

Frequently asked questions:

Why the Radlett scheme?

As the council owns the car park, we believe this project offers an entrepreneurial opportunity for us to develop it into a food retail store and hotel to increase income from Newberries. This will enable us to protect the key services that we work hard to deliver to residents across the borough. The scheme will also help to reinvigorate this part of Radlett, increase car parking capacity and boost the local economy and retail scene.

There won't be enough parking?

We estimate that the parking capacity will increase by more than 40 per cent as a result of this scheme, with actual numbers of useable spaces increasing from 202 to around 290. We've been advised that spaces required for hotel guests are more likely to be used during the evening and overnight when the car park is less busy. M & S will be allocated 35 spaces. Our studies show that the existing car park operates at an average of 60 per cent capacity so the net increase generated from this scheme should provide sufficient parking.

What about the impact on traffic in the area?

Hertfordshire Highways is a key consultee now and will be during the planning application phase as well. They will decide on what improvements need to be made to the road infrastructure in order to facilitate this scheme, also taking into account potential increases in traffic generated by the proposed rail freight terminal and the Harperbury Hospital housing development.

Isn't the car park at risk of flooding?

We are consulting with the Environment Agency on an assessment of the flood risk and this will also form part of the planning application process. Working with our partners, we will ensure the area is safe and that any risk is managed. The scheme has been designed to build above the existing car park, therefore presenting no additional risk.

Do we really need a hotel in Radlett?

Travelodge is keen to have a hotel in Radlett and consider there is a strong market there - either for people visiting Radlett itself or surrounding areas in Hertfordshire. It is also a reasonable base for those making business visits to north London or the M25 surrounding area.

Will there be a restaurant or café at the proposed Travelodge hotel?

The hotel may have a small restaurant or café for its guests but this is still subject to legal negotiations.

What about creating jobs for local people?

We estimate that the development will create approximately 85 full or part time locally employed jobs.

The development will have a negative impact on other local traders?

We feel there is room within Radlett to accommodate a new retail store and hotel. Both businesses will add significant footfall to the High Street. Data from Travelodge also suggests that their customers spend around £40 per night in the local area that they're staying. Assuming an average of 80 per cent occupancy of the hotel rooms throughout the year, this in itself would bring in the region of £935,000 to the local economy annually, including to the night time economy.

Also it's considered that M & S foodstores fulfil a unique function in the food retail market as they function primarily as a shopping 'top up' facility, putting them in a different market to most independent retailers and conventional supermarkets.

What about all the disruption during the construction phase of the development?

As with any building development, there is bound to be some disruption during the construction phase. We will work with the contractors to phase construction and keep disruption to a minimum.

Will the council use the Travelodge to temporarily house homeless people?

That does not factor into our plans.

What have the council done to tell people about the scheme?

We have tried to update residents and keep them informed since the council first made an 'in principle' decision to develop the site, back in January this year. Since then, leaflets with details about the scheme have been delivered to residents in Radlett, and we've held two public exhibitions which were attended by over 400 people. We're currently going through all the comments and feedback given so far. Where possible and appropriate, those views will be incorporated into the final design that is put forward for planning permission.

When is the planning application going in?

We estimate that a planning application could be submitted for this scheme in early 2017. We publish applications on our website, via our social media channels and via the local press. Our planning department also have statutory requirements to write to nearby residents and other key consultees as part of that process.

When is building work likely to start/finish?

The timeframe is subject to the planning application process, but we expect once building work starts that it will take a year to complete the project.

Why does Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC) determine its own planning application?

HBC is the local planning authority for the area. The application will have to be compliant with national planning legislation and guidelines, otherwise it won't be approved.

There is more about our planning application process on our website www.hertsmere.gov.uk/planning

What if we don't like the proposed style of architecture?

There are still opportunities for people to give their comments and views during the application process. Where possible and appropriate, we will make reasonable adaptations but obviously our main objective is that the development is sympathetic with the surrounding area (this will be key when the planning application is determined as well).

Will we still need to pay to park at Newberries?

It will continue to operate as a pay and display car park managed by Hertsmere Borough Council

Are there plans to sell the freehold once the site has been developed?

No, the plan will be for the council to retain the freehold and use the increased income from the site to protect our key services.

Will any trees be lost?

There will be some loss of non-valuable trees which will be replaced. An arboricultural report has been carried out to assess the impact on trees and that will be available to view by the public when the planning application has been submitted. All other surveys commissioned as a result of this proposal will also be available at that time.