

# Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 21 October 2015

**Application for Planning Permission 15/02898/FUL  
At 181,183,185,187,189,191,193-195, St John's Road,  
Edinburgh**

**Demolition of existing shopping parade and erection of food retail development including ancillary cafe at ground floor level, parking, infrastructure and landscaping.**

**Item number**

**Report number**

**Wards**

A06 - Corstorphine/Murrayfield

## Summary

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The development of a large food retail store at the heart of a town centre is acceptable in principle. However, the proposed development fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, will have an adverse effect on the road network, pedestrian safety and convenience and provides an excessive amount of car parking in a heavily congested area with good public transport links. As the proposal is likely to have an adverse effect on congestion, it follows that it will have adverse effects on air quality in an Air Quality Management Area. There are no material considerations that justify approval.

## Links

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[Policies and guidance for this application](#)

LPC, CITD3, CITD5, CITE5, CITE6, CITE12, CITE16, CITE17, CITE18, CITH8, CITR2, CITT1, CITT4, CITT5, NSG, NSGD02, NSP, NSLBCA, OTH, CRPCOR,

# Report

## **Application for Planning Permission 15/02898/FUL At 181,183,185,187,189,191,193-195, St John's Road, Edinburgh**

### **Demolition of existing shopping parade and erection of food retail development including ancillary cafe at ground floor level, parking, infrastructure and landscaping.**

#### **Recommendations**

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1.1 It is recommended that this application be Refused for the reasons below.

#### **Background**

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##### **2.1 Site description**

The site is located on the south side of St John's Road, east of the junction with Manse Road. It currently accommodates a two storey, flat roof, shop at the eastern most end before dropping down to single storey, flat roof, parade of seven shops. It includes the former Woolworths and a hot food takeaway. The retail units provide an active frontage onto St John's Road. A service yard, accessed from Manse Road, is located to the rear and enclosed by a high stone wall. Two mature trees, Oak and Corsican Pine, flank the access to the service yard and car park. A mature sycamore is located in the service yard and an early mature Silver Birch is positioned on the corner of Manse Road and St John's Road.

The site is 0.56 hectares and includes a public road, footway and controlled junction at Manse Road and St John's Road.

The site is located in the Corstorphine Town Centre and forms part of the primary frontage known as 1-12 Ormiston Terrace and 181-195 St John's Road.

The surrounding area is mixed use with a strong commercial presence on St John's Road and a residential character on Manse Road. The south side of St John's Road is characterised by three storey tenement blocks with ground floor shops. Manse Road is characterised by stone built terraced houses and semi-detached cottages ranging from one-and-a-half storeys to two storeys in height. Manse Road is a one-way street where vehicles travel north onto St John's Road.

The site is bounded by the Manse and its curtilage to the south. The Manse is a large detached dwelling set in a generous garden with mature trees.

This application site is located within the Corstorphine Conservation Area.

## **2.2 Site History**

23 August 1961 - planning permission granted for two storey supermarket and seven shops (application number: 00965/61). The approved plans showed the trees on Manse Road would be retained within the development.

5 November 2014 - proposal of application notice received for the demolition of existing shops and erection of a food retail development with ancillary cafe, parking, infrastructure and landscaping (application number: 14/04655/PAN).

### Related applications

6 July 2015 - application for conservation area consent received for the demolition of the existing shopping parade (application reference: 15/03169/CON). This application will also be considered at this Committee meeting.

## **Main report**

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### **3.1 Description Of The Proposal**

#### **Proposed Building**

The application proposes the demolition of the existing retail units and the erection of a retail supermarket within a three storey building plus basement with car parking on the upper floors and a service area in the basement. The proposed development would result in a 3,140 square metre foodstore with a net sales area of 1,922 square metres.

The proposed building will be closer to the road than the existing buildings. The proposed building line on St John's Road is in line with the adjoining tenement and the proposed building line on Manse Road follows the Manse's west boundary wall.

Access to the car park and service yard is from Manse Road. A turntable is proposed in the service yard so delivery vehicles can enter and exit the site in a forward gear. The first and second floors would be accessed using a ramp along the south elevation and wrapping around the east side of the building. The first floor would provide 67 car parking spaces and the second floor would provide 73 spaces resulting in a total of 140 car parking spaces.

The proposed building will be finished in sandstone, timber and zinc panels and louvres.

#### **Proposed changes to the road network**

The existing lay-by on St John's Road would be removed and infilled to form a four metre wide footpath. The parking bays on Manse Road would be removed and infilled to form a two metre wide footpath. These alterations are required to accommodate the proposed building line. The existing service access on Manse Road would be widened from 4.4 metres to 14.6 metres to create a four lane access to the proposed car park and service yard. The Transport Assessment states there would be a degree of pedestrian priority over vehicular traffic in the form of courtesy crossings. A courtesy crossing is a crossing in the road that you aren't required to stop for, but allows for a safer place to stop if pedestrians do want to cross.

Manse Road would be altered to allow two-way vehicular traffic as far as the proposed car park and service yard. The existing signalised junction would be altered from the current 'walk with traffic' arrangement to 'all stop', whereby traffic would be stopped on St John's Road and Manse Road to allow pedestrians to cross the junction. The existing greenway lanes on St John's Road travelling east and west would be reduced to allow all traffic to use the lanes that approach the new signalised junction. Yellow box / keep clear markings would be formed at the proposed St John's Road / Manse Road junction.

### **Operating hours**

The applicant proposes operating during the following hours:

- Trading Hours: Monday - Saturday: 07:00 - 22:00; Sunday: 10:00 - 18:00.
- Delivery Hours: Monday - Saturday: 06:00 - 22:00; Sunday: 08:00 - 19:00.

### **Supporting Information**

The following documents have been submitted in support of the application:

- Design and Access Statement;
- Planning Statement;
- Retail Statement;
- Heritage Statement;
- Pre-application Consultation Report;
- Transport Assessment;
- Air Quality Assessment, updated 9 September 2015;
- Noise Impact Assessment;
- Tree Survey;
- Bat Survey, plus updated report following resurvey of the buildings dated 17 September 2015;
- Daylight and Sunlight Report;
- Sustainability Statement; and
- Drainage Strategy.

These documents are available to view on the Planning and Building Standards Online Services.

### **3.2 Determining Issues**

Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 states - Where, in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Do the proposals harm the character or appearance of the conservation area? If they do, there is a strong presumption against granting of permission.

Do the proposals comply with the development plan?

If the proposals do comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for not approving them?

If the proposals do not comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for approving them?

### 3.3 Assessment

To address these determining issues, the Committee needs to consider whether:

- a) the proposal is acceptable in principle and will not have a significant adverse effect on the town centre or any other centre;
- b) the proposal is an acceptable design and preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- c) the proposal will have any traffic or road safety issues;
- d) the proposal has significant adverse effects on air quality;
- e) the proposal adversely affects the amenity of neighbouring residents;
- f) there are other material considerations which outweigh development plan policies;
- g) the proposal has any equalities or human rights impacts;
- h) representations raise issues to be addressed.

#### a) Principle and effect on town centre

The site is located within a designated town centre as defined in the Edinburgh City Local Plan and the Second Proposed Local Development Plan.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and local planning policies apply a town centre first policy for uses that are likely to attract significant numbers of people to support existing town centres.

Edinburgh City Local Plan (ECLP) Policy Ret 2: Town Centres, requires development within a town centre (a) not to have an adverse impact on the city centre and other town centres, (b) to be physically integrated into the centre; (c) to be an appropriate use within a town centre, (d) to economically integrate with the existing centre and (e) improve accessibility.

New retail development in town centres does not have to demonstrate there is a need to fill a gap in provision or meet the needs of an expanding population. This is only a requirement for out-of-centre locations. Accordingly the existing provision of food retail shops in the town centre does not prevent the development of additional food retail shops in the town centre.

