

**From:** [alan.story@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:alan.story@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Subject:** Planning application 6/2016/0318/MAJ - Media House  
**Date:** 21 April 2016 09:39:03

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**Response to Planning application from Hertfordshire County Council (T and CP GDP Order 2015)**

**District ref:** 6/2016/0318/MAJ

**HCC ref:** WH/59/2016

**HCC received:** 31/03/2016

**Area manager:** James Dale

**Case officer:** Alan Story

**Location**

Media House

Sopers Road

Cuffley

EN6 4RY

**Application type**

Full application

**Proposal**

Erection of additional floor to provide 1719 sq metres of B1a (Office) floorspace in association with the use of the premises for B1 offices together with elevational alterations to the remainder of the building

**Decision**

Notice is given under article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that the Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Prior to the commencement of the use hereby permitted the vehicular access shall be reduced in width to a maximum of 4.8m in accordance with the Hertfordshire County Council access construction specification Reason: In the interest of highway safety and traffic movement.
- 2) Prior to the commencement of the use hereby permitted the on-site car and cycle parking shall be laid out and demarcated, in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use. Reason: To ensure the permanent availability of the parking /manoeuvring area, in the interests of highway safety.

I recommend inclusion of the following Advisory Note (AN) to ensure that any works within the highway are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highway Act 1980.

AN1) The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN2) It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a

highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN3) Where works are required within the public highway to facilitate the new or amended vehicular access, the Highway Authority require the construction of such works to be undertaken to their satisfaction and specification, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. If any of the works associated with the construction of the access affects or requires the removal and/or the relocation of any equipment, apparatus or structures (e.g. street name plates, bus stop signs or shelters, statutory authority equipment etc.) the applicant will be required to bear the cost of such removal or alteration. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

#### Comments:

Application is described as providing 1719 sq metres of B1a (Office) floorspace however section 18 of the application form confirms that the net additional gross internal floorspace following development shall be 1378m<sup>2</sup> of floor area following the necessary internal changes to facilitate the proposed additional floor. I have assessed the proposals on the basis of this net additional floor space.

HCC would require a development within this use class (B1) to be provided with a Transport Statement where the floor area was in excess of 1500m<sup>2</sup>, and therefore a TS is not required. The Design and Access statement suggests that the proposals serve to relocate staff from a local employer who are required to move as a result of prior approval consent for B1 to housing to an adjacent site. It is my understanding that this may relate to District Reference S6/2015/1119/OR - Prior approval for the change of use from Class B1 (Office) to Class C3 (Dwellinghouses) Everest Ltd Everest House, Cuffley, to which my comments dated 10/6/2015 refer.

HCC have previously accepted the loss of the vehicle movements associated with the B1 use, and replaced by a reduced residential demand. This present application would serve to reintroduce these movements.

I consider B1 use of 1378m<sup>2</sup> floor area has the potential (TRICS assessment) to generate circa 6.5 vehicle trips / 100m<sup>2</sup> of floor area across the day, and therefore generate approximately 89 two way vehicle trips. In the AM peak arrivals may reasonably be expected to be circa 20 inbound movements and a similar level of trips in the PM peak. Such a level of vehicle arrival equates to approximately 1 every 3 minutes during the peaks and would be negligible in terms of vehicle flows on Station Road being in excess of 1000 vehicles in the AM peak (E/W, 2014 figure). The earlier application (Everest Ltd, Everest House, Potters Bar) provided a total of 45 dwellings in place of the B1 floor area, HCC would have considered at this that such a development might give rise to circa 30 movements in the peaks

The development now considered shall therefore reintroduce inbound trips to Sopers Road in the AM peak at an approximate level of 45, and these shall be trips already on the network currently and evident in visible daily traffic flows on Station Road and the wider network. In net terms, if consent is granted, the area shall experience a slight increase in trips on the network which in real terms represents the additional housing considered

previously, if accepting that employment trips remain largely unchanged. Trips for the two uses are opposite and opposing.

Sopers Road Industrial Estate is a small trading estate located to the south-east of the railway station. The trading estate is located on the edge of the village, separated from residential development by the railway line.

The site is in a very sustainable location, located on the periphery of the village centre, and in close proximity to Cuffley Station providing access to 3 trains per hour (off peak) to Moorgate with trains also to Hertford North and Letchworth via Stevenage. Local shops, and other facilities exist nearby this as well as access to bus routes 302, 380 and 242.

The application describes that parking for 92 vehicles shall be provided, and shall be for the LPA to determine whether sufficient parking is provided to serve the requirements of the increased employment space, however the Highway Authority note that in close proximity to the site is public car parking in the control of the Parish Council and parking controls exist locally (part) to control / deter parking in inappropriate locations. Any shortfall in parking is unlikely to have a significant highway impact.

I would observe that some parking is in tandem, but it is not unreasonable in a work environment for such an arrangement to be workable. Spaces parallel to direction of travel are shown at 2.4m x 4.8m and commonly a distance of 6m is recommended for such bays to ensure they're accessibility even when adjacent bays are occupied, but it is again not unreasonable to expect within an employment situation to consider this workable. Parking in such a situation can, at times, provide an informal arrangement, but I would recommend that all parking areas provided are identified with marked bays in order that the level of parking described shall be achieved representing effective use of site area. I present no objection that parking arrangement precludes through movement within the site, removing an access / egress arrangement and instead providing flows at both points of access, noting that footway activity is likely to be low.

No new or amended access is provided as part of the development, and existing access points (two off) are constructed to serve the industrial nature of the site providing wide vehicle crossovers at both points. As the development proposals include loss of B1(c) use (Light industrial) and the use becomes solely B1(a) offices, these accesses as presently provided are in excess of operational requirements. The Highway Authority would recommend that concurrent with any grant of consent, and prior to occupation, the access points be reduced in width to reflect the change in vehicle type attending the site. Such a requirement shall improve footway conditions at this point (as well as potentially provide additional on-street parking capacity)

Cycle parking is described as remaining at 10 spaces, it is unclear on submitted plans where this is located.

**Alan Story**

**Date 21/04/2016**

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