions in accordance with revised parking arrangements.
Drawing 817.16C	Elevations Proposed altered to reflect changes to parking layout.

Travel Plan

Copy of Land Registry Plan

Traffic Calming Report (includes T.M.B.C. approval notice)

Keith Day Drawing 1682/100 for information

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We would be most grateful if you would add this information to our application documents and process the application to determination as soon as possible. If you would like any additional information or to discuss the matter please do not hesitate to contact us. In the meantime should any further matters arise from a meeting with the Sports and Social Club we will of course advise you straight away.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Mutch

Enc.
Cc Patman Trust