The proposal will not have a significant adverse effect on the city centre or other town centres, Gorgie/Dalry being the nearest, due to the nature of the proposals and its distance from them. Nearest local centres (Saughton Road North, East Craigs, Drumbrae and Western Corner) will also not be significantly affected. The Retail Statement surveyed these local centres and found them to be in good health providing a range of uses. These findings are accepted.

The physical integration and design of the proposal is considered in detail in section 3.3b). In principle, the site can accommodate a retail development that will maintain a compact centre.

The provision of a large food retail development in the middle of the town centre is compatible with the character and function of the centre because there is a significant walk-in catchment population and there is high accessibility by public transport.

The internal impacts of the proposal on the town centre would be positive as it would provide a large food retail shop that would encourage linked trips due to its central location. Economic Development has advised the proposal has the potential to introduce activity to an often vacant part of the town centre, provide employment opportunities, increase spending and productivity in the area and attract further investment.

The proposed store could provide up to 150 new jobs and would introduce another food retail provider that could increase level of competition, productivity and reduce prices. Economic Development has noted that displacement levels for a general retail use such as this would be high, meaning the net jobs figure would be lower (between 0 and 18). As noted above, the impacts upon neighbouring shopping areas would be acceptable.

The proposal includes a new car park that is integrated into the design that would address the difficulties of parking in the town centre. The site is located on a main east-west vehicular route linking the city centre to the west and beyond. It is also a main bus route and is well served by public transport. As a proposed retail site, it is easily accessible by a choice of transport modes and the provision of a car park will improve the accessibility of the centre for the private car and cyclists. The acceptability of the level of car parking proposed is considered in section 3.3c).

The proposal is acceptable in principle and accords with policy Ret 2: Town Centres.

#### b) Character of the Conservation Area

The Corstorphine Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies;

*"the site was developed in the 1960s and established St John's Road, an original turnpike road, as an important local shopping centre that provides a full range of community facilities. This left the historic core of the area untouched and a popular residential suburb. Its character is akin to a country town high street with shops under three storey tenement blocks and is often busy and congested. The spatial structure of the area appears opportunistic which emphasises its organic village character, rather than extensive planned development.*

*The village character still predominates. St Ninian's Church is one of the important landmarks that stands out in the village's physical setting and enhances its character. The uniformity of materials, sandstone buildings with slate roofs, are crucial in establishing the conservation area's architectural character. The character appraisal acknowledges the important role trees play in defining the village character."*

The existing building is a 1960s development that does not reflect the architectural character of the conservation area and does not make a positive contribution to its character. However, the small scale of the units is in keeping with the village character and the multiple occupiers creates activity on the street. While the proposed development introduces a large scale store the benefits of such a unit, outlined above in section 3.3a), would justify the loss of the existing units.

The redevelopment of the site provides an opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and preserve features that contribute positively to the area's character. Acknowledging the site is an opportunity for enhancement does not infer the existing positive features can be set aside for a redevelopment opportunity. The existing trees on Manse Road and in the service yard and the stone boundary wall on Manse Road make a positive contribution to the conservation area's village character and their removal is contrary to policy Env 6: Conservation Areas - Development.

Three of the four trees proposed to be removed are fully mature, large in stature and are in reasonable health. They make a clear contribution to the character and amenity of the conservation area, in particular in northward views from Manse Road to St Ninian's Church and in southward views from St John's Road. There are no good arboricultural reasons to remove them therefore their loss is contrary to policies Env 6: Conservation Areas - Development, and Env 12: Trees. Three of the existing trees were retained when the site was redeveloped in the 1960s despite no statutory protection being in place. The proposed replacement planting, seven clipped carpinus in a raised planter, does not adequately compensate for the loss of the visual amenity of the existing trees in the conservation area or streetscape. An alternative design would not necessarily result in the loss of the existing trees.

The proposed replacement building's height is in keeping with the prevailing buildings on the south side of St John's Road and the proposed materials are acceptable. The scale of the proposed St John's Road elevation is in keeping with the street as the floor to floor heights are broadly similar to the neighbouring tenement.

The scale of Manse Road is lower than St John's Road and is in keeping with the village character of the conservation area. The proposed west elevation on Manse Road will form a dominant mass on a prominent corner, due to its height, the lack of fenestration and its largely solid form, and would dominate the west entrance to the conservation area. The view from the south on Manse Road, which has a small, village, character, will be overwhelmed by the proposed south elevation.

The development misses the opportunity to retain and incorporate the stone boundary wall and existing trees into the design and is contrary to policy Des 5: External Spaces.

In conclusion, the proposal fails to preserve existing positive features, mainly the mature trees and stone boundary wall, and introduces a building that is not in keeping with the character or appearance of the conservation area and is contrary to ECLP policies Env 6: Conservation Areas - Development, and Des 3: Development Design.

#### c) Road network and parking

The site is located on a main road that forms part of the A8 that links Edinburgh to Glasgow and is heavily congested. It is an existing public transport corridor with good public transport accessibility with limited and controlled on-street parking.

A number of objectors raised concerns about congestion, the number of parking spaces proposed and the effect of the changes to the road network would have on pedestrian safety, including the route to Corstorphine Primary School.

Transport has concluded the changes to the road network, mainly the two-way signalised junction at Manse Road and St John's Road, would significantly reduce the junction's reserve capacity and would result in unacceptable delays that would render the junction inoperable.

Transport also notes the development exceeds the non-statutory Parking Standards and the proposed four lane entrance/exit on Manse Road would be formed at the expense of pedestrian safety and convenience.

Exceeding the Parking Standards Guidance is contrary to policy Tra 4: Private Car Parking. The Transport Assessment justifies the parking provision by highlighting the discrepancy between the Council's standards and SPP standards. The standards in SPP are intended to promote consistency and recognise planning authorities may set more restrictive standards when an area is well served by sustainable transport. In this case the site is located in a heavily congested area that is well served by public transport. It is appropriate and necessary to set more restrictive standards that consider these constraints. The national standards do not justify an infringement to the Council's Parking Standards that consider the location of the site, its accessibility by public transport and the type of the development proposed.

The Council's Local Transport Strategy 2014-2019 (LTS) contains a number of policies and objectives to support growth, protect the environment, improve road safety and manage parking to support wider Council economic, environmental and social policies.

The proposal will have a detrimental effect on the local road network, would compromise pedestrian safety and convenience and exceeds the parking standards. Accordingly it is contrary to policy Tra 4: Private Car Parking, the non-statutory Parking Standards Guidance and the LTS. Transport recommends the application is refused.

#### d) Air Quality

The site is located in St John's Road Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) which was declared in December 2006 and extends from Murrayfield Hospital at its east end to Drum Brae roundabout in the west.

The Air Quality Action Plan (2008) states that monitoring indicates a deteriorating situation at some locations and has a large number of daily exceedences caused by the absolute volume of traffic, the local 'canyon' townscape and the proximity of residential properties to the pollution source i.e. traffic.

The proposed building, being three storeys in height, will not cause a canyon effect because of the width of the road and the buildings on the north side of St John's Road are two storeys.

The applicant's Air Quality Assessment (AQA) acknowledges the proposal may have significant impacts on pollutant levels as a result of vehicle exhaust emissions associated with vehicle travelling to and from the site. It determined the proposed development, when operational, would have negligible to slight impacts on road traffic emissions and recommends the following mitigation measures:

- the installation of eight electric vehicle charging points in the proposed car park;
- the installation of real time public transport information screens in-store; and
- the demolition of an existing building that is not fit for purpose and replacing it with a sustainable building which will improve energy efficiency.

The applicant's AQA uses emission factor data from 2013 and predicted 2016 traffic data in their model. Environmental Assessment advised 2013 was the first year hourly-mean NO<sub>2</sub> objectives were met since the AQMA was declared and are concerned the traffic data, using Morningside Waitrose as a comparison, does not show the worst case scenario. The AQA states that air quality is predicted to improve in the future while Environment Assessment's data show that annual-mean NO<sub>2</sub> objectives continue to be breached since the declaration of the AQMA and the hourly-mean objective from the first quarter of 2015 has been exceeded. Air quality in the AQMA is not meeting annual-mean or hourly-mean standards.

