

DELEGATED

AGENDA NO

PLANNING COMMITTEE

DATE 15th OCTOBER 2008

**REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR,
DEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD
SERVICES**

08/2584/LA

**Riverside/Bridge Road/Church Yard Link Road,
Realignment of Riverside Road at the junction with Churchyard Link Road/Bridge Road
through existing commercial premises (Glynn Webb building)**

Expiry Date: 12th November 2008

Summary

Planning permission is sought for the realignment of Riverside Road to straighten out the link onto the 1825 Way and the signalisation of the junction with Bridge Road and a second signal controlled junction at the Parkfield Road junction.

The scheme is intended to provide an improved link for public transport by reducing delay particularly in the peak hour period.

The proposal forms part of the proposed Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements which will play a key role in the Council's Long-Term Transport Strategy as set out in the Stockton on Tees Local Transport Plan and is considered to be in line with general planning policies set out in the Development Plan and is recommended for approval with conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning application 08/2584/LA be Approved subject to the following conditions:-

01 *The development hereby approved shall be in accordance with the following approved plan(s); unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.*

<i>Plan Reference Number</i>	<i>Date on Plan</i>
<i>TS/D2/70/2/3</i>	<i>13 August 2008</i>
<i>TS/D2/70/2/4</i>	<i>13 August 2008</i>
<i>TS/D2/70/2/5</i>	<i>13 August 2008</i>
<i>TS/D2/70/2/3A</i>	<i>28 August 2008</i>

Reason: To define the consent.

02. **No development shall take place within the area indicated until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has completed the implementation of a phased programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Where important archaeological remains exist provision should be made for their preservation in situ.**

Reason: The site is of archaeological interest.

03. **Notwithstanding the proposals detailed in the submitted plans the development shall not commence until full details of proposed hard landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This will include all external finishing materials, finished levels, and all construction details confirming materials, colours, finishes and fixings. The scheme shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority according to the approved details within a period of 12 months from the date on which the development commenced. Any defects in materials or workmanship appearing within a period of 12 months from completion of the total development shall be made-good by the owner as soon as practicably possible.**

Reason: To enable the LPA to control details of the proposed development, to ensure a high quality hard landscaping scheme is provided in the interests of visual amenity which contributes positively to local character of the area.

04. **Notwithstanding the proposals detailed in the submitted plans no tree, shrub or hedge shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans, without the written authorisation of the Local Planning Authority. Any tree, shrub or hedge or any tree/shrub or hedge planted as a replacement that dies or is removed, uprooted or destroyed or becomes seriously damaged or defective must be replaced by another of the same size and species unless directed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

Reason: To protect the existing trees/shrubs and hedges on site that the Local Planning Authority consider to be an important visual amenity in the locality and should be appropriately maintained.

05. **Notwithstanding the proposals detailed in the submitted plans all means of enclosure including any requirement for earthwork retention and street furniture associated with the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development commences. Such means of enclosure, retention and street furniture as agreed shall be erected before the development hereby approved is brought into use.**

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

06. **Notwithstanding the proposals detailed in the submitted plans, no development shall commence until full details of Soft Landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This will be a detailed planting plan and specification of works indicating soil depths, plant species, numbers, densities, locations inter relationship of plants, stock size and type, grass, and planting methods including construction techniques for pits in hard surfacing and root barriers. All works shall be in accordance with aall existing or proposed utility services that may influence proposed tree planting shall be indicated on the planting plan. The scheme shall be completed unless otherwise agreed with the LPA in writing in the first planting season following:**

- a) commencement of the development
- b) or agreed phases

and the development shall not be brought into use until the scheme has been completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a high quality planting scheme is provided in the interests of visual amenity which contributes positively to local character and enhances bio diversity.

07. Notwithstanding the proposals detailed in the submitted plans, a soft landscape management plan including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas/ retained vegetation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the

- a) development
- b) or approved phases.

Maintenance shall be detailed for a minimum of 5 years from date of completion of the total scheme regardless of any phased development

Any vegetation within a period of 5 years from the date of from the date of completion of the total works that is dying, damaged, diseased or in the opinion of the LPA is failing to thrive shall be replaced by the same species of a size at least equal to that of the adjacent successful planting in the next planting season unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory landscaping to improve the appearance of the site in the interests of visual amenity.

08. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision of a surface water drainage system has been approved by the Local Planning Authority to confirm that there will be no increase in surface water run-off to the River Tees. The scheme shall be implemented before the construction of impermeable surfaces unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding by ensuring the provision of a satisfactory means of surface water disposal.

The proposal has been considered against the policies below and it is considered that there are no material considerations that indicate a decision should be otherwise.

Policy GP1 of the adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan.

BACKGROUND

1. The construction of the final stage of South Stockton Link between central Stockton and Ingleby Barwick was completed in March 2005. This road, known as the 1825 Way, was connected into Bridge Road with a signal controlled junction to the east of the Bridge Road/Riverside roundabout. When the South Stockton Link was originally planned it was always recognised that the existing roundabout at the Bridge Road/ Riverside junction would reach capacity within about five years of the opening of the 1825 Way and that a junction improvement scheme would be required. The improvement and signalisation works, which form the subject of this application, would provide an improved link for public transport on the Bridge Road corridor into central Stockton by improving the capacity of the junction.

2. The main desire line for traffic heading north on the 1825 Way from Ingleby Barwick is along Riverside to by pass central Stockton. Currently traffic on this route has to pass through a signal-controlled junction and then negotiate the Bridge Road roundabout before accessing Riverside. This can lead to delays in passing through the junction, particularly in the peak hour periods. These delays directly impact on bus journey times as the junction is heavily used by buses, which run along Bridge Road to and from the High Street and central Stockton. Traffic heading west along Bridge Road again currently has to pass through a signal controlled junction and then negotiate the Bridge Road roundabout before heading for the High Street or further west along Yarm Road, again traffic at these junctions can directly and adversely impact on bus journey times.

3. The improved public transport link at the Bridge Road/Riverside junction forms part the wider Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement Scheme that aims to improve the journey time for buses on a number of core routes within the Borough. In order to achieve this goal the Council along with other Councils in the Tees Valley have put together a joint bid for finance to carry out a number of improvement schemes under the banner of the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement Scheme.

PROPOSAL

4. The proposed improvement would replace the current arrangements with two linked signal controlled junctions. The main improvement would involve the realignment of Riverside to straighten out the link onto 1825 Way and the signalisation of the junction with Bridge Road. Further west along Bridge Road there would be a second signal-controlled junction at the Parkfield Road junction. Both these signal junctions would be linked and the phasing of the lights coordinated in order to speed up traffic flows through the junction. This system, known as MOVA, together with dedicated lanes would enable a priority green route to be set up for buses on the Bridge Road to High Street corridor.

5. As part of the application an access to Tower Street has been shown on the application drawing as a future highway link associated with the potential redevelopment of the site. This link is shown for information only as the details may change following any future submission for the redevelopment of the site.

6. The existing steam locomotive which has been temporarily sited on the central island of the Bridge Road roundabout for a number of years is to be re-sited onto the new highway verge at the Bridge Road / Riverside junction. It should be noted that, when the locomotive was placed here, the long-term future of the roundabout was already known and that a new home would be required within 5-10 years.

CONSULTATIONS

7. The following Consultations were notified and any comments received are set out below: -

8. Tees Archaeology

The section of the proposed route, which heads northwards from Bridge Road to Riverside Road crosses the former moat and precinct of Stockton Castle. Although I have no objection in principle to the proposal we would need to assess the impact of the scheme on archaeological deposits and devise appropriate mitigation where necessary.

This could be achieved by use of a negative planning condition.

The first stage of the assessment would be to check existing geotechnical data for the area as this might indicate the depth at which archaeological deposits are likely to survive. If the development can be achieved without penetrating archaeological deposits then no further action would be needed. If geotechnical work has not yet been commissioned then it would be advisable for an

archaeological contractor to be present as works take place in order to characterise archaeological deposits.

I would be happy to liaise with your engineers further and provide further advice as required.

9. The Environment Agency

We have consulted on the application, as submitted, and confirm that we have no objections to the proposed development subject to the imposition of a condition on surface drainage.

10. Highways Agency

The Highways Agency has reviewed the details of the application and has no objections to the highway improvement works.

11. Urban Design Engineers

Urban Design supports the application in accordance with the comments below.

