

insight

MOTION CONSULTANTS

SUMMER 2012

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- ▶ National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable travel
- ▶ Council road works fail to hinder new store development
- ▶ £90 million housing redevelopment scheme underway in Barnet



Sustainable residential development

Developers are now able to improve the sustainability of new residential schemes with the help of Motion's dedicated Travel Plan Coordinators.

Hertz On Demand car hire is being offered to future residents of Trinity Village in Bromley Common, Kent. The initiative is part of a range of sustainable travel measures which Motion is helping Ward Homes to implement.

Meanwhile, home buyers in East Sussex can now benefit from unlimited travel for ten days a year using Brighton and Hove bus services. The 'taster' tickets are being offered to families moving into the new Ashdown Place development, near Uckfield, as part of a wider strategy to encourage sustainable travel. Households are also entitled to a ten percent discount on the purchase of cycles and cycling equipment at the local bicycle store.

Creating developments that work harder

Insight talks to a successful developer and an accomplished architect about how innovative schemes are being delivered despite the current challenges.

Developers are facing testing times. They have to work harder than ever to bring projects to fruition. The economic conditions make funding difficult. The planning system is becoming more complex and demanding. Local communities and end users have increasing expectations.

One real estate company is making headway by taking existing sites and adding clever things to them. Jonathan Meier, Group Head of Acquisitions and Planning at Précis Management Services, explains: "To add value to land and make it more viable, we try to extract as much use as possible." Précis is a privately owned business with a portfolio of self-storage centres across the UK and hotels in central London. The company has brought forward several storage centres as mixed use developments and is now planning to deliver housing above storage and service facilities. *Continued on page 2*



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Establishing a point of difference

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Architects Collado Collins has a novel approach to assist clients with funding and to reduce the risk profile of larger projects. Senior Partner Roy Collado outlines the process, *"We consider how complex projects might be broken down into their component parts, allowing the option of delivering in phases. This helps with viability, as it allows funding to mirror income rather than to be outweighed by it. The overall vision is set out and a journey towards it made possible."*

Having a thorough working knowledge of the various parts that comprise a scheme is essential according to Roy. He observes that *"most complex projects contain uses that vary in value. Less commercial components can still add vibrancy and quality and deliver value. We try to give to our clients the ability to get schemes moving by considering all of the parts both separately and as a whole."*

The current economic situation often encourages parties to converge around the objective of making development happen. But, there is more rigour and more testing of options, and a greater interest in quality, in both the residential and commercial sectors. According to Roy Collado, *"Developers have to work harder to get projects off the ground. Their advisors need to really*

understand what makes each project tick. The current climate calls for more creative thinking. Expectations remain high, with an increasing amount of choice and a tough market. The need to establish a point of difference is becoming ever more important."

Jonathan Meier confirms that Précis has had to raise its game and look smarter: *"People have become more demanding. The storage industry has had to adapt. Nobody wants old warehouses any more. They expect a pleasant experience, more akin to a shiny high street retail-based product."* Jonathan continues, *"The design should create a buzz. Because we are based in pseudo-retail environments, dressing the building with offices, retail and even apartments is important."* Roy Collado believes that a good architect's contribution to a project goes well beyond aesthetics. *"With a closer understanding of the many and varied pressures that projects now face, our ideas are more likely to progress to a successful building."*



Précis and Collado Collins are working on an application for a mixed-use development at Gillette Corner on the Great West Road in Brentford and on a major new office head quarters in Shepherd's Bush, West London. Motion carried out the transport assessment for both schemes which combine a mix of uses within a single contemporary environment to deliver the optimum return.



Richard Bettridge

Vibrancy and teamwork

Why get up for work in the morning?

RB *I'm a specialist in land drainage, flooding and highway design. The analytical side of assessing policy against law is fascinating for me.*

What are your four defining qualities?

RB *I'm a thinker with an edge of fun, a leader and innovator and a sociable guy who uses all the tools I can to motivate and inspire.*

How would you describe Motion?