The Head of Transport has found the proposal will have an unacceptable impact on the local road network and will likely cause congestion. Accordingly as the poor air quality in the AQMA is largely due to traffic congestion and the proposal is likely to have an adverse effect on congestion it follows that the proposal will have adverse effects on air quality and is contrary to policy Env 18: Air, Water and Soil Quality.

#### e) Residential amenity

##### **(i) Daylight, sunlight, privacy and outlook**

The Daylight and Sunlight Report found the proposed development fails a number of windows (13 out of 70) when using the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) test. The buildings affected are known as the Manse at 23 Manse Road located to the south of the site and the Cedars at 2 Manse Road located to the west of the site. The Average Daylight Factor (ADF) was applied to the affected rooms and passed this test. While the proposed development does not strictly accord with the guidance this does not in its own right justify refusal. The report demonstrates the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the sunlight reaching neighbouring gardens and is acceptable. The proposal will not adversely affect privacy because users of the car park would have, if any, fleeting views into neighbouring properties that would be adequately obscured by the timber louvers.

The proposed building sits in close proximity to the Manse and its scale is large in comparison. However this does not justify refusal because the property's main outlook is to the south and there are few windows facing north.

## **(ii) Noise**

Environmental Assessment does not support the proposed operating hours due to existing complaints about early morning deliveries. As the site is located in a designated town centre it would not be appropriate to use planning controls to limit the hours of operation of new retail development.

The Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) assessed the following elements:

- HGV driving onto the turntable and stopping;
- turntable rotating to line up rear of HGV with the dock;
- unloading operations of the HGV;
- turntable rotating to allow HGV to leave; and
- HGV departure.

It concludes the proposal will have a negligible impact. Environmental Assessment has concerns about the assumptions and inputs used to inform the NIA, particularly the performance of the attenuation barrier as no specific details have been submitted. In addition they consider the worst case scenario has not been assessed because the NIA has not assessed noise from the proposed large gate, reversing beepers, turntable alarm or the upper floor car park.

The applicant has not been requested to address these matters due to the outstanding transport and air quality concerns and the adverse effect on the character and appearance on the conservation area. If the Committee is minded to approve the scheme it is recommended the application is continued to address Environmental Assessment's concerns about the noise to ensure the proposal would not have a materially detrimental effect on the living conditions of nearby residents and accords with policy Hou 8: Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas.

## f) Other material considerations

### **Archaeology**

The site overlies the site of the former Georgian Church Manse which was demolished prior to 1960 and it may contain evidence of this and possible evidence of the medieval development of Corstorphine. Accordingly ground breaking works associated with both demolition and construction are likely to have an impact upon any surviving buried remains. The Council's Archaeology Officer recommends a programme of archaeological excavation is undertaken as part of the demolition process and prior/during development, in order to fully excavate, record and analysis any significant buried remains affected by ground breaking. The proposed development, subject to an appropriate condition, would not have an adverse impact on a site of suspected archaeological significance and accords with policy Env 9: Development of Sites of Archaeological Significance.

## Ecology

A bat survey was submitted and the buildings were recently resurveyed. The survey found no evidence of bats emerging or re-entering the buildings. Accordingly there are no further matters concerning a European protected species which need to be considered. The proposal would not have an adverse impact on a European protected species and accords with policy Env 16: Species Protection.

## Flood Prevention

A flood risk assessment is not required for the proposal however a surface water management plan is required because the site is located to the north of an area affected by surface water flooding. Flood Prevention has requested additional information on the surface water management plan to show that the development would not make this area of flooding any worse. This additional information has not been requested due to the outstanding concerns from other consultees that recommend the application is refused. If the Committee is minded to approve the scheme it is recommended the application is continued to address Flood Prevention's requirements met to accord with policy Env 17: Flood Prevention.

### g) Equalities and human rights

The proposed store will have level access and includes three customer lifts to access the car park. This will ensure that the premises are accessible to a range of users. Disabled and parent and child parking spaces are provided on the first level of the car park near the lobby.

Overall, the proposal will have a positive impact in terms of equalities. There will be no impact on human rights.

### h) Public comments

## Material Representations in objection

Pollution: - addressed in section 3.3d).

- proposal is inappropriate development in an Air Quality Management Area;
- contrary to the Council's Local Transport Strategy's Environmental Objective to reduce pollutant emissions in order to meet statutory Scottish air quality standards;
- link between air pollution and damage to health, including reference to children going to and from Corstorphine Primary School;
- development incompatible with Council's legal obligation to reduce air pollutants;
- loss of the trees results in the loss of benefits they provide for air quality; and
- buildings height will create a canyon effect and add to pollution.

Transport concerns: - addressed in section 3.3c).

- congestion caused by proposed changes to the road network;
- congestion caused by proposed development;
- congestion and delays caused by the removal of the bus lane;

- proposal will attract more traffic;
- proposed car parking is excessive and exceeds Parking Standards;
- proposed parking is a substantial increase to what exists already and will increase the risk to pedestrians due to increase in vehicle movements;
- concern that the courtesy crossing over the access to the car park and service area are ineffective;
- proposed car parking will encourage people to drive to the site rather than use alternatives and is contrary to the Council's Local Transport Strategy 2014-2019;
- reduction in pedestrian accessibility and safety due to reduction in the footpath's width on St John's Road and Manse Road;
- pedestrian safety walking to Corstorphine Primary School on Manse Road;
- pedestrian safety over the proposed four lane vehicular entrance/exit on Manse Road;
- loss of the loading and parking bays on St John's Road;
- additional cycle parking on Manse Road required to encourage cycling;
- Featherhall area already experiencing on-street parking problems; and
- insufficient cycle parking.

Landscape and visual impacts: - addressed in section 3.3b).

- monolithic structure detrimental to village character;
- loss of trees that make an important contribution to the area's character and conservation area policy;
- replacement planting not commensurate;
- overdevelopment of a constrained site;
- proposal fails to protect and enhance natural and cultural resources;
- proposed structure not in keeping with the conservation area's character or appearance; and
- fails to provide an active frontage.

Town centre concerns: - addressed in section 3.3a).

- detrimental impact on existing Town Centre;
- scale of proposal out of keeping with and does not complement the area's character;
- over provision of supermarkets in the area;
- no need for convenience retail shop or cafe;
- no need for budget shopping in the area;
- proposal should reflect the affluent standard of the area and aim to raise it;
- limited net job creation;
- employment opportunities of new retail developments displace existing retail employment;
- value of the current uses; and
- the proposal is contrary to existing centre character of small shops.

Other material concerns: addressed in sections 3.3e), 3.3b) and 3.3d).

- loss of daylight and sunlight;

- loss of privacy;
- noise from articulated vehicles and traffic;
- loss of public views to the Pentlands; and
- contrary to Scottish Government's National Objectives to reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.

### **Material Representations in support**

- the development would benefit Corstorphine;
- proposal represents an improvement over the existing site;
- would improve the economic viability of the area;
- Corstorphine needs more parking;
- traffic impacts will be negligible;
- area is already congested and unlikely to get worse;
- existing traffic and associated pollution caused by traffic passing through Corstorphine should not be held against the proposal;
- parking, traffic and air quality concerns are exaggerated;
- any development of the site would result in the loss of the existing trees;
- existing trees unlikely to have an impact on air quality;
- proposal will attract public and new businesses;
- concerns about pedestrian safety can be addressed;
- Corstorphine needs investment; and
- proposal represents a high quality development.

### **Non-material Representations in objection**

- alternative redevelopment opportunities for the site, including mixed use retail and residential, affordable housing, retirement homes, community facilities and small businesses;
- Council should not support this development and listen to residents;
- unknown operator;
- need to offer lower rates to small businesses;
- development of the Gyle and Tesco has had a negative impact on the town centre;
- tree survey is out-of-date;
- potential damage to private property; and
- noise from demolition and redevelopment operations would harm existing beauty therapy business.

