

WITHAM, Cut Throat Lane Car Park

Agenda Item 7

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Background Papers:- None
Financial Implications:- None at present
Equalities Implications:- None
Legal Implications:- Legal Services have been involved in discussions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to update members on the planning situation regarding the Cut Throat Lane Car Park, in Witham, and progress that has occurred since the site was last discussed at Witham Area Committee.

DECISION

No decision required.

WITHAM, Cut Throat Lane Car Park

At the Witham Area Committee on the 30th January 2007 it was agreed that a report which details the situation regarding the existing Cut Throat Lane Car Park in Witham should be presented to this committee.

The existing surface level car park accessed from Cut Throat Lane in Witham has previously been the subject of planning proposals in the past. The most recent proposal was submitted in 2002, as an outline application to erect a multi-storey car park and 'drive-thru' restaurant on the site. The application number was 02/01280/OUT.

The Witham Area Committee resolved to refuse the application on the 16th March 2004, for reasons relating to the use of part of the site as a fast food restaurant, and for the additional traffic generated by the proposal.

The application was then referred to the Council's Regulatory Committee, on the 20th April 2004. At that committee it was resolved to grant permission, subject to a 'Section 106' legal agreement, principally in order to secure highways improvements to the locality, and to resolve the issue related to the access, which was proposed from the roundabout serving Morrison's.

Regular checks on the progress of the Planning Agreement were undertaken by the Council's solicitors, however we received no instruction that the applicant was willing to proceed with the application. As a result, the Council wrote to the applicants' solicitors in April 2006, advising them that the application was deemed to be withdrawn, due to lack of progress on the legal agreement.

At the same time officers have been discouraging any applications in the vicinity which would result in any loss of existing car parking, bearing in mind Policy RLP56 of the Local Plan Review which safeguards the three car parks around the station.

The situation at present is that there are no outstanding applications to be considered regarding this, or other, car parks in the vicinity. However, because the lack of parking is an issue, Council officers have looked at opening up a dialogue with others which will investigate how an increase in parking spaces can be achieved. This has included speaking with Essex County Council Highways Officers, and the Council's solicitors. Dialogue is ongoing but it is hoped that firm options to pursue can be considered shortly. As you will be aware, the Car Parking Survey has also been commissioned, and this is presented as a separate agenda item.

The way forward would seem to be considering the recommendations resulting from the Car Parking Survey, then pursuing options relating to this site, by contacting the occupier of the car park, and neighbouring car parks, in conjunction with the Highways Authority and the Council solicitor.