

Operational Filling Station with Redevelopment Potential

FREEHOLD FOR SALE

On the Instructions of MRH (GB) Ltd

TROWBRIDGE BA14 8HR

Bythesea Road



Location

The site is located on Bythesea Road (A363) adjacent to the Shires Shopping Centre in Trowbridge town centre. The site is adjoined to the east by an Asda Supermarket. The entrance to the shopping centre and supermarket adjoins the northern boundary of the site. To the south of the site is a Job Centre and BT telephone exchange.

Description

The site currently comprises a Texaco petrol filling station, consisting of four pump islands in a four square formation under a large canopy and a single storey shop of approximately 90 sq m (970 sq ft). The site also benefits from air/water facilities.

The site extends to approximately 0.12 hectare (0.30 acre).

Trading

The site is offered subject to a fuel supply agreement. Further details will be released to shortlisted parties.

Year	Fuel /Litres	Shop	Valeting
2006	2,431,238	£142,515	£458
2007	2,708,975	£244,475	-

Revenues exclude VAT.

Planning

Planning officers have stated that the site may be suitable for alternative commercial or retail uses. Residential use may also be considered but amenity issues will need to be addressed. Please refer to the Planning Commentary for further information.

Environmental Condition & Indemnity

An Environmental Report Summary of the property is included within the **Further Information** section of the website, which outlines the reports carried out on the site. Prospective purchasers will be able to undertake updated Environmental Assessments at their cost, following exchange of contracts, in order to satisfy themselves on the condition of the property. Copies of previous reports will be available for shortlisted parties, subject to assignment from the respective consultants. The successful purchasers will be required to provide an environmental indemnity to the Vendor for all past or future contamination.

Tenure

The site is available freehold with vacant possession, or as a trading entity. If acquired as a trading site, TUPE regulations will apply and wet and dry stock is to be purchased at cost upon completion.

Offers

The preference is for unconditional offers to be submitted. However, conditional offers upon planning will also be considered. All offers must be accompanied by details of funding for the proposed acquisition. Conditional offers must include full supporting information together with site layout plans and details of conditions.

All offers are to be submitted to Mark Frostick no later than **12 noon on Friday 18th July 2008**. Our clients do not bind themselves to accept the highest or any offer received. Prior to submitting any offer, interested parties should refer to the sale contract detailing the conditions of the disposal and other relevant information, found in the **Further Information** section of the website.

All offers are to be set out on the Schedule provided.

Stamp Duty

Stamp duty will apply on the sale of this property.

Legal Costs

Each party to be responsible for their own legal costs incurred in the transaction.

Further Information - www.malthurstpfssites.co.uk

The following further information is available (where applicable) to download:

- Environmental Summary
- Report on Title
- Fuel Supply Agreement Summary/Trading Figures
- Specimen Sale Contract
- Offer Schedule

VAT

Value Added Tax will be charged at the prevailing rate.

Viewing

Strictly by appointment through the sole agent.

Contact:

Mark Frostick
01480 371 456
maf@rapleys.co.uk



0870 777 6292
www.rapleys.co.uk

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Site and Surroundings

The site accommodates an operational Texaco Filling Station, located on the southbound carriageway of Bythesea Road. Access/egress to the filling station is from Bythesea Road by both north-bound and south-bound traffic. There is also a service access for delivery vehicles via the mini roundabout on Bythesea Road, which also provides access to the Shires Shopping Centre car park. The site has a prominent position on the roundabout.

The petrol filling station forecourt supports a four square layout, and a sales building of approximately 90 sq m, which provides a limited range of convenience goods, focusing primarily on chilled drinks and confectionary.

The site is located on the edge of the main retail core of Trowbridge Town Centre. Immediately to the North East of the site is an Asda supermarket, with associated car parking. Beyond this is the Shires Shopping Centre. To the north, along Stallard Street, are retail units with offices above. The town's train station is located off this road. To the west of the site (and on the other side of Bythesea Road) is the vacant former Wincanton factory site and Cabot Tower occupied by a recruitment agency. Immediately to the south of the site is the Jobcentre and telephone exchange office. Further along Bythesea Road is a Kwik Fit tyre/exhaust fitting centre and car lot.

The character of the area is predominately commercial, with building heights of two/three storeys.

Planning History

The planning history for the site has been reviewed during a visit to the Local Council offices and a schedule of planning history is attached at **Appendix 1**. These records show the authorised use of the site is a filling station, with an application submitted in 1990 for the erection of the petrol filling station and associated shop/control room (application ref: W90/0421) approved on 5th June 1990. Subsequent applications on the site relate to signage and minor additions to the petrol filling station use. The principle of alternative uses is yet to be tested by a planning application.

Other notable applications, as relating to site's within close proximity to the Shires Service Station (and representing recent regeneration within the town) include:

- Former Wincanton Factory, Bythesea Road – Approval for mixed-use redevelopment to include retail (A1-A5 – 7600 sq m), residential and office use;
- Former Ushers Brewery Bottling Plant, Conigre – Decision awaited on Class A1 foodstore (2900sq m), non-food A1, A3 and residential use;
- Waterside Development off Bythesea Road – Resolution to approve (subject to s106) comprehensive development to include leisure, food/drink, hotel, residential, offices, retail, and library uses, and
- Former Peter Black Factory, Mortimer Street – Decision awaited on mixed-use development to include a food store, cafes, bars and restaurants, hotel, and residential use.

Planning Policy

The relevant development plan is the West Wiltshire District Plan First Alteration, adopted June 2004, which forms part of the Local Development Framework, albeit this is in its early stages, and therefore does not contain any relevant documents at present.

The proposals map confirms that the site falls within the 'Trowbridge Town Centre Commercial Area' boundary, but does not have a specific site allocation.