### **Non-material general comments**

- no objection to the principle of the site's redevelopment;
- area needs regeneration but not that proposed;
- public consultation was for a Waitrose supermarket, not a speculative retail development, therefore any positive comments in the PAC report about the benefits of Waitrose should be discounted; and
- concern the retail unit will not be occupied and the car park will operate separately.

## **Corstorphine Community Council**

Corstorphine Community Council supports the application in principle as it will ensure that the village centre remains viable and it will address a longstanding problem with car parking in the area. They noted a sizeable local minority protested at potential traffic problems in the St John's Road / Manse Road / Featherhall Road nexus and also about the character of the development preferring small independent shops. There have also been expressions of concern regarding the planned removal of mature trees.

### Conclusion

While the development of a large food retail store at the heart of a town centre is acceptable in principle, the proposed development fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, will have an adverse effect on the road network, pedestrian safety and convenience and provides an excessive amount of car parking in a heavily congested area with good public transport links and as the proposal is likely to have an adverse effect on congestion, it follows that it will have adverse effects on air quality in an Air Quality Management Area.

It is recommended that this application be Refused for the reasons below.

### **3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives**

#### **Reason for Refusal:-**

1. The proposal is contrary to Edinburgh City Local Plan Policy Env 6 in respect of Conservation Areas - Development, as it fails to preserve existing positive features, mainly the mature trees and stone boundary wall, and introduces a building that is not in keeping with the character or appearance of the conservation area.
2. The proposal is contrary to Edinburgh City Local Plan Policy Env 12 in respect of Trees, as there are no good arboricultural reasons to remove four fully mature trees that are in reasonable health and make a clear contribution to the character and amenity of the area. The proposed replacement planting does not adequately compensate for the loss of the visual amenity of the existing trees in the conservation area or streetscape.
3. The proposal is contrary to Edinburgh City Local Plan Policy Tra 1 in respect of Location of Major Development, as the changes would have an adverse effect on the road network because (1) it would significantly reduce the junction's reserve capacity resulting in unacceptable delays that would render the junction inoperable, and (2) the proposed four lane entrance/exit on Manse Road would have an adverse effect on pedestrian safety and convenience.

4. The proposal is contrary to Edinburgh City Local Plan Policy Tra 4 in respect of Private Car Parking, as the proposed parking exceeds the non-statutory Parking Standards and the site is located in a heavily congested area that is well served by public transport.
5. The proposal is contrary to Edinburgh City Local Plan Policy Env 18 in respect of Air Quality, as the poor air quality in the Air Quality Management Area is largely due to traffic congestion and as the proposal is likely to have an adverse effect on congestion it follows that it will have adverse effects on air quality.

## **Financial impact**

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### **4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:**

There are no financial implications to the Council.

## **Risk, Policy, compliance and governance impact**

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5.1 Provided planning applications are determined in accordance with statutory legislation, the level of risk is low.

## **Equalities impact**

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### **6.1 The equalities impact has been assessed as follows:**

This application was assessed in terms of equalities and human rights. The impacts are identified in the Assessment section of the main report.

## **Sustainability impact**

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### **7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:**

This application meets the sustainability requirements of the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

## **Consultation and engagement**

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### **8.1 Pre-Application Process**

A Proposal of Application Notice was submitted and registered on 5 November 2014 (application number: 14/04655/PAN). A copy was also issued to Corstorphine Community Council.

A public meeting was held on 10 December 2014. Consultation events were also held throughout September 2014 prior to the submission of the Proposal of Application Notice. Full details can be found in the Pre-Application Consultation report, which sets out the findings from the community consultation. This is available on the Planning and Building Standards Online Services. During the consultation an operator, Waitrose, was identified, however no known final operator has been identified for this application. As the applicant and the proposed development is the same there is no breach of the regulations, the operator of a shop is not a material planning consideration.

A pre-application report on the proposals was presented to the Committee on 14 January 2015. The Committee requested the traffic assessment included the whole of Manse Road and the Featherhalls and requested further information on maintaining safer route to school for Corstorphine Primary School and air quality.

## **8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments**

The application was advertised as development affecting a conservation area on 30 August 2013 and attracted 470 letters of representation, 455 in objection, 11 in support and four commenting on the proposal. Some of the letters of objection explain they do not object to the principle of the redevelopment of the site but object to this proposal. The representations include a letters of objection from Colin Keir MSP, Councillor Edie, Friends of the Earth (Scotland) and Spokes and comments from Michelle Thomson MP and Lothian Buses.

An application for conservation area consent for the demolition of the existing buildings is also being considered by the Committee. This application attracted 13 letters of representation, nine in objection, three in support and one general comment. As members of the public may not necessarily distinguish between the two, it is reasonable to also consider these under this application.

Colin Keir MSP objected to the introduction of two-way traffic on part of Manse Road, congestion around the new junction, the effects on air quality, the realignment of the footway on St John's Road, the loss of trees and the height and mass of the proposed building. Mr Keir MSP did not object to the principle of the redevelopment of the site.

Councillor Paul Edie objected to the effects on additional vehicles in the area, an increase in the existing congestion in the area and pollution and concern about pedestrian safety using Manse Road as a principle route to Corstorphine Primary School because of its narrow width and the extra traffic the proposal would generate. In addition he raises concerns about noise from delivery vehicles, loss of sunlight and daylight, and objects to the visual impact of the building, the loss of mature trees and the effect on the conservation area.

Friends of the Earth (Scotland) object to the proposal because they consider it will have an unacceptable impact on traffic congestion and air pollution due to its location. They refer to the requirements of the European Ambient Air Quality Directive and the risk of legal proceedings that may follow if the Government, and Council, continue to fail to meet its requirements. In addition they consider the height of the building will increase the canyon effect and make it more difficult for air pollution to disperse, the removal of the bus lane will cause buses to idle for longer and the reduction in the footpath width will increase pedestrians' exposure to pollutants.

Spokes object to the proposal because the car parking exceeds the Council's standards, the changes to the road network, congestion and the lack of cycle parking on Manse Road.

Michelle Thomson MP made a general comment raising concerns about the timing of the application and the consultation period over school holidays, the speculative nature of the proposal and the concerns raised to her directly from her constituents.

Lothian Buses made a general comment on the application raising concern about the ability of traffic to flow in the area and any negative impact during construction and operation. They consider the occupation of the carriageway and the creation of a southbound lane on Manse Road will have significant impacts on through flow of traffic along St John's Road. In addition they raise concerns about construction works, for example utility works, carried out on the public road and potential traffic disruption.

Corstorphine Community Council supports the application in principle as it will ensure that the village centre remains viable and it will address a longstanding problem with car parking in the area. They noted a sizeable local minority protested at potential traffic problems in the St John's Road / Manse Road / Featherhall Road nexus and also about the character of the development preferring small independent shops. There has also been expressions of concern regarding the planned removal of mature trees.

### **Material Representations in objection**

#### Pollution:

- proposal is inappropriate development in an Air Quality Management Area;
- contrary to the Council's Local Transport Strategy's Environmental Objective to reduce pollutant emissions in order to meet statutory Scottish air quality standards;
- link between air pollution and damage to health, including reference to children going to and from Corstorphine Primary School;
- development incompatible with Council's legal obligation to reduce air pollutants;
- loss of the trees results in the loss of benefits they provide for air quality; and
- buildings height will create a canyon effect and add to pollution.

#### Transport concerns:

- congestion caused by proposed changes to the road network;
- congestion caused by proposed development;
- congestion and delays caused by the removal of the bus lane;
- proposal will attract more traffic;
- proposed car parking is excessive and exceeds Parking Standards;
- proposed parking is a substantial increase to what exists already and will increase the risk to pedestrians due to increase in vehicle movements;
- concern that the courtesy crossing over the access to the car park and service area are ineffective;
- proposed car parking will encourage people to drive to the site rather than use alternatives and is contrary to the Council's Local Transport Strategy 2014-2019;
- reduction in pedestrian accessibility and safety due to reduction in the footpath's width on St John's Road and Manse Road;
- pedestrian safety walking to Corstorphine Primary School on Manse Road;
- pedestrian safety over the proposed four lane vehicular entrance/exit on Manse Road;
- loss of the loading and parking bays on St John's Road;
- additional cycle parking on Manse Road required to encourage cycling;

- Featherhall area already experiencing on-street parking problems; and
- insufficient cycle parking.

