



Coventry City Council

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Public report

Report to
Cabinet Member (City Development)

17th June 2010

Report of
Director of City Services and Development

Title
Proposed new Salvation Army residential centre, Harnall Lane West.
(Foleshill Ward)

1. Purpose of the Report:

This report details the objections received during the 21 day public notice of closure for the car park at Harnall Lane West. This formal process was required before making a decision regarding the car park closure.

2. Recommendations

The Cabinet Member is asked to:

- a) consider the objections including the petitions received to the proposed closure of the Harnall Lane West car park and the community consultation referred to in 6.
- b) subject to consideration of a) above approve the closure of the car park and authorise the Director of Finance and Legal Services to advertise any modifications to the Road Traffic Order.
- c) request that officers review the provision of disabled car parking spaces in the vicinity of Harnall Lane West.

3. Information/Background:

- 3.1 The existing 99 bed Salvation Army hostel (Site 2 on plan), built in the 1970's, is situated in Lincoln Street in close proximity to the car park on Harnall Lane West (Site 1 on plan). The Harnall Lane car park has always been a temporary car park created by the Primary Care Trust as part replacement for the Russell Street Car Park. The hostel is outdated and is no longer fit for operational purposes. The Salvation Army struggle to deliver education and training in the present building and this means it takes longer to move people towards living

independently. The condition of the building also means it has a very limited life and it is not economically viable to refurbish.

- 3.2 The proposed new development will have 80 bedrooms (all with en-suite shower-rooms) together with new training and enterprise facilities. The new facility will enable residents to receive tailor-made training packages to help them settle in the community, obtain work and live independently. It is also proposed that the training facility will be available for use by the local community which will contribute to community cohesion. The principle of this development has already been approved by planning committee.
- 3.3 The existing hostel was modelled on the principles of addressing street homelessness and has tended to lead to people being accommodated on a long term basis with limited opportunities for accessing jobs and independent living. Central Government's Places of Change criteria, now places the emphasis on shorter stay accommodation with intensive and more focussed training (both formal and practical) to equip people with new skills and the capacity to access further education, regular employment and independent living. The aim is to radically reduce the average stay from up to 3-4 years in some cases, down to just 3-6 months.
- 3.4 The Government's Homes and Communities Agency are providing £6.42m of the capital funding and to meet their timescale construction must start on site by Summer 2010. The total construction costs including fees are £9.56millions.

4. Car park closure and replacement

- 4.1 The Harnall Lane West Car Park, owned by Coventry City Council (site 1 on the annexed plan) provides 65 'long stay' spaces. It was developed in 2006 as a temporary car park by the Primary Care Trust ('PCT'). This was to provide part-replacement car parking for the nearby 116 space Russell Street Car Park (site E), which was closed for the development of the PCT's new health centre. (Note: This PCT scheme was delayed and only commenced earlier this year). A further 78 additional spaces were also created by the PCT (on Lincoln Street car park - site B) to complete the replacement of the Russell Street spaces.

To summarise the main car parking alterations-

Car Park A should open in Summer 2010 (+116 spaces).

Car Park B is due to close in Summer 2010 (-78 spaces)

Car Park D has recently closed on Sundays due to a tiny level of usage (300 spaces).

Car Park E has recently closed (-116 spaces) but will reopen with a reduced capacity in 2012 (+56 spaces).

Car Park F has recently opened and will close in January 2012 (-36 spaces)

- 4.2 Harnall Lane West car park currently has two key users:

City College staff and students: Monday to Friday daytime use. c.70-80% during term times. This will significantly reduce as users move to the similar priced, recently opened spaces in the City College's new 460 space multi-storey car park (site D on plan).

Local Temples. Major weekend use, and full on Sundays when parking is free of charge. Their parking need varies between minimal and large at different times of the week – with highest demand on Sunday peak times for religious and wedding celebrations.

- 4.3 The Salvation Army scheme requires the closure of the 65 space Harnall Lane West car park. Officers are of the view that, thanks to a number of new developments, there

is sufficient car parking provision in the Swanswell area to more than replace this specific loss including:

(i) 460 new spaces at the City College multi-storey car park (Site D on plan). Now open to everyone - not just staff and students with similar charges to other public car parking in the area. In addition in March 2010 City College and the Guru Nanak Parkash Temple agreed an arrangement for the Temple to use the car park on Sundays, their peak demand day. This arrangement allowed the Temple to take upto 300 spaces at £1 per space on Sundays. This offer was withdrawn after four weeks due to the low level of usage. On three successive Sundays there were less than three cars in the car park. This number rose to 102 vehicles on the fourth Sunday when there was a Sikh march.

(ii) 78 spaces at NHS Lincoln Street car park (site B on plan). On average, there are over 50 spaces available at Sunday peak times. It is understood this car park is due to close in Summer 2010.

