

APPLICATION REPORT - PA/057108/09

Planning Committee, 28 October, 2009

Registration Date: 07/09/2009
Ward: Coldhurst

Application Reference: PA/057108/09
Type of Application: Outline Planning Permission

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of a Metrolink 3B Stop at Westwood Middleton Road Oldham. Access and layout to be considered.

Location: Land at Westwood, Middleton Road, Oldham
Case Officer: Mark Ollerenshaw

Applicant Agent : GMPTE

THE SITE

Land at Westwood, Middleton Road, Oldham

THE PROPOSAL

Outline application for the erection of a Metrolink 3B Stop at Westwood, Middleton Road, Oldham. Access and layout to be considered.

The stop is to be located alongside Middleton Road, between Winterbottom Street and the service road to the covered reservoir, and in front of the Westwood Medical Centre. Changes to local roads require rationalisation of the junction of Middleton Road and Winterbottom Street and the pedestrian access/egress to the proposed stop. The stop would form part of a new signalised junction with Middleton Road. The existing rights of way will need to be realigned across the ends of the stop, which should tie into the new traffic management measures allowing pedestrian crossing across Middleton Road.

The overall design of the stop is configured to minimise the impact on the surrounding residential area to the north of the site and the Westwood Medical Centre to the south, through the introduction of noise and visual barriers as part of a landscape scheme. The existing play area adjacent to the stop and access footways will be replaced as part of the scheme.

A kiss and ride (short stay drop-off bay) on Middleton Road is to be provided.

The stop will include platforms, shelters, CCTV, ticket vending machines, passenger information displays, poster cases, signage, lighting, passenger emergency call points, seating, bins, pedestrian links and hard and soft landscaping. Cycle parking will also be provided within the stop boundary.

The Oldham Town Centre Line will include four new stops, comprising Westwood, Oldham King Street, Oldham Central, and Oldham Mumps.

RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE:

Outline planning permission has been granted for a stop in this location on three previous occasions, see below:

PA/052877/07 - Outline consent for construction of four Metrolink-Stops with Layout and Means of Access to be considered as a detail. All other matters to be reserved - Granted May 2007.

PA/046642/04 - Renewal of existing planning permission (PA/40889/00) for outline consent for construction of Metrolink Stops - siting and access to be considered, all other matters reserved - Granted April 2004.

PA/040889/00 - Outline application for construction of Metrolink Stops - siting and access to be considered, all other matters reserved - Granted April 2001.

SITE SPECIFIC UDP POLICIES

LRT	Metrolink (LRT) Route
LRT2	New Railway Station or Metrolink Stop
ROS	Recreational Open Space

CONSULTATIONS

Pollution Control (Air, Noise, Water)	No comments.
Traffic Section	Recommends conditions.
United Utilities Asset Protection	Object. A public sewer crosses this site. United Utilities will not permit building over it.
Water and Wastewater Comments	
Greater Manchester Police	No comments on access and layout but would wish to be consulted on the reserved matters application.
Architectural Liaison Unit	
Environment Agency	No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicized by way of neighbour notification letters, a press notice, and a site notice. A copy of the plans has also been on display during the consultation period at Gallery Oldham. One objection has been received from Westwood Primary School, in which the following concerns are raised:

- Increased noise and other pollutants;
- The proposal will exacerbate the parking problem in the area;
- The proposal could impede access to and from the Nursery building and car park;
- The stop will have a negative impact upon the already problematic issues of drug dealing and prostitution in the area;
- Increased traffic on an already treacherous stretch of road that is without a safe crossing point;
- By using land behind the Nursery building for the line would remove us of an emergency evacuation and assembly point;
- Loss of green land and open space in the area. The land is also used for recreational uses and by voluntary groups.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The Metrolink stop on Middleton Road, Westwood and associated facilities are allocated on the UDP Proposals Map and safeguarded by Policy T1.1 Transport Infrastructure. The principle of development is therefore established. Other specific policies pertinent to this application include D1.1 General Design Criteria, and D1.3 Inclusive Access.

The application seeks layout and access matters to be considered in detail with appearance, landscaping and scale reserved. In this context, the proposal raises a number of issues including the design and siting of the stop, impact on neighbouring premises, accessibility and highway safety.

Westwood Primary School have raised a number of concerns about the proposal, which appear to relate primarily to the principle of the development in this location. However, as pointed out above, the application site is allocated as a Metrolink stop on the UDP proposals map and its siting in this location has been approved in outline on three previous occasions.

With regards to the concern raised about the loss of the open space, the proposals include for a replacement play area of equal or better value. A detailed scheme for the replacement play area can be satisfactorily dealt with by way of condition. It is considered that due to the positioning of the stop at street level and on the opposite side of Middleton Road that any impact on the businesses and residential properties (on the north side of Middleton Road) would be minimal.

The design of each stop along the Metrolink route is being considered individually, whilst a collective approach is being maintained to some of the detailing. In this context the design response to the detailed elements of the proposal will be common to all the stops, though at the same time, the design framework aims to be responsive to the local environment of each stop. I am satisfied that the overall design of this stop will be acceptable and compliant with Policy D1.1. More detailed information on the design of the stop will be forthcoming at reserved matters stage.

There are necessary highway works which are directly associated with the proposed LRT track and this Metrolink stop. The planning application site for the Metrolink stop, shown edged red on the location plan, is confined to the stop. The highway works outside the application site would have to be completed prior to the opening of the stop. Consequently, a 'Grampian' condition is recommended relating to the necessary associated highway works, in the vicinity of the site.

In conclusion, I am satisfied that the proposal complies with Council policy and wider Government policy. The proposed stop will help foster greater public transport use, increase accessibility and enhance the attraction of Oldham Town Centre. I therefore recommend this application for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve, subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval of :

1) Scale

2) Appearance and

3) Landscaping

hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be obtained from the Local Planning Authority in writing before any development is commenced and shall be carried out as approved.

Reason - To comply with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. The development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission or two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters.

Reason - To comply with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

3. No development shall take place unless and until a detailed habitat and protected species survey has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The survey shall include a bat survey and any related mitigation measures for identified species and shall be implemented fully in accordance with the agreed scheme before the commencement of the use hereby approved, unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the protection of species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

4. No development shall take place unless and until a detailed lighting scheme has been submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, and the development shall not be brought into use until it has been carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason - In the interests of safety and security and the amenities of the area.

5. No development shall take place unless or until a detailed scheme for the relocated play area has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the works that form the approved scheme(s) shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority before the development is brought into use, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason - To ensure that an adequate replacement play facility is provided.

6. No development shall take place until detailed scheme(s) of the alterations to the existing Middleton Road footway has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Such scheme shall show full details of improved pedestrian provision, kerbing, footway construction, levels and guardrailing. No part of the development shall be brought into use until the works have been implemented in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason - To ensure that the means access to the application site is acceptable to the Highway Authority in the interests of highway safety.

7. Secure cycle parking facilities shall be provided within the site prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, in accordance with details that shall first have been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such facilities shall thereafter remain available for users of the development.

Reason - To ensure adequate cycle storage facilities are available to users of the development.

8. No development shall take place unless and until improvement works to:
 - i) the alterations to the Middleton Road/ Winterbottom Street junction;
 - ii) the cycle and pedestrian routes approaching the sitehave been completed, in accordance with a scheme(s) which shall first of all be submitted to and approved in writing, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning and Highway Authority.

Reason - To ensure that the details of the development are acceptable to the Local Planning Authority in the interests of amenity and highway safety.