Highways Comments

I have considered the proposed highway layout plan and I have no comments to make regarding the proposals.

Landscape & Visual Comments

In landscape and visual terms I have no objections, however notwithstanding the landscape scheme submitted, full hard and soft landscape details are to be provided to the following minimum standard:

A detailed landscape plan indicating proposals for hard construction indicating materials and construction methods. The site is seen as a gateway site and therefore any proposed surface materials need to reflect this.

Details of street furniture including pedestrian barriers. A detailed planting plan indicating soil depths, plant species, numbers, densities, locations, and sizes, planting methods, maintenance and management.

Built Environment Comments

I support the application and request that further details are to be provided in relation to the proposed treatment of any building façade reconstruction treatment that may occur as a result of the realignment and outcome of the CPO.

12. Northern Gas Networks

No objection and standard mains record shown.

13. CE Electric UK

Standard mains record shown.

PUBLICITY

14. Local residents/businesses have been individually notified of the application and it has also been advertised by site notice and in the local press. The comments received are summarised below

15. Build Center, Riverside Road

Our concerns as a business what effect will the works to be carried out on the junction, which leads into our depot. Will there be access so our customers and supply vehicles can still gain entry, also what is the timescale on the works to be carried out.

16. DTZ

I write on behalf of my client, Redleaf VI (Stockton) GP Limited acting for Redleaf VI (Stockton) Limited Partnership, as owners of the Castlegate Shopping Centre in Stockton-on-Tees. We have reviewed details of the above planning application and are grateful for the opportunity to submit comments.

We wish to register an objection to this planning application on the grounds that:

- i. It has not been demonstrated that works are essential and that the junction involved is operating at or above its capacity.
- ii. The roadworks that the implementation of the scheme will require will be highly detrimental to the accessibility of the town centre and its attractiveness to shoppers, visitors and businesses for a protracted period of time. This will have a significant economic impact and may ultimately result in business closures and job losses.

Specifically, access restrictions caused by road works such as diversions, closures and delays are likely to reduce the number of visitors to the town centre and impact on the trading performance of shops and businesses. This will impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre and may, in the worst case scenario, lead to business closures and increased vacancy rates.

In the adopted Local Plan (Alteration No. 1 to the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan 2006), the Council sets out its aims and objectives. These include:

'To strengthen the retail function of the Borough... in order to:

- *provide and maintain attractive and accessible shopping facilities to meet the needs of the local population as a whole*
- *protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the functional roles that the [town centres] play towards the provision of retailing.'* (Chapter 3 Paragraph 5, paraphrased)

Paragraph 17 refers specifically to Stockton Town Centre and states that:

'The Council recognises that this retail economy and its environment must be strengthened, and its role expanded as a strong and attractive destination'.

Should planning permission be granted, the proposed highways works must not be allowed compromise the achievement of the aims and objectives or impact the vitality and viability of the town centre.

It is therefore imperative that the works are carefully planned to minimise impact on traffic and pedestrian flows and the attractiveness of the town centre. Specifically, Stockton Council must guarantee that motorists can access both the Castlegate Centre car parks at all times throughout the period of works and that access points are comprehensively signposted. These access points are shown on the attached plan.

In the absence of specific details at this stage, we request that any proposed temporary closures and diversions are subject to further consultation and approval prior to commencement of any works pursuant to the grant of planning permission.

Should permission be granted, then a construction method statement should also be required by condition. This should set out methods to be employed to minimise disruption, such as by undertaking construction out of trading hours.

In summary, the Castlegate Centre and Stockton Town Centre as a whole are experiencing difficult economic and trading conditions which are expected to continue into the medium term. The proposed highway works will compound this situation at a very bad time, such that the impact on trade will be detrimental to the economic viability of business and the vitality and viability of the town centre. Unless proven to be absolutely essential, the proposed works should be abandoned or deferred and this planning application should be refused accordingly.

I hereby request that this objection is conveyed to the Planning Committee prior to determination of the planning application.

I trust that these comments are in order and will be taken into account in the formulation of planning conditions and the determination of the planning application.

17. CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD LLP

We write on behalf of our client, Beaucette Ltd Partnership (for Eliteshape and Deltatoken Ltd), in relation to the above planning application currently being considered by the Council.