(iii) 85 spaces at Leicester Row car park (site C on plan). Council owned with 50 plus spaces available at Sunday peak times. (site C on plan)

(iv) 36 public spaces have been made available by the PCT in Byron Street. (site F on plan)

We are advised by the PCT that a further 116 new spaces at the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital site (site A) are likely to be available later this year. These will be followed by 56 spaces which will be available at the proposed new City Centre Health Centre (site E on plan) which is set to open in January 2012.

4.5 Consequently, your officers are satisfied there is sufficient planned replacement car parking to satisfy demand. Therefore officers request approval to the car park closure.

5 Proposal and Other Option(s) considered

The following options have been considered:

5.1 Option1:

Refurbishment by the Salvation Army of their current Lincoln Street Centre.

Detailed surveys have shown that refurbishment is not practical or economic. This is further exasperated as capital funding is not available. The building would require a period of closure which would have an adverse impact on the delivery of homelessness services and the building would still not meet the Places of Change criteria. This option would not require the Council's car park.

5.2 Option2:

Salvation Army to redevelop new centre on their existing Lincoln Street site.

This could not be done without the closure of the current centre for the 15 month construction period, which would adversely impact on homelessness and provide significant challenges to establish temporary accommodation capable of providing the level of training and enterprise facilities required. This option would not require the Council's car park.

5.3 Option 3:

Develop the new centre on another site.

The Salvation Army need a site close to the city centre where they can easily access local services including health, training, and education facilities. The Harnall Lane site is considered to be the only suitable Council owned site.

5.4 Option 4:

Develop the new centre on the Harnall Lane West Car Park Site

The site is less than 200 metres from the existing facility and its use in the area is already well established. It can also be progressed in time to enable the Salvation Army to access funding and once complete they will be able to provide better quality services to local people. This is the proposal that officer's recommend.

6 Results of consultation undertaken, and objections received:

6.1 The Council's project team has been in consultation with local people. This has included meetings with directly affected parties including the two local Temples on 22 October and 24 November 2009. A special Salvation Army newsletter was sent to 200 local residents. A staffed exhibition on 22 October 2009 at City College and the display of the current planning application drawings in St Peters Community Centre. A presentation was given to the Swanswell Community Liaison Group on 29 October 2009, and again discussed at the next 10 December 2009 meeting. There has been on going correspondence with the objecting groups and telephone and e.mail discussion with objectors. Officers have also been in communication with local ward Councillors and MP's.

Summary of the five letters of objection received during 21 day car park closure notice period:

1. Mr A Takhar – on behalf of the Guru Nanak Parkash Temple wished for the car parking spaces to be maintained.
2. Murria Solicitors, on behalf of Shree Krishna Temple, Harnall Lane West – objected on the ground of car park spaces, race relations, Disability Discrimination, ethnic relations and closure would interfere with the congregation's right to worship and thus constitute a breach of Article 9 of ECHR.
3. Mr K Rav, President of Shree Krishna Temple has objected on behalf of the congregation to the closure of the car park.
4. Mr Babu Govind Garala, MBE, Postmaster objected to the lack of car parking in the area and also to the officer's assessment that there is sufficient car parking.
5. Father Romuald Szczodrowski, St Stanislaus Kostka Church objected on behalf of the Polish Parish to the closure of the car park.

6.2 Two local ('Shree Krishna' and 'GNP') Temples had also previously objected on the following basis:

- (i) The proposed new centre being opposite them, and it creating anti-social nuisances.
- (ii) Loss of the car park immediately opposite their Temple; and lack of parking for their needs in the locality generally.
- (iii) That the land sale to the Salvation Army should not proceed.
- (iv) They wish to purchase this car park themselves (for continued car parking).
- (v) That the land should be re-categorised as public car park.

Some residents have also previously objected as follows:

- (iv) The proposed new centre moving closer to them, and creating anti-social nuisances.
- (v) Adverse impact on house prices.
- (vi) Loss of parking for local businesses and customers (e.g. chip shop).

- 6.3 Councillor Taylor and Councillor Singh Auluck have presented petitions objecting to the car park closure and the disposal of the Harnall Lane Car Park site to the Salvation Army for the scheme.
- 6.4 Many of these objections, which we believe are primarily of a planning nature have already been taken into account by the separate planning process which recently granted planning permission.
- 6.5 Summary of seven letter of support received during 21 day car park closure notice:

Five letters of support have been received from Project Workers at the Salvation Army. The consistent theme being that a new building would have a real impact on the work in rebuilding local people's lives and promoting training, education and independence, giving people a real purpose in their future. In addition the current Manager has written a letter of support together with the Lieutenant Colonel, Secretary for the Programme. The Lieutenant Colonel states that the Centre would be an integral part of the Council's Homeless Strategy, as evidenced by the significant capital grant.

