

Delegated Report

Planning Application & Advertisement Consent

Application No:	20250249 – Full Planning Application 20250250 – Advertisement Consent
Location:	Morrisons, Coldharbour Road, Northfleet, Gravesend, DA11 8AB
Description:	20250249 – Continued use of a 'WeBuyAnyCar' car collection point pod and moving the position of the pod. 20250250 – Application for consent for non-illuminated advertisements associated with the 'WeBuyAnyCar' pod proposed.
Applicant:	Wm Morrison Supermarkets
Site Visit:	

Site Description

The application site comprises of a part of the existing customer carpark for the Morrison's supermarket on Coldharbour Road. The supermarket is a standalone single storey building from the early 1990's, formerly a Safeway.

The supermarket also has its own petrol filling station and car wash building to the north of the store and adjacent to Coldharbour Road. It has a service yard on the eastern side of the store and there is a bus stop within a lay by. There is access to the store from Coldharbour Road via a roundabout and the customer car park adjoins on its western side two storey modern housing on the Dundale Estate.

The part of the customer car park that this current application relates is on the western edge, near to the car hand carwash and valeting unit, as well as a currently unimplemented car sales pod. Recently Morrison's have erected a garden centre pod within the carpark, which has reduced further spaces. Lastly, the carpark is also frequently used by an NHS screening service van on a temporary basis offering