As you may be aware, our client owns the site known as Chandler's Wharf, which is directly impacted by the above proposal. Further to our letter of 12 September 2008 and for the reasons set out below, our client objects strongly to the planning application and urges the Council to refuse the proposal on the following grounds.

The application relates to the '*realignment of Riverside at its junction with Churchyard Link Road / Bridge Road through existing commercial premises*'. We are surprised to note that the Statement in Support of the Application contends that there is only '*some minor requirement for works on adjoining retail land*'. In fact, implementation of the proposed permission would require the acquisition of a significant and prominent parcel of my client's title, totalling over 1.5 acres of Stockton town centre.

Chandler's Wharf is a retail park comprising five units and associated surface car parking. The commercial success of a retail park is dependent on creating a destination, where customers are able to visit a number of outlets. At present Chandler's Wharf is only marginally able to achieve this, and as a consequence has struggled to maintain full occupancy. We strongly believe that any reduction in the quantum of retail space on the park would result in the loss of critical mass needed to attract tenants. The effect of granting permission for this application would be to create a blight over the park. In turn this will lead to significant vacancies and a lack of activity on a site which the Council aspires to be the Southern Gateway to the town.

Local Plan Policy SH4 promoted, inter alia, comprehensive development of the site and adjoining land for retail and tourism uses, including property refurbishment. Following directions from the Secretary of State this Policy was deleted from the Local Plan on 27 September 2007 (as part of the transition to the new Local Development Framework). We understand from discussions with the Council that this Policy was deleted as it was considered that the proposed development is now 'complete'. However, it is not clear in what sense this Policy has actually been 'completed' as there have been no works carried out on our client's site since the Policy's inception, and very little activity on adjacent sites to deliver this regeneration. In this respect, we conclude there are Council objectives for this site, as contained within Policy SH4, which remain unfulfilled and would be jeopardised by this application.

Although this is ostensibly a planning application to upgrade a highway junction, we note that the realignment of Riverside frees up almost one acre of land to the West of the road at the expense of the land taken from my client's property. On the planning application drawings, this is shown as landscaping. However, this is in stark contrast to the proposals for the land shown in the aspirational plan 'Stockton Riverside' produced for the applicant and its partners in April 2007. This plan indicates that this newly created site would be appropriate for a high density multi-level commercial development. It occurs to us therefore that the planning application is being used to create value for a third party at my client's expense, which would not appear to be a valid planning objective.

We recognise that granting planning permission for this application only provides the planning basis for development, and cannot in itself be used to acquire my client's land. However, if granted, it would show clear intent by the Council to follow a path towards compulsory acquisition. This will have the effects of:

- Deterring potential new occupiers
- Causing existing occupiers to leave the park
- Reducing the investment value of the property
- The loss of existing and potential jobs in Stockton
- The blighting of over 8 acres of land at a key gateway site

It will also have the effect of significantly reducing any redevelopment options. My client is exploring ways to upgrade and enhance the property. This includes various phased development options, an upgrade of the public realm, attracting new job-creating occupiers and generally improving the aesthetics of the park in keeping with a key gateway site. At best, the timing of this application is unfortunate as it does not allow for the synchronisation and evolution of design options, instead forcing development down more a prescribed and less economic route. At worst, the application will prevent forms of redevelopment such that the property remains sterilised and in a deteriorating state for many years to come, if not indefinitely.

For the reasons above, we strongly commend that the Council as applicant withdraws the application, or as local planning authority refuses permission.

PLANNING POLICY

18. The relevant development plan in this case is the adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan. Where an adopted or approved development plan contains relevant policies, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application for planning permissions shall be determined in accordance with the Development Plan(s) for the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the relevant Development Plans are: - *the Tees Valley Structure Plan (TVSP) and the Stockton on Tees Local Plan (STLP)*.

19. The Tees Valley Structure Plan does not contain any policy applicable directly to the application site.

20. The following planning policies are considered to be relevant to the consideration of this application: -

Policy GP1

Proposals for development will be assessed in relation to the policies of the Cleveland Structure Plan and the following criteria as appropriate:

- (i) The external appearance of the development and its relationship with the surrounding area;
- (ii) The effect on the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties;
- (iii) The provision of satisfactory access and parking arrangements;

- (iv) The contribution of existing trees and landscape features;
- (v) The need for a high standard of landscaping;
- (vi) The desire to reduce opportunities for crime;
- (vii) The intention to make development as accessible as possible to everyone;
- (viii) The quality, character and sensitivity of existing landscapes and buildings;
- (ix) The effect upon wildlife habitats;
- (x) The effect upon the public rights of way network.