Officers are of the opinion there is sufficient replacement car parking with more parking to come on stream. Officers would also welcome a new Salvation Army hostel facility because it is consistent with the Council's strategic priorities under the Council's Housing, Homelessness and Supporting People Strategies to reduce/prevent rough sleeping and homelessness.

7 Other specific implications

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Best Value		✓
Children and Young People		✓
Climate Change & Sustainable Development	✓	
Comparable Benchmark Data		✓
Corporate Parenting		✓
Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy		✓
Crime and Disorder		✓
Equal Opportunities	✓	
Finance	✓	
Health and Safety		✓
Human Resources		✓
Human Rights Act		✓
Impact on Partner Organisations	✓	
Information and Communications Technology		✓
Legal Implications	✓	
Neighbourhood Management		✓
Property Implications	✓	

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Race Equality Scheme		✓
Risk Management	✓	
Trade Union Consultation		✓
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact	✓	

7.1 Legal implications:

- 7.1.1 Harnall Lane West surface car park forms part of the Council's current off-street parking order namely, City of Coventry (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2005 (as amended). In order to close the car park and dispose the site to the Salvation Army for their development, it is required that it be formally removed from the off-street order. The removal of the car park is to be completed by formal variation pursuant to Sections 32 to 35 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended).
- 7.1.2 With the approval from your previous meeting on 18 February, the Director of Finance and Legal Services advertised a Notice of Proposals that set out the Council's intention to close the car park and to invite persons to object should they wish to do so, within the prescribed 21 days period, that expired on 25 March 2010.
- 7.1.3 The Council must consider any valid objections received before making a traffic regulation order.
- 7.1.4 The obligation on the Council is to consider the objections. The objection from Murria solicitors refers to the wider area of public law which the Council cannot consider in the area of whether or not to close the car park. There are only limited circumstances to hold a public enquiry and neither of these circumstances apply to the circumstances of this Order to remove the car park. The issues raised by Murria must be weighed against the wider public interest to provide a hostel which is fit for purpose for Coventry and has already been granted planning permission.

7.2 Financial Implications

There will be an annual loss of Lincoln Street ground rental income of £7,500 which in part will be compensation for the land transfer. There will also be an annual car park income loss of up to £10,000. However, some of the car park usage will be displaced to other nearby council car parks to reduce this impact. The resulting loss will be managed within the car park income account.

7.3 Property Implications:

- 7.3.1 Subject to car park closure the terms of the property transactions with the Salvation Army is being dealt with separately by the Director of City Services and Development, via his delegated property disposal powers in accordance with the Council's constitution. The transaction has been valued on an 'open market' commercial land value basis, and has been externally validated by The District Valuer.

7.4 Voluntary Sector (and dealing with homelessness)

The development of this new Salvation Army Hostel facility is consistent with the Council's strategic priorities. The provision of a new homelessness and support facility for

vulnerable and socially excluded people (many with acute needs) to replace the current outdated Salvation Army hostel, is a key priority under the Council's Housing, Homelessness and Supporting People Strategies to reduce / prevent rough sleeping and homelessness. The emphasis of the Programme is to move away from large hostels to smaller schemes that can deliver the support and training / enterprise objectives envisaged under the Places of Change Programme more effectively.

7.5 Equal Opportunities

The new centre would assist in reducing social inequalities by providing accommodation, support, training, and enterprise facilities and access to adult education services to the (single) homeless to enable them to move towards eventual independent living and employment.

7.6 Climate Change and Sustainable Development:

The new development is being designed to the 'BREEAM Excellent' sustainable building standards.

7.7 Implications for partner organisations:

This scheme will provide substantially improved facilities provided by the Salvation Army, who are the project's developer. CV One Ltd. currently manages the Harnall Lane West car park for the Council, and have been fully consulted on this proposal throughout.

8 Monitoring and risk management

8.1 The property deal is being managed via a project team in the Development Services Division of City Services & Development Directorate. The Salvation Army will be managing the delivery of their new development once the site has been transferred to them for this specific purpose.

8.2 One of the key risks relates to funding conditions imposed by the HCA. Time is of the essence whereby the works for the new development need to have been commenced by the Summer 2010. If they do not then the scheme's funding is at risk of being withdrawn. The project is currently on programme in this respect.

8.3 A project risk register is maintained on the corporate system and reviewed at every meeting of the city centre programme board and at separate project team meetings. Consequently risks are managed on a monthly basis.

9 Timescale and expected outcomes

If the car park closure is approved the Salvation Army have programmed site works to commence in the Summer 2010, with an opening of the new centre around January 2012.

	Yes	No
Key Decision		No
Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)		No
Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)		No

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper

Planning Application No. 51249/A

Location

Council's Planning Office & Web-site

(I/Project Champions/Swanswell/Salvation Army/Cabinet member report 2010/final)

Appendix 1

Site Showing Existing & Proposed location of Salvation Army Residential Centre.