#### Landscape and visual impacts

- monolithic structure detrimental to village character;
- loss of trees that make an important contribution to the area's character and conservation area policy;
- replacement planting not commensurate;
- overdevelopment of a constrained site;
- proposal fails to protect and enhance natural and cultural resources;
- proposed structure not in keeping with the conservation area's character or appearance; and
- fails to provide an active frontage.

#### Town centre concerns:

- detrimental impact on existing Town Centre;
- scale of proposal out of keeping with and does not complement the area's character;
- over provision of supermarkets in the area;
- no need for convenience retail shop or cafe;
- no need for budget shopping in the area;
- proposal should reflect the affluent standard of the area and aim to raise it;
- limited net job creation;
- employment opportunities of new retail developments displace existing retail employment;
- value of the current uses; and
- the proposal is contrary to existing centre character of small shops.

#### Other material concerns:

- loss of daylight and sunlight;
- loss of privacy;
- noise from articulated vehicles and traffic;
- loss of public views to the Pentlands; and
- contrary to Scottish Government's National Objectives to reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.

#### **Material Representations in support**

- the development would benefit Corstorphine;
- proposal represents an improvement over the existing site;
- would improve the economic viability of the area;
- Corstorphine needs more parking;
- traffic impacts will be negligible;
- area is already congested and unlikely to get worse;
- existing traffic and associated pollution caused by traffic passing through Corstorphine should not be held against the proposal;

- parking, traffic and air quality concerns are exaggerated;
- any development of the site would result in the loss of the existing trees;
- existing trees unlikely to have an impact on air quality;
- proposal will attract public and new businesses;
- concerns about pedestrian safety can be addressed;
- Corstorphine needs investment; and
- proposal represents a high quality development.

### **Non-material Representations in objection**

- alternative redevelopment opportunities for the site, including mixed use retail and residential, affordable housing, retirement homes, community facilities and small businesses;
- Council should not support this development and listen to residents;
- unknown operator;
- need to offer lower rates to small businesses;
- development of the Gyle and Tesco has had a negative impact on the town centre;
- tree survey is out-of-date;
- potential damage to private property; and
- noise from demolition and redevelopment operations would harm existing beauty therapy business.

### **Non-material general comments**

- no objection to the principle of the site's redevelopment;
- area needs regeneration but not that proposed;
- public consultation was for a Waitrose supermarket, not a speculative retail development, therefore any positive comments in the PAC report about the benefits of Waitrose should be discounted; and
- concern the retail unit will not be occupied and the car park will operate separately.

A full assessment of the representations can be found in the main report in the Assessment section.

### **Background reading/external references**

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- To view details of the application go to
- [Planning and Building Standards online services](#)
- [Edinburgh City Local Plan and Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan](#)
- [Planning guidelines](#)
- [Conservation Area Character Appraisals](#)
- [Edinburgh Local Development Plan](#)
- [Scottish Planning Policy](#)

## **Statutory Development**

### **Plan Provision**

The site is located in an urban area and a designated town centre.

### **Date registered**

3 July 2015

### **Drawing numbers/Scheme**

01-25,

Scheme 1

## **David R. Leslie**

Acting Head of Planning and Building Standards

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## **Links - Policies**

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### **Relevant Policies:**

#### **Relevant policies of the Edinburgh City Local Plan.**

Policy Des 3 (Development Design) sets criteria for assessing development design.

Policy Des 5 (External Spaces) sets criteria for assessing landscape design and external space elements of development.

Policy Env 5 (Conservation Areas – Demolition of Buildings) sets out criteria for assessing proposals involving demolition of buildings in conservation areas.

Policy Env 6 (Conservation Areas Development) sets out criteria for assessing development in conservation areas.

Policy Env 12 (Trees) sets out tree protection requirements for new development.

Policy Env 16 (Species) sets out species protection requirements for new development.

Policy Env 17 (Flood Protection) sets criteria for assessing the impact of development on flood protection.

Policy Env 18 (Air, Water and Soil Quality) sets criteria for assessing the impact of development on air, water and soil quality.

Policy Hou 8 (Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas) establishes a presumption against development which would have an unacceptable effect on the living conditions of nearby residents.

Policy Ret 2 (Town Centres) sets criteria for assessing retail development in or on the edge of town centres.

Policy Tra 1 (Major Travel Generating Development) supports major travel generating development in the Central Area, and sets criteria for assessing major travel generating development elsewhere.

Policy Tra 4 (Private Car Parking) requires private car parking provision to comply with the parking levels set out in supplementary planning guidance, and sets criteria for assessing lower provision.

Policy Tra 5 (Private Cycle Parking) requires cycle parking provision in accordance with levels set out in supplementary guidance.

### **Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines**

**Non-Statutory guidelines** Edinburgh Design Guidance supports development of the highest design quality and that integrates well with the existing city. It sets out the Council's expectations for the design of new development, including buildings and landscape, in Edinburgh.

**Non-statutory guidelines** on 'PARKING STANDARDS' set the requirements for parking provision in developments.

**Non-statutory guidelines** 'LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS' provides guidance on repairing, altering or extending listed buildings and unlisted buildings in conservation areas.

### **Other Relevant policy guidance**

The Corstorphine Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the retention of the village character and vernacular architecture, the varied grain of the area, the retention of the informal street layout and footpath network, the consistency in the use of traditional materials, and the prevalence of residential uses.

# Appendix 1

## **Application for Planning Permission 15/02898/FUL At 181,183,185,187,189,191,193-195, St John's Road, Edinburgh Demolition of existing shopping parade and erection of food retail development including ancillary cafe at ground floor level, parking, infrastructure and landscaping.**

### **Consultations**

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#### **Transport Planning**

*I would recommend that the application be refused.*

*Whilst Transport has no objection to the proposed retail development in principle, the proposed two way operation of Manse Road poses what appear to be insurmountable traffic problems as outlined below. Transport's assessment of the traffic model for St John's Road / Manse Road has concluded that the reserve capacity of the junction would be significantly reduced with the junction re-design. This would result in unacceptable delays and mean that the St John's Road / Manse Road junction becomes inoperable.*

*Transport remains to be convinced that a practical solution can be found to the two way working on the northern section of Manse Road.*

*In addition, Transport would comment as follows:*

- 1. The proposed 140 spaces for the development exceeds the Council's current parking standards which would require between 51 and 91 spaces;*
- 2. Access to the service yard and car park proposes a 4 lane entrance / exit. This is likely to be contrary to the safety and convenience of pedestrians;*
- 3. The proposed development requires the stopping up of a narrow section of footway on St John's Road (under Section 207 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. There can be no guarantee that such an order can be progressed without objection;*
- 4. The proposed development requires the redetermination of a section of carriageway on St John's Road to footway and the amendment / deletion of the existing permitted loading bay. There can be no guarantee that such orders can be progressed without objection;*

*Comments on LINSIG Modelling and Traffic Signal Design at A8 St John's Road / Manse Road - Foodstore Development  
General Comments*

The proposed traffic models for A8 St John's Road / Manse Road indicate that the Practical Reserve Capacity of the junction would be significantly reduced with the implementation of the junction re-design.

It is expected that the majority of the reduction in practical Reserve Capacity is a result of the proposed 'all stop' pedestrian facilities at the junction, and only partly due to the increase in traffic flows predicted by the new development. The current pedestrian facilities are 'walk with traffic' and therefore do not detract from available green time for traffic.

The base and proposed models for A8 St John's Road/ Belgrave Terrace do not contain the same staging and phasing and it is therefore difficult to identify the effect of the additional development traffic flows. There is a planned pedestrian crossing phase across Clermiston Road, so it is recommended that the base model also includes this traffic phase in addition to the specified ahead filters on the A8.