RB *We're a young company that is able to blend extensive knowledge with an approachable nature. The enthusiasm of our team is incredible. We have fun and we deliver results.*

Where is Motion going?

RB *Onwards and upwards! We have a brilliant combination of excellent, motivated people, experience and depth of knowledge. Our vibrancy and teamwork is evident to everyone who works with us. That in turn makes us desirable to new clients. It's an exciting time.*



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Construction Plans for London developments

Construction Logistics Plans (CLPs) are now required by Transport for London for most developments within the city that are referred to the Mayor. The 2011 London Plan also directs London Boroughs to include policies requiring CLPs in Local Development Framework documents.

CLPs help manage freight movement to and from construction sites to improve the safety and reliability of deliveries and minimise the effect of construction traffic on the local area. CLPs are often incorporated within Construction Management Plans (CMPs), which seek to control issues such as noise, dust and working hours as well as traffic.

Associate at Motion's London office, Pete Sturgeon, says, "*Schemes in sensitive locations can be particularly problematic for local residents. We are increasingly being asked to produce Construction Management Plans for our clients.*"

A successful planning application for the residential redevelopment of a site located on a private road overlooking Hampstead Heath required a comprehensive CMP. Pete explains, "*The site had previously been granted planning consent, subject to conditions, but was the subject of an appeal against refusal by the Borough Council to approve a CMP. The appeal was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate, after which the site was sold.*"

Motion worked on the CMP that formed part of the new owner's planning application. Following a period of extensive negotiation with local residents, the planning authority and other stakeholders, the scheme received planning approval.

Red route to mail centre

The Royal Mail Centre in Croydon is currently being extended, to increase the operational footprint by a third and accommodate more than one hundred additional jobs. The site is located close to the A23 Purley Way, one of Transport for London's Red Routes.

According to Mark Boorman, Programme Manager at Royal Mail Group Property, the transport-related issues had been the company's first concern, but they needn't have worried. "*In the end this was the smoothest part of the planning application. The appointment of reliable people with the right expertise is critical on larger projects.*"

Motion was able to quickly understand the highway authority's initial sensitivities about the potential increase in traffic, and build a case for consent. The team successfully argued that the twenty-four hour operations and associated shift patterns would have negligible impact on the road network at peak times.



Comfortable choice

Uncertainty over a road improvement scheme by Kent County Council has been prevented from delaying the development of a new DFS furniture store. Location 3 Properties proposed two alternative plans that enabled development to begin as soon as possible, regardless of any changes made to the road.

Alan Gibbons, Director at Location 3 Properties, explains, "The challenge for us was to design two different access solutions for the site, depending on whether a planned road widening scheme went ahead or not. The result was that we were able to proceed with the development irrespective of the Council's plans for work on the road."

Parking was also an issue for the proposed store at Westwood Cross in Kent. The Local Authority argued that as the new building was to be in an established retail area with extensive parking, no extra spaces were required. Shoppers could make linked trips, parking elsewhere in the locality and walk.

Motion demonstrated that providing an extra 65 parking places would comply with local government parking standards. The implementation of new cycle and footpaths also improved access for shoppers across the site as a whole.



During a recent Public Inquiry, Motion accumulated a body of evidence which was successfully used to overcome the Highway Authority's concern over heavy goods vehicles and increased traffic using narrow rural lanes. The appeal site had been operational for a period of eight years prior to the Inquiry. Motion gathered a body of evidence on how the site had operated over this period and was able to demonstrate that the access was acceptable and that there had been no injury or accidents involving vehicles travelling to or from the site.

Narrow appeal

Technical Director Steve Parsons concludes, "Clients should contact Motion if they would like to discuss development sites where there are concerns about the impact on narrow lanes or where passing places or lorry routing agreements are required to facilitate development."

