

 **Planning Committee Map**
Site address: 15 Steele Road, London, NW10 7AS
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This map is indicative only.

RECEIVED: 26 September, 2011

WARD: Stonebridge

PLANNING AREA: Harlesden Consultative Forum

LOCATION: 15 Steele Road, London, NW10 7AS

PROPOSAL: Proposed change of use from existing office ancillary to the garage workshop to a radio controlled mini cab office (Use Class Sui Generis)

APPLICANT: Autos Motors Ltd

CONTACT: Draw - IT

PLAN NO'S:
(See Condition 2 for the approved plans)

RECOMMENDATION

Approve

EXISTING

The premises, currently used as a vehicle repair workshop (Use Class B2) are situated on the eastern side of Steele Road, within Park Royal Strategic Industrial Land.

Vehicle access to the premises can be gained via Steele Road to the front, and Corby Road at the rear. Potentially up to 5 cars can park within the service areas either side of the building.

The property is not within a Conservation Area, nor is it a Listed Building.

PROPOSAL

Proposed change of use from existing office ancillary to the garage workshop to a radio controlled mini cab office (Use Class *Sui Generis*)

HISTORY

There are no recent planning applications for this site.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004

SH14 Mini-Cab Offices

SH19 Rear Servicing

TRN4 Measures to Make Transport Impact Acceptable

TRN22 Parking Standards: Non-residential developments

EMP8 Protection of Strategic & Borough Employment Areas

Brent Core Strategy – July 2010

CP12 Park Royal

CP20 Strategic Industrial Locations

Main Policy Considerations;

Principle of use in Strategic Industrial Location

Transportation implications of use

Impact on neighbouring occupiers

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

N/A

CONSULTATION

In total 17 neighbouring and surrounding properties were consulted on 18 October 2011 along with Brent's Transportation Unit.

Five letters objecting to the change of use of have been received. The concerns raised in the objection letters are summarised as follows:-

- *Steele Road is already busy and there is no further room for the extra vehicles a mini-cab business would bring.*
- *The existing use as a garage has resulted in vehicles awaiting repair being parked on the surrounding highways. Allowing a mini-cab use will exacerbate the problem.*
- *Concern that large numbers of cars will be parked on Steele Road, however if assurances can be made that mini-cabs will not be parked up outside the premises, and that drivers are not based at the office this objection can be withdrawn.*

Transportation; - On the basis that this is proposed to be a radio-controlled only operation with no customers being picked up from base, or drivers visiting base then there is no objection on Transportation grounds.

Site visited on 11/11/11.

REMARKS

This application proposes a change of use to part of the existing B2 premises to accommodate a radio controlled mini-cab operation. At the moment the building is a vehicle workshop, with small ancillary office areas to the front and the rear. The proposal is to change the use of the existing office area at the front, which is 6m² in area into a radio-controlled mini-cab office. No customer or driver waiting areas are proposed.

Policy context and principle of change of use to radio controlled mini-cab office;

The site is within designated Strategic Industrial Land (SIL) and under this policy the Council will protect such designated areas for employment uses characterised by use classes B1, B2 and B8, or *Sui Generis* uses that are closely related. The same policy context is set out in UDP policy EMP8.

The proposed change of use would see a very minor loss of B2 floorspace, and the proposed replacement mini-cab operation would not normally be considered to be a closely related use found in industrial areas. However the critical point is that the proposal is for a radio controlled only mini-cab office, and given the minor amount of floorspace involved on balance this change would not undermine the role of the Strategic Industrial Land.

UDP policy SH14 states that mini-cab offices and similar operations will be permitted only if traffic safety problems would not be caused, and where they are located away from pre-dominantly residential areas. Regard must be had to the concentration of such uses though.

The policy also states that where sufficient off-street parking cannot be provided then consent may be granted for a radio controlled operation only, on a temporary basis so the use can be monitored.

As the proposal is so minor in floorspace Officers consider that it will not undermine the employment land hierarchy, and as it is for a radio controlled office only there is no conflict with LDF Core Strategy policy CP20 or UDP policy SH14. However, before the proposed change of use can be considered acceptable, in all respects, the other, more direct, impacts of the proposed development must first be considered.