21. **Planning Policy Guidance Note 13:** Transport seeks to integrate planning and transport by reducing the reliance on the motor car, encouraging the use of more sustainable transport choices, reduce the need to travel, and promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, cycling and walking.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

22. The primary considerations in regard to this application relate to highway safety implications, environmental impact, the effect of the development on the character and amenity of the area, impact on the Town Centre and whether it satisfies the requirements of the Local Plan Policies.

23. The realignment and improvement works would be constructed largely on existing adopted highway land but with some requirement for works on adjoining retail land at the Glynwebb site on the corner of Bridge Road/Riverside and at the Build Centre site on Riverside. Whilst the realignment does not directly require any land from the Build Centre site, a small retaining wall would be necessary on the boundary with the Build Centre and an easement required for construction and future maintenance.

24. The Highways Agency has examined the proposal and raised no objections and it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of highway safety.

25. As stated previously the scheme would largely be constructed on exiting adopted highway land and would be situated within an area of built development and with the provision of suitable landscape treatment it is considered would not have a significant impact on the visual amenities of the locality as a whole.

26. The proposal involves the removal of the eastbound bus stop and lay-by but a replacement will be considered as part of the bus major scheme for the Mandale Gyratory.

27. The scheme is intended to provide an improved link for public transport and the principle of the Bridge Road/Riverside Junction Public Transport Improvement scheme is supported by a number of policy documents:

- Local Transport Plan
- 'Tees Valley City Region: A Business Case for Delivery', published by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit in October 2006
- 'Connecting the Tees Valley: The Case for Investment in the Tees Valley Bus Network', published by the TVJSU in October 2006
- The Major Scheme Business Case for the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements, prepared by the TVJSU and submitted to the DfT on 29 February 2008

28. The Council's Long-Term Transport Strategy, as set out in Chapter 6 of the Second Stockton-on-Tees Local Transport Plan (LTP), is based on the set of Core Aims and Objectives set out below.

29. The Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements will play a key role in meeting many of these Aims and Objectives, particularly those highlighted in **bold** within the Table.

Shared Priority Theme	Core Aim	Objectives
Accessibility	To improve opportunities for all to access health, education, jobs, leisure and food outlets.	Improved public transport network coverage.
		More integrated transport links.
		Better travel information.
		Increased reliability of transport systems.
		Reduced cost of travel. Encouragement of more walking and cycling trips.
Congestion	To reduce the rate of traffic growth in the Borough.	Increased use of more sustainable alternatives to the private car.
		Promotion and awareness of more sustainable alternatives to the private car.
		More efficient management and use of existing infrastructure.
Road Safety	To reduce the incidence and severity of casualties on the Borough's roads.	Ensure that all new and improved highways infrastructure adopts best practice in 'safe by design' principles.
		Take into account the greater incidence of casualties in priority neighbourhoods.
		Promote road safety education within the community.
Air Quality	To reduce the risk posed to health by traffic related pollution.	Maintain statutory air quality objectives across the Borough.
		Implement measures designed to reduce PM10 levels across the Borough.
Other Quality of Life	To improve transport's contribution to our community's quality of life.	Implement measures designed to enhance safety and reduce the fear of crime.
		Address noise and climate change issues.
		Enhance the landscape and biodiversity.
		Enhance the quality of the public realm.
		Improve community transport. Promote healthier communities.

30. Given the above, the scheme is highlighted as a priority intervention within the Accessibility Chapter (Chapter 8) of the Second LTP, as well as being referenced specifically within the Congestion, Air Quality and Other Quality of Life Chapters (Chapters 9, 11 and 12 respectively).

31. The scheme will also contribute to the achievement of many of the targets against which the delivery of the Second LTP will be assessed, including those set for National Indicators (NIs) 167 (Congestion – average journey time per mile during the morning peak), NI 175 (Access to services

and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling), NI 177 (Local bus and light rail passenger journeys originating in the Authority area) and NI 178 (Bus services running on time), together with LTP Mandatory Indicators LTP 2 (Change in area-wide vehicle kilometres) and LTP 6 (Changes in peak period traffic flows to urban centres).