More detailed comments on the submitted models are below.

#### A8 St John's Road/ Manse Road Model - Base

Phase Delays - Existing on street phase delays on phases A and B on a stage 1 to 2 change (value of 3s) have not been included within the base model. This provides an additional 3s green time per cycle for traffic on St John's Road within the base model.

Results - The Practical Reserve Capacity (PRC) is a measure of how much traffic growth can be accommodated before the junction reaches its practical capacity. The submitted values of PRC for both the existing situation and for the proposed layout at Manse Road/ St John's Road are detailed as below. Note that the proposed model results are from traffic models which have been amended to reflect the comments contained within this note. This includes a column showing results for the intergreen following the pedestrian stage has been increased to 13 seconds. The final column shows the effect of the flare modelling for the bus lanes on the A8 in addition to the increased pedestrian intergreen.

Scenario Model	Base Model PRC (%)	Proposed Model (corrected for PED IG) PRC (%)	Proposed (corrected for PED IG + Bus Lane) PRC (%)
Weekday AM Peak	81	2	-36
Weekday PM Peak	50	16	-25
Saturday Peak	85	5	-20

It can be seen from the above table that the existing junction layout and associated base traffic flows provide a significant level of PRC (between 50% and 85%). However, the PRC is significantly reduced with the introduction of the new junction layout and additional traffic flows.

For example, in the AM peak the junction can currently cater for an 81% increase in traffic flows, whereas in the proposed situation the junction will be able to accommodate no increase in traffic flows at all.

#### A8 St John's Road/ Manse Road Model - Proposed

Flared Lanes - Lanes 1-2 and 2-1 should be modelled as flared lanes to account for bus lanes on both St John's Road approaches.

*Intergreens- All round pedestrian Phase E has been allocated an 8 second minimum green, with an 8 second intergreen back to the main road stage. An intergreen of approximately 12 - 14s would be expected here dependant on crossing width.*

*Design - By inspection of the drawings provided it is unclear if the recommended distance between cycle stop-line and pedestrian studs has been provided, this may affect intergreen timings. Please provide sufficient distance between cycle stop-line and pedestrian studs and alter intergreens if required.*

*Traffic Flows - Traffic flow allocations between nearside and offside lanes on the A8 West approach do not match figures in the Transport Assessment.*

#### *A8/ Belgrave Terrace Models*

*General - The phasing and staging in the base and proposed model are different. In order to quantify the effect of the development traffic, the base and proposed model phasing and staging should be the same. It is recommended that the base model is updated to include ahead filters and pedestrian phase across Clermiston Road.*

*Intergreens - The intergreen specified from phase H (pedestrian crossing across Clermiston Road) back to the main road is 7s. An intergreen in this location would be expected to be in the region of 10-12s depending on geometry.*

#### *Conclusions*

*- It is considered that the reduction in Practical Reserve Capacity predicted at the A8/ Manse Road junction would not be acceptable.*

*- It is considered the junction design proposal for the A8/ Manse Road is not acceptable in its current form.*

*- The base model for A8/ Belgrave Terrace should include amendments as detailed above.*

### **Environmental Assessment**

*The applicant proposes the Demolition of existing shopping parade and the erection of a 3,140.85 m<sup>2</sup> (33, 808 ft<sup>2</sup>) retail (Class 1) including ancillary café; 140 car parking spaces on the first and second storey levels above the ground floor retail; changes to the St John's Road/Manse Road signalised junction allowing right and left turns from St John's Road onto Manse Road, while still allowing left and right turns onto St John's Road from Manse Road, configuration of the pedestrian crossing; and, changes to the configuration of Manse Road from one way to two ways from St John's Road to the proposed entrance/exit of the retail development to enable vehicular access to site. Changes are proposed to provide crossing facilities at the south end of Manse Road and create a new crossing facility at the south end of Belgrave Terrace/St John's Road (traffic lights). The proposed development will also include 21 cycle parking spaces 4 motorcycle parking spaces; service and car park access is proposed via Manse Road and eight electric car charging points within the car park.*

*The application site is bounded to the east, by existing three storey tenements with residential on the upper floors and retail units on the ground floor, which form the retail frontage to St John's Road. To the south, the site is bound by residential properties including 'The Manse' with its associated garden area with more residential units beyond.*

*To the west, the site is bound by Manse Road with a retirement home (known as the Cedars), Iceland retailer and more residential units beyond. St John's Road was declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for annual mean exceedances of NO2 in 2006 and amended to include exceedance of hourly mean NO2 in 2008. St John's Road is part of the A8 route in Corstorphine with residential properties at ground, first, second, third and fourth floor level within 2m of kerb edge. Sections of the street can be defined as having street canyon effect in parts and is already a busy shopping area. St John's Road is typically a congested flat road with high percentage of bus movements.*

## *Noise*

*Environmental Assessment has serious concerns regarding the potential noise impacts this development may have on the amenity of the existing residential properties. It is recognised that there is an existing service area to the rear of the commercial properties. The yard is currently only served infrequently by light good vehicles. The applicant has submitted a noise impact assessment in support of the application. The noise impact assessment has concluded that the magnitude of impact relative to the change in noise level is 'Negligible'. Accordingly the significance of effect is categorised as 'Slight'.*

*The applicant proposes operating during the following hours;*

*Trading Hours: Monday - Saturday: 07:00 - 22:00; Sunday: 10:00 - 18:00*

*Deliveries: Monday - Saturday: 06:00 - 22:00; Sunday: 08:00 - 19:00*

*Environmental Assessment do not support the proposed hours as they will likely lead to complaints especially early morning deliveries and Sunday deliveries. It should be noted that Environmental Health Officers have investigated early morning delivery noise complaints in this area already. The proposed hours and days of delivery are unacceptable.*

*Environmental Assessment has concerns regarding noise breakout from the new service yard, plant noise, and noise breakout through the proposed wall adjoining the existing residential tenement on St John's Road as well as increased noise from the proposed elevated car parking area.*

*The proposed service yard will be located in the basement area on the south side of the site, this is approximately the same area where the existing service yard. Delivery vehicles will access the service yard from Manse Road and drive down a ramp onto a turntable. The turntable will spin around and line-up with the loading bay. The delivery vehicle will then reverse up to the loading bay. Unloading and loading will then be carried out and thereafter the delivery vehicle will be spun around and exit up the ramp back onto Manse Road.*

*The noise impact assessment has looked at all these components of the delivery and combined them to estimate the likely impacts the service yard will have on the existing residential amenity.*

*Environmental Assessment has serious concerns regarding some of the assumptions and inputs used in the noise impact assessment. For example the distance from the delivery yard and nearest residential property is the Manse House where the bedroom and living room windows are approximately 5m away from the delivery yard. The noise impact assessment has modelled the nearest residential dwelling being 20.1m from the service yard.*

*The proposed service yard will be at basement level and the noise impact assessment has stated that a barrier calculations has been used to determine the attenuation provided by this position. A level of attenuation of -17.1dB has been calculated. This is a substantial reduction for a barrier and the applicant has not included any details on this proposed barrier. It is not clear if there will be a direct line of site from the residential properties on St John's Road or Manse Road into the service yard.*

*The noise impact assessment has not included noise from the proposed large gate, reversing beepers or turntable alarm. It has also not taken into account the worst case scenarios for the Lmax noise which are the high levels noise likely to cause disturbance.*

*The noise impact assessment has not considered what will happen if there are multiple deliveries made at the same time. This may lead to vehicles parking on Manse Road waiting for the service yard to be cleared. The noise impact assessment states that a delivery may take over 1 hour to complete.*

*An unusual aspect to the delivery system is that the yard will incorporate a turntable. This should enable to vehicles to manoeuvre with limited reversing. Reduced reversing is beneficial as this will limit the operation of reversing beepers but not completely. Environmental Assessment has been advised by planning that use of and maintenance of the turntable cannot be conditioned. If the turntable breaks down or delivery drivers choose not to use it then there is no planning condition to control it.*