Parking permit success

The sale of three flats on Hampton Court Road, London was able to proceed after a planning condition preventing owners from parking nearby was removed. Motion Technical Director, Steve Parsons recalls, "Without the ability to park locally the sale of the properties was likely to have been considerably delayed."

The condition prevented future owners or occupiers of the flats from applying for a parking permit. The development was in a residential area overlooking Hampton Court. With no off-street parking, future residents would only be able to park if they were allowed to apply for a permit for on-street parking. Despite concerns from local residents, Motion was able to demonstrate to Richmond Borough Council that there was spare capacity for on-street parking. Moreover, the Planning Authority needed to consider whether parking availability had changed since the application was approved with the condition. Motion successfully pushed for the condition to be removed, stating that all parking decisions should be fair and reasonable.



New Hindu temple for Kingsbury

Motion has helped to secure planning permission for a new purpose-built temple and community facility in Kingsbury, Brent. The temple currently operates from a church in Golders Green, but larger premises are needed to accommodate educational, cultural and sporting activities.

The new temple is to be located in a mainly residential area. Local people were concerned about the possibility of increased congestion and parking problems due to high attendance at the temple during peak times, such as Hindu festivals.

Associate Pete Sturgeon comments, *"There are several special events during the year when the number of visitors to the temple will be significantly higher than usual. However, arrival and departure times during these events are staggered, therefore, not all visitors to the temple will be on site at the same time."*

The temple will also operate a travel plan. Through the implementation of measures provided, the council was satisfied there would be no detrimental effect on local traffic conditions or parking supply.



More parking for new London homes

Construction is underway on the £90million Genesis Housing scheme for redevelopment of Zenith House on the A5 Edgware Road in Barnet. The prominent site is situated at the gateway to the wider Colindale regeneration area which will eventually deliver 3,000 new homes.

Motion carried out the transport assessment for the proposed mixed use development, comprising 308 residential units and 1,708 square metres of commercial floor space. A total of 226 car parking spaces are to be provided in the basement and ground level, including two car club spaces. Motion is working on travel plans for all uses within the new high density development.

The first phase of accommodation will be ready in January 2013 with the final phase completed in late 2013. Head of Development at Genesis Housing, Dominic Whiston, explains *"Motion responded in a very timely manner. Despite tight timescales and funding constraints, we ended up with a balanced outcome which did not impinge on the overall development."*

Motion Director Phil Bell recalls, *"Transport for London was in favour of fewer parking spaces but the local authority argued for more. Barnet Council wanted to avoid overspill parking on the neighbouring streets."*

The site benefits from access to an excellent sustainable transport network providing a real alternative to the motor car. But the number of parking spaces was maximised when Motion demonstrated that the development proposals accorded with the relevant national, regional and local transport planning policies.





Four things you should know about the new NPPF

The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was released in March. It consolidates 1,500 pages of national planning policy to fifty. Motion Director Stuart Davies comments, "The theme of much of the previous land use and transport policy still applies, namely mixed use development in accessible locations or locations which can be made accessible. However, there is now a greater emphasis on accessing sustainable modes of transport."

Stuart Davies highlights some of the key implications for developers:

- ▶ The impacts of development require study as before, with proposals generating significant amounts of movement necessitating a transport assessment and travel plan.
- ▶ Consideration will be given to how well applications take or create opportunities for travel by sustainable transport modes, taking into account location and the cost effectiveness of any proposed improvements.
- ▶ Development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts are 'severe', a term left open for debate between promoters and decision makers.
- ▶ National car parking standards have been removed. When setting local standards, Planning Authorities are invited to consider the location, type and mix of development, its accessibility and local car ownership levels. The importance of car parking to a town centre's vitality is acknowledged.

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6'6" six professionals . one line up . no coincidence

6'0"

5'6"

5'0"

4'6"

4'0"

3'6"

3'0"



The Unusual Experts

Ask Motion



If you would value a preliminary discussion about the transport, traffic or

infrastructure issues associated with a potential development project, why not give us a call on 01483 531300?

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