Impacts of the Proposed Use on Surrounding Area

Surrounding uses are commercial, there are a variety of light industrial and general industrial uses along Steele Road. There are no residential units located nearby.

The main area of concern surrounding mini cab uses is often the impact on parking and traffic. As this is proposed a radio controlled mini cab office only, by its nature there would be no customer collections from base, nor would drivers be permitted to drive to base and wait there for jobs. On this basis Officers do not consider that the change of use will give rise to parking problems or generate extra traffic on the surrounding roads. If well managed on-site and with the controls imposed through planning conditions it is probable that the use would have very little impact on the surrounding industrial area.

Any permission will be subject to conditions restricting its use as an office only, with no customers allowed to be picked up from site and no drivers visiting/collecting from site. It is recommended that the permission be granted on a temporary basis in the first instance so that this use can be monitored and a 1 year temporary permission is recommended. This 1 year temporary permission will allow the local planning authority, in conjunction with Highways Officers to review the situation and assess what impacts the use (if any) has had on the surrounding area in terms of noise and parking.

The nature of this site in Park Royal industrial estate means it unlikely that members of the public would be attracted to base, Steele Road does not experience high numbers of pedestrian footfall. The conclusion may be different if it were close to a transport interchange, or close to a high street.

Transportation Implications

In terms of considering this application, no objection has been raised by Transportation Officers in relation to the use.

As no increase in floor space is proposed, and this is for a radio controlled only operation the change of use does not affect parking or servicing standards, as set out in the 2004, UDP.

Transportation officers have noted that there is parking available within the front and back yards of the premises, accessed from both Steele Road and Corby Road. However a condition is recommended controlling these spaces for the existing B2 vehicle repair workshop only, these parking spaces are not permitted to be used in association with the proposed mini-cab office as this would be contradictory to it being a radio controlled base only.

On this basis, despite the objections received on parking and traffic grounds, the impact of the proposed change of use on the free and safe flow of traffic and on existing parking pressures are not considered to be significantly worse to warrant a refusal of this application on these grounds alone.

Conclusion

The proposed change of use is acceptable in policy terms and the proposal is considered to comply with policies EMP8, SH14, TRN22 of Brent's Unitary Development Plan 2004, and LDF Core Strategy Policy CP02.

Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be **granted, subject to conditions.**

RECOMMENDATION: Grant Consent

REASON FOR GRANTING

- (1) The proposed development is in general accordance with policies contained in the:-

Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004
Brent Core Strategy 2010

Relevant policies in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan are those in the following chapters:-

Built Environment: in terms of the protection and enhancement of the environment

Employment: in terms of maintaining and sustaining a range of employment opportunities

Transport: in terms of sustainability, safety and servicing needs

Park Royal: to promote the opportunities and benefits within Park Royal

CONDITIONS/REASONS:

- (1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning on the date of this permission.

Reason: To conform with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- (2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawing(s) and/or document(s):

Plan S.1
Plan S.2
OS Sitemap
Land Registry site plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- (3) This permission shall be for a limited period of 1 year only expiring 12 months from the date of the decision notice when (unless a further application has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority) and the use hereby approved shall be discontinued.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to review the position in the light of the impact of this use during a limited period on the neighbouring highways and local area.

- (4) The mini-cab business shall operate only as a radio-controlled, mini-cab office from which cars are directed and no drivers or customers shall visit the premises at any time.

Reason: To accord with the terms of the application and ensure that vehicles and customers do not visit or congregate at the premises, in the interests of the free flow of traffic on the neighbouring highway and the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties, consistent with policy SH14 of the Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004.

- (5) The proposed off-street parking area(s) as indicated on drawing S.2 shall only be used in conjunction with the existing vehicle repair business, and at no time is it permissible for these spaces to be used by mini-cab drivers for collection or waiting purposes.

Reason; In the interests of maintaining the free flow and safe movement of traffic.

INFORMATIVES:

None Specified

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

London Borough of Brent, UDP 2004
Brent Core Strategy 2010

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Gary Murphy, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, Tel. No. 020 8937 5227