*The noise impact assessment has not investigated the impacts the operational store and new upper floor car park may have on the neighbouring residential properties. The upper levels will be directly through the wall from the residential properties on St John's Road and will look over the neighbouring residential Manse House. The noise could be significant as they will be required to negotiate a ramp to access the car park.*

*Therefore based on the submitted noise impact assessment alone Environmental Assessment recommends that planning permission is refused.*

### *Local Air Quality*

*Planning Advice Note (PAN) 51: Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation 3 sets out the Scottish Executive's core policies and principles with respect to environmental aspects of land use planning, including air quality. PAN 51 states that air quality is capable of being a material planning consideration for the following situations where the development is proposed inside, or adjacent to, an AQMA:*

- Large scale proposals;*
- If they are to be occupied by sensitive groups such as the elderly or young children;*
- If there is the potential for cumulative effects.*

*The planning system has a role to play in the protection of air quality, by ensuring that development does not adversely affect air quality in AQMAs or, by cumulative impacts, lead to the creation of further AQMAs (areas where air quality standards are not being met, and for which remedial measures should therefore be taken.*

*AQMAs have been declared at five areas in Edinburgh - City Centre, St John's Road (Corstorphine), Great Junction Street (Leith) Glasgow Road (A8) at Ratho Station and Inverleith Row / Ferry Road. Breaches of AQS in the city's AQMAs are largely due to road congestion. The Council's Air Quality Action Plan contains a range of measures to reduce emissions both within these areas and beyond.*

*Reducing the need to travel and promoting the use of sustainable modes of transport are key principles identified in the Action Plan as well as the second Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LPD). The LDP acknowledges that growth of the city based on car dependency for travel would have serious consequences in terms of congestion and air quality. An improved transport system, based on sustainable alternatives to the car is therefore a high priority and continued investment in public transport, walking and cycling are central tenets of the City of Edinburgh Council's Local Transport Strategy 2014-19.*

*At St John's Road the statutory annual-mean NO<sub>2</sub> objective continues to be breached since the declaration of the AQMA (Graph 1). In 2013 the hourly-mean objective was met for the first time since monitoring commenced (Graph 2). There were eight exceedences compared with 62 the previous year (a maximum of 18 is allowable). In 2014 there was only one exceedence however there were some issues with monitoring equipment where a data set had to be removed. Data from the first quarter of 2015 shows the hourly-objective is likely to be exceeded once again (with 25 exceedences in that three month period). It should be stressed that if this proposal is developed out as proposed this will have a detrimental impact on achieving the objectives for this pollutant.*

*The impacts on the already problematic 1-hour standard have not been addressed by the applicant.*

*Environmental Assessment also has concerns with the traffic data used in the air quality impact assessment it may not be the worst case scenario. Vehicle trips have been predicted using the counts from the Morningside Waitrose store. This is not deemed a like for like comparison as the Morningside store is located in a much higher density residential area and more likely to be visited by higher numbers shoppers on foot.*

*The City of Edinburgh Council's Parking Standards for Development Control document, dated December 2009, is used to determine the appropriate level of car parking for new developments. Applying the above standard would result in parking provision of between 51 and 91 for a development this size.*

*Section 4 (5) of the Parking Standards provided general notes regarding reductions in minimum standards. It states that car parking provision below the normal minimum may be permitted for sites where lower parking provision is deemed essential for reasons of townscape, air quality or transport impact.*

*Due to the proximity of the St John's Road AQMA it is therefore deemed essential for parking numbers below the minimal standard to be considered.*

*The transport assessment states that the traffic signal data was obtained from CEC-Roads who advised that the signals on St John's Road operate on a 'SCOOT' (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) based system during the weekday AM and PM peak periods.*

*SCOOT is a tool for managing and controlling traffic signals in urban areas. It is an adaptive system that responds automatically to fluctuations in traffic flow through the use of on-street detectors embedded in the road. Due to recent works in this area SCOOT has not been fully operational. SCOOT is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2015.*

*Transport Planning have raised concerns regarding the proposed changes to Manse Road/St John's Road junction. Adding a third cycle would significantly reduce its capacity and its ability to be able to function with the proposed redesigned junction.*

*Furthermore, Environmental Assessment is concerned that if several delivery vehicles arrive at the same time they may be forced to wait Manse Road until the delivery yard/turntable is clear. It should also be noted that Iceland is also located on Manse Road and may also received deliveries from Manse Road. Multiple delivery/waste collection vehicles servicing the store(s) parked on Manse Road for up to an hour waiting for the turn table to be cleared may lead to further congestion. There are also proposed changes to the Clermiston junction, which is covered in the transport assessment. This too may have an adverse impact on congestion.*

*The applicant has not submitted any details on any proposed energy centre serving the building.*

*Environmental Assessment has serious concerns that both the noise and air quality impacts have not been assessed taking into account the worst case scenarios. Therefore Environmental Assessment recommends that the application is refused.*

## **Economic Development**

*The following are comments from the City of Edinburgh Council's Economic Development Service (EDS) which relate to planning application 15/02898/FUL: Demolition of existing shopping parade and erection of food retail development including ancillary cafe at ground level, parking, infrastructure and landscaping at 181, 183, 185, 197, 189 and 193-195 St John's Road, Edinburgh.*

### *Commentary on existing uses*

*The site is located within the local town centre of Corstorphine, approximately 4 miles from the City Centre and is 5,600 m<sup>2</sup> in size. A significant part of the proposed development was previously occupied by Woolworths and, as a result, it has remained vacant for long periods since late 2008.*

*It currently comprises of seven units with uses including class 1, 2 and 3. These units are occupied on short leases. It is estimated that, if fully let with existing class uses, these units could support approximately 82 full-time equivalent jobs.*

Corstorphine Town Centre currently has 112 units with a vacancy rate of 6.25% (May 2015). This figure is slightly higher than the Edinburgh Town Centre average (5.7%) but lower than the Scottish and UK averages (9.7% & 10.4% - Springboard January 2015).

#### *Commentary on Proposed Uses*

The developer, Realis Estates Ltd, proposes to demolish the existing 7 units and to replace them with a supermarket (identity undisclosed at this time.) This development could deliver:

- The replacement of ageing buildings with a sustainable new design, creating a gross floorspace of 3,140 m<sup>2</sup> (and a net sales area of 1,922 m<sup>2</sup>);
- The creation of an active frontage on part of the high street;
- The creation of approximately 113 full-time equivalent jobs (presumably there would also be a number of temporary jobs during construction); and
- The provision of approximately 140 car parking spaces, 8 electric car charging points and 21 secure cycle parking places.

#### *Employment*

Edinburgh's economic strategy, 'A Strategy for Jobs 2012-17', aims to achieve sustainable economic growth through supporting the creation and safeguarding of jobs in Edinburgh. A key element of delivering jobs-driven economic growth is through supporting businesses and the provision of an adequate supply of workplaces.

Economic Development encourages developers to work directly with the City's 'Joined Planning Consultation Up for Business' partners in order to unlock employment opportunities and satisfy tailored skills requirement for each site. Economic Development would, therefore, welcome engagement with the applicant and the end-users to allow detailed consideration of potential jobs and training opportunities associated with the proposals. Such an approach would allow time to prepare potential candidates from within the City's priority groups, including young people.

The proposed development could be expected to directly support approximately 113 full-time equivalent jobs. However, it is anticipated that displacement levels for a general retail use such as this would be high, meaning the net jobs figure would be lower (between 0 and 18).

#### *Other economic benefits*

It is assumed that approximately 85% of the floorspace (i.e. 1,634 m<sup>2</sup>) would be used for the sale of convenience goods; this is the area likely to be of concern to the existing retailers. A retail statement, compiled by agents CBRE concludes that the impact of the proposed store 'will be dispersed across a number of stores and, as such, the impact on any one store would not be significant'.

Based on this, it could be argued (albeit speculative) that the proposed development, in providing an additional convenience offering in the heart of one of the City's local town centres, could improve the attractiveness of the town centre and encourage footfall and may even attract additional investment. It would also address the long-standing issue of a number of highly visible empty units.

