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PROPOSED ALLOTMENTS AT ST MARY'S ROAD, GLOSSOP

PLANNING APPLICATION – OCTOBER 2010

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

The Site

This small former lairage enclosure is located to the north of Mettrick's abattoir behind 67-99 St. Mary's Road, Glossop and has an area of approximately 1200 m^2. The site is bounded by a public right of way (trackway) to the north, privately owned land to the east and the alleyway at the rear of St. Mary's Road to the west.

Land to the south west of the site is currently let as a private allotment. The tenant accesses his plot via a track between 99 and 101 St Mary's Road, which also serves as the main vehicle access to the abattoir. He has agreed in principle to allow pedestrian access through his plot into the site but the preferred option is to provide a separate access to be managed under the terms of a Management Agreement.

The boundaries are a mixture of chain link fences and stone-walls and there is currently no formal access to the site. The chain link fences are in a poor condition and will need replacing. A stone wall which forms the eastern boundary is in reasonable condition but may require some remedial work. A range of redundant stone and brick buildings form the boundary to the abattoir yard and the roof of one of these buildings has partially collapsed. It is proposed to erect a fence along this boundary to safeguard users of the allotments.

History

The site is privately owned by a local butcher and has previously been used as a lairage enclosure to keep livestock awaiting slaughter at the adjacent abattoir.

The entire area is now derelict and very heavily overgrown with bramble, nettles and other rank weeds and saplings. There is evidence of other types of man-made waste on the site.

In 2009 the owner approached the Council with a view to creating public allotments. Initial discussion suggested that he would be willing to offer a medium-term (10 year minimum) lease to the Council for this purpose.

The Council has been working with a local allotment group called Glossopdale Action for Allotment (GAFA) who are keen to take over the management of the site if planning permission is granted and a lease agreement with the owner can be finalised.

A provisional layout has been devised with room for up to 9 small plots. It is envisaged that when the site is handed over to GAFA their members would want to erect sheds, greenhouses, poly-tunnels and other structures and features to facilitate the site's use as an allotment. The intention is that such development will be controlled by the terms of the allotment constitution and rules and by any planning conditions applied to this application.

Biodiversity & Trees

There are no anticipated negative impacts on biodiversity of the area as a result of the proposals. The use of the land for allotments is likely to introduce new habitats and species.

The site is within the St. James Conservation area boundary, therefore permission would be necessary to prune or fell trees over a certain girth. Some tree & shrubs pruning or removal would be necessary to facilitate development of the site for allotments.

The Council's Arboricultural Officer is currently preparing schedule of works, which would form part of the planning application.

Use of the Allotments

The use of the allotments is described within the draft Management Agreement and Rules for the site (copy appended).

Specific rules set out that the site is to be used for horticulture and gardening.

In particular, rules are included which define the type of structures, materials and designs, which are to be permitted (subject to planning approval) on the site.

Transport Issues

As part of the draft Management Agreement a majority of allotment tenants (80%) must live within 1 mile of the allotment site, therefore encouraging walking to the site.

The allotments will generate some additional traffic during their construction phase but following this it is anticipated that the necessity to use vehicles will be minimal.

Roadside parking is very limited on St. Mary's Road and Victoria Street.

The owner has indicated that a small courtyard behind 88 – 92 Victoria Street may be available for limited parking for allotment tenants but this provides no direct access to the allotment site. The access between 99 & 101 St Mary's Road is used by the abattoir and access by allotment tenants should be discouraged.

The proposal is to access the allotments from the public right of way to the north of the land, subject to confirmation of vehicular access rights via this route. The proposal is described in more detail later.

Proposed site layout

The provision of allotments dates back to the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 which placed a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments, according to demand. Allotment sizes were traditionally based on the area of land needed to cultivate sufficient

food for a family of four for one year. This was assessed as an area of 10 square rods, equal to 253m^2.

Many councils report that the traditional 10 square rod allotment is too large for modern requirements and they have divided their plots to provide twice the number of 5 square rod allotments, each equal to 126.5m^2.

The proposed site layout shown in drawing 1727/2b provides the maximum number of allotments possible at the Glossop site whilst addressing specific site issues.

The layout provides 9 allotment plots of various sizes, from 71m^2 to 136m^2, and is designed to compliment the existing layout of the site.

Although pedestrian access via the adjacent private allotment has been considered, the preference is to provide a separate access which will be managed under the Management Agreement and the terms of any planning conditions.

The proposal is to create a new pedestrian access at the north-western corner of the site.

As mentioned earlier, the landowner has indicated that a courtyard at the rear of 88-92 Victoria Street could be made available for limited parking for allotment tenants. Whilst this area is near to the proposed allotment site, there is no direct access and the joint use of the vehicular access from St. Mary's Road may introduce conflicts with abattoir vehicles and should be discouraged. It is also unlikely that allotment tenants would wish to park at this site and carry any supplies or materials via the overgrown alleyway at the rear of properties in St. Mary's Road. Tenants would be much more likely to park in St. Mary's Road or the public right of way at the north of the site.

The preferred option is to provide parking for up to four vehicles within the site boundary at the north-west corner of the site. This removes the potential conflict at the access to the abattoir and removes the need for allotment tenants to use residents' parking spaces in the surrounding streets. The parking spaces would be surfaced with crushed stone which is permeable and removes the need for any drainage works and an existing mature sycamore tree in this area would be retained.

The northern boundary of the allotments will be fenced and a single pedestrian gate will be provided for access.

Summary

The development of the Glossop site will help to address the demand for allotments in the Glossopdale area whilst tidying up an un-used and derelict plot of privately owned land. The use of the site for allotments will retain a green area within an otherwise urbanised area of the town.

The use of a Management Agreement will ensure that the allotments are managed in a standardised, controlled manner and in accordance with the terms of any planning conditions applied to this application.