32. Concerns have been expressed by local businesses in respect of the potential impact of the construction works on their operations. The roadworks will be phased to ensure that access to all adjoining properties is maintained. Due to the need to alter levels this may, in the case of the Builder Center, involve a local temporary diversion but the main consideration would still be to maintain access. The actual timing of the works has yet to be finalised but the provisional programme is: -

Advance earthworks	Jan. 2010 - March 2010
Service diversions	April 2010 - August 2010
Roadworks	Sept. 2010 - December 2011

33. An objection has also been received from the owners of the Castlegate Centre. Whilst it is acknowledged that there will be some disruption to the existing network when the scheme is being constructed, the project will be managed to minimise any potential impact by careful planning and phasing of the works. Whilst detailed programming constraint have not yet been formulated, they will include the need to maintain access to properties by existing signed routes and the carrying out of final surfacing works at night to minimise disruption, however not all works would be undertaken out of trading hours as this is considered to be both unreasonable and uneconomic.

34. Any temporary road closures would be advertised and subject to consultation before works are undertaken. Any diversion routes would not, however, be the subject of consultation. Any such routes would be put in to suit traffic needs and to minimise disruption to the public. Furthermore when the scheme reaches the construction stage there will be full consultation with the major affected parties, one of whom will be the Castlegate Centre.

35. An objection has been received from the owners of Chandler's Wharf stating that the implementation of the proposal would require a significant and prominent parcel of their land and that the reduction in the amount of retail space would result in the loss of critical mass needed to attract tenants and would create a blight over the retail park. Furthermore the proposal frees up almost one acre of land to the west of the road at the expense of land taken from Chandler's Wharf thereby creating value for a third party at the owners of Chandler's Wharf expense. The proposal would also significantly reduce any redevelopment options such that the property remains sterilised and in a deteriorating state for many years to come, if not indefinitely.

36. In response to the above comments it is considered that the extent of land required for the proposal is fully justified in order to provide a more direct route for the main traffic flow on the Ingleby Barwick to Riverside corridor compared to the existing alignment. This direct link will enable traffic on this desire line to traverse the junction in less time due to the fact that there will be only one major signal junction to pass through instead of the current arrangement of a signal junction followed by a roundabout. This in turn will free up time and hence capacity at the junction for buses on the Bridge Road to Stockton High Street corridor. The remaining parcel still provides for the owner to explore development opportunities including property refurbishment and comprehensive redevelopment. It should be noted that the existing access/egress from Bridge Road is unaffected.

37. It is acknowledged that the realignment of the road would result in a new reconfigured area to the West of the road shown as a landscaped area. With regards to any future development of this area, in the event of such development requiring consent, any proposals would be treated on their own merits in the light of the situation prevailing at the time. However this application should be decided on its individual planning merits with regard to relevant material considerations.

38. It should be noted that should planning consent be granted this would only provide for the development and would still require the landowner's consent. The owner states that if granted it would show a clear intent by the Council to follow a path towards compulsory acquisition. This would have the effect of deterring potential new occupiers, causing existing occupiers to leave the park; reducing the investment value of the property; the loss of existing and potential jobs in Stockton and the blighting of over 8 acres of land at a key gateway site.

39. In response, the acquisition of land is a separate matter and not a material consideration in determining this application. The Riverside Road/ Bridge Road junction is considered to be an important gateway to Stockton and the proposed scheme offers opportunities to enhance the area and facilitate development whilst still providing the owner of Chandler's Wharf scope to refurbish and develop their land which to date has not fully realised its potential.

40. As stated previously the scheme provides for improved public transport links to the town centre, which, in turn, will promote accessibility and hence the attractiveness to shoppers.

CONCLUSION

41. In conclusion it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of highway safety and will not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area and is in accordance with policy GP1 of the adopted Local Plan and is recommended for approval.

Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services

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Financial Implications – As report

Environmental Implications – As report

Community Safety Implications – As report

Background Papers – Stockton on Tees Local Plan, Second Stockton on Tees Local Transport Plan.

Human Rights Implications - The provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights 1950 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Ward Stockton Town Centre

Ward Councillors Councillor D. W. Coleman, Councillor P. Kirton