The average expenditure of households in Scotland is £449 p/w, making it one of the lowest-spending parts of the UK. According to the Office of National Statistics, average weekly spending on food and non-alcoholic drinks in Scotland sits below the UK norm. This raises the question of whether the proposed development would result in economic benefits, i.e. whether or not people would actually use it.

That said the development could be expected to have benefits by increasing the level of competition amongst retailers in the area, therefore increasing productivity and reducing prices.

## Summary

- The proposed development has the potential to enhance and enliven a part of one of the City's town centres that has been frequently vacant for some time.
- There is potential for the provision of approximately 113 full-time equivalent jobs as well as additional construction jobs.
- There is potential for additional spending in the area as a result of the proposed development.
- There is potential for increased productivity in the area as a result of the proposed development.
- There is potential for the proposed development to attract further investment into the local area.

## Archaeology Service

Further to your consultation request I would like to make the following comments and recommendations concerning this application for the demolition of existing shopping parade and erection of food retail development including ancillary cafe at ground floor level, parking, infrastructure and landscaping.

The current 1960's shopping centre was built on the site of Corstorphine's historic Manse. This important building was associated with the Parish's medieval Church of St Ninian's and occupied the NW corner of the intersection of Manse Road and the St John's Road, the historic medieval road linking Edinburgh and the west Kirkwood's map of 1817 depicts the Georgian Manse, however it is likely that this is the latest of series of buildings which occupied the since the medieval period.

Accordingly this site has been identified as occurring within an area of archaeological potential significance. This application must be considered therefore under terms the Scottish Government Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), PAN 02/2011 and also Edinburgh City Local Plan (2010) policy ENV9. The aim should be to preserve archaeological remains in situ as a first option, but alternatively where this is not possible, archaeological excavation or an appropriate level of recording may be an acceptable alternative.

As stated the site overlies the site of the former Church Manse demolished prior to 1960. Though affected by the construction of the 60's shopping parade the site may still contain evidence for this Georgian Manse and significantly possible evidence for the medieval development of Corstorphine. Accordingly ground breaking works associated with both demolition and construction are likely to have an impact upon any surviving buried remains. Therefore it is recommended that a programme of archaeological excavation is undertaken as part of the demolition process and prior/during development, in order to fully excavate, record and analysis any significant buried remains affected by ground breaking.

Accordingly it is recommended that the following condition be attached consent, if granted, to ensure that this programme of archaeological works is undertaken.

*'No demolition/development shall take place on the site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (excavation, analysis & reporting) in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.'*

*The work must be carried out by a professional archaeological organisation, either working to a brief prepared by CECAS or through a written scheme of investigation submitted to and agreed by CECAS for the site. Responsibility for the execution and resourcing of the programme of archaeological works and for the archiving and appropriate level of publication of the results lies with the applicant.*

## **Flood Prevention**

*The applicant would not be required to submit a flood risk assessment in this instance as the flooding to the south of the site is at level much lower level than the basement. However they should note that the development must not make this area of flooding any worse.*

*As a result the applicant should submit a surface water management plan which should include as a minimum:*

- The proposed discharge rate to the public network and the amount of impermeable area proposed for the site;*
- Microdrainage calculations which show that the surface water is retained and drained within the site;*
- Existing and proposed surface water flow paths to ensure that they are not significantly changing the way the site drains at the moment;*
- Confirmation from Scottish Water that there is capacity to allow them to connect into the public network;*
- Details of SUDS that they propose to install;*
- Confirmation of who will adopt and maintain the SUDS in the site.*

*Comments on the drainage strategy.*

- The proposed discharge rates of 10.0l/s is in excess of the maximum 4.5l/s/ha rate based upon impermeable area. CEC does not operate a policy of 'betterment' and as such the developer must bring their proposed discharge rate in line with the flood prevention guidelines. Due to the size of the site a relaxation in this rule must apply in order to comply with Sewers for Scotland v3 which states that a pipe but be no smaller than 75mm in diameter. As a result the maximum discharge rate for the site using a 75mm diameter hydrobrake shall be in the region of 3l/s. This rate will be acceptable to CEC Flood Prevention.*
- The drainage strategy notes that 'Because we are discharging into the combine sewer there is no need to treat the discharge'. This is not correct and under Scottish Planning policy CEC request that SuDS treatment is incorporated for discharges going to either the combined network or a watercourse. As the developer has included filter trenches in the design this level of treatment is acceptable to the CEC Flood Prevention.*
- Please revise the storage and microdrainage calculations to take account of the maximum flow rate of 3 l/s.*
- Please provide pre-development and post-development flow paths which show surface water flow in and around the site.*

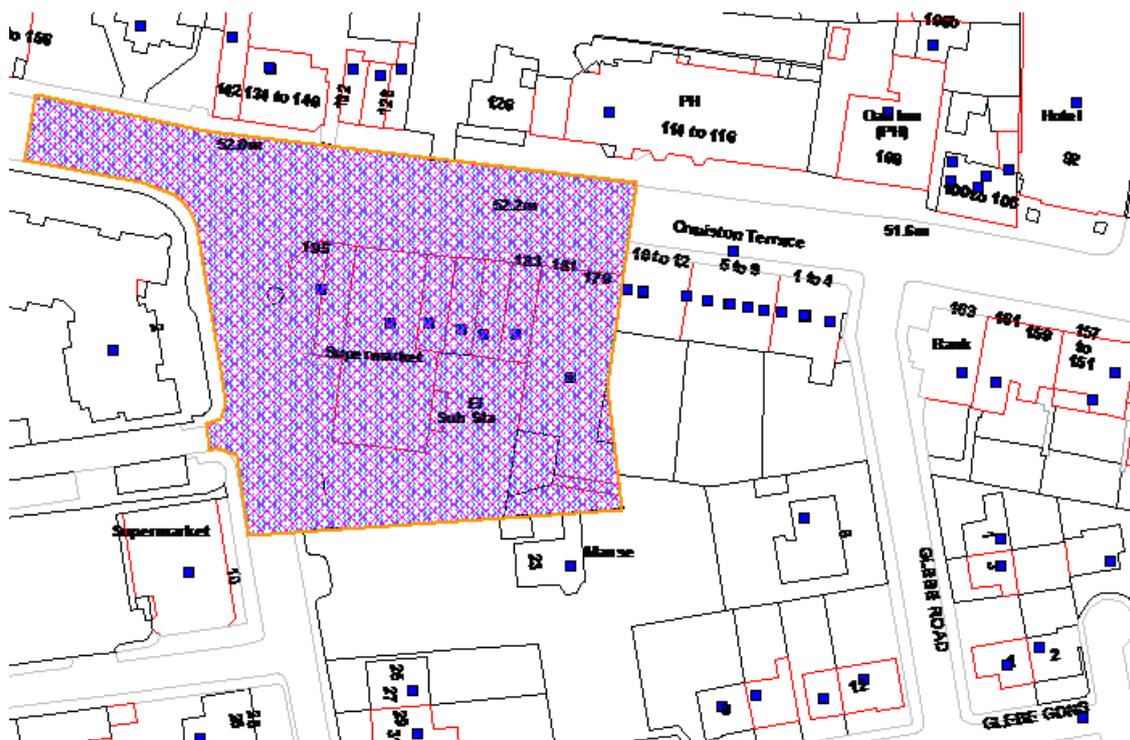
## **Corstorphine Community Council**

*Thank you for the original grant of extension of time for submission of comments on above for Corstorphine Community Council.*

At our monthly meeting last night (Wednesday 16th.) we agreed by a majority of members present to support the application in principle as it is desired that efforts be made to ensure that the village centre remains viable and car parking in the location has long been problematical..

A sizeable local minority have protested at potential traffic problems in the St John's Road / Manse Road / Featherhall Road nexus and also about the character of the development preferring small independent shops etc. There has also been expressions of concern regarding the planned removal of mature trees.

## Location Plan



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