The supporting text of policy SP5 indicates that within the commercial area boundary the Council allow for a diversity of retail, non-food retail, and service use activities important to town centre commercial areas but that do not necessarily need a prime site within the retail core.

Policy TC1 has the aim of maintaining a vibrant town centre, and states that proposals that make greater use of upper floors of premises within 'town centre commercial areas' for offices, small businesses or residential uses will be permitted. Within other parts of the town centre commercial area, outside of primary retail frontages, changes of use from A1 to A2/A3 are permitted by Policy SP5.

Additionally, the adopted local plan confirms:

- New retail development is directed to the primary retail frontage, which for the purposes of policy defines the town centre (Policy SP1);
- Retail proposals on 'edge of centre' sites (defined as sites within 300m of the primary retail frontages) will need to demonstrate

compliance with PPS6, in terms of need, scale, sequential appraisal, impact and accessibility (Policy SP3), and

- Housing development will be permitted within the built up areas, and on previously developed land as a priority. Proposals will be judged against set criteria (Policy H1).

Officers View

Discussions have been held with Carmen Chadwick, Duty Officer, Development Control, and Mark Russell, Policy Officer, both at West Wiltshire District Council. Both Officers suggest that in general terms the principle of the re-use of the site for retail or commercial purposes is likely to be acceptable given the close proximity to the defined town centre, and location within the commercial area boundary.

Officers differ in their view of the potential for residential use of the site. Whilst Carmen Chadwick suggested that this may be acceptable, Mark Russell considered that due to the site's location on a busy transport interchange, and its relatively small size, residential uses would be considered less acceptable than commercial or retail uses.

With respect to retail uses of the site, Mark Russell confirmed the site as 'edge of centre', as it is not within the defined primary retail frontage of the town centre. However, he did acknowledge that its position within the commercial area would be positive in demonstrating a sequential approach, in that edge of centre sites are considered secondary to primary retail frontage locations, and before out of centre sites.

Mark Russell referred to the recent application for a mixed use development, with retail included, on the former Wincanton Factory site, opposite the petrol filling station. This was originally refused on the basis of lack of information (albeit an application has subsequently been approved), and he stressed that retail would therefore need to be justified in accordance with the sequential test. He considered that commercial development or office use would be suitable for the site.

Further to the advice above, pre-application advice was sought from the Council in November 2007, seeking formal comment on a mixed use re-development scheme for the site, to include 3 retail units at ground floor (totalling 300 sq m) with 12 residential units above (split over three floors). The Council confirmed that, in principle, the loss of the filling station was acceptable, albeit some justification may be required in terms of a loss of employment use for the site. Further, the residential use of the site was considered acceptable in terms of the re-use of brownfield land, and the proximity to the town centre and its associated facilities, albeit design issues were raised. Highway matters also require further consideration in respect of alterations to road layout.

Officer's considered that any retail use would need to be assessed against the relevant tests as set out in PPS6, albeit they acknowledged the recent approval of a large mixed use scheme at the former Wincanton site, opposite the filling station, which includes significant retail floorspace on a site that is further from the town centre than the filling station. Officer's advised that retail need should be assessed cumulatively with other recent applications within the town centre, which include retail floorspace (such as a proposed Waitrose food store, as well as smaller units included within the Waterside development scheme, both of which are within close proximity to the site and as described in the planning history section above).

Planning Discussion

In terms of retail use on the site, the sequential assessment would need to be met. Whilst the site is not within the primary retail frontage of Trowbridge Town Centre, its location within the commercial area boundary suggests it would be considered 'edge of centre', and this has been confirmed by Officers. Advice from Officer's indicates that close attention should be paid to recent approvals relating to retail floorspace in and around the town centre (in relation to a justification on the basis of need and the sequential test).

Commercial uses would be acceptable on the site, given the designation for such uses within the Development Plan. Accordingly, a mixed use retail and office scheme may be considered acceptable.

Whilst in principle the site has the potential to be redeveloped for residential purposes, amenity and design will need detailed consideration, and the site does appear more suited to commercial activity, albeit that residential could potentially be included on the upper floors. The differences in levels between the petrol filling site and Asda supermarket and car parking need to be addressed as part of any future proposal.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The loss of the Petrol Filling Station is likely to be acceptable in principle, and alternative uses will be considered having regard to the surrounding pattern of development and land uses. The potential to use the site for commercial uses would be acceptable, supported by its location within the Commercial Area, however, retail uses will need to be justified in terms of the tests set out in PPS 6 (need, scale, sequential approach, impact and accessibility). Initial discussion with Officers suggest that a retail case could be made. Residential is also a possibility for the site (in principle), but amenity issues will need to be addressed due to its location and relative isolation from other residential areas.

Appendices

1. Schedule of Planning History

APPENDIX 1 – PLANNING HISTORY

PLANNING REF	DESCRIPTION	DECISION	DATE
87/01910/FUL	Re-clad existing structure, provide roof over existing courtyard	Approved	01/03/1988
88/02075/OUT	Petrol filling station	Withdrawn	07/06/1989
89/00407/FUL	Erection of petrol filling station and associated shop/control room	Approved	16/05/1989
90/00420/FUL	Erection of petrol filling station, shop/control room and access	Withdrawn	18/07/1990
90/00421/FUL	Erection of petrol filling station, shop/control room and access	Approved	05/06/1990
90/01441/ADV	Illuminated shop canopy and pole sign, pump spreaders and poster unit	Approved	04/12/1990
92/0118/ADV	Internally illuminated 5m high pole sign	Refused	10/11/1992
95/0047/FUL	Installation of jet wash machine and glazed screen	Withdrawn	17/05/1995
98/01113/ADV	Shop fascia roundel and PID sign	Approved	14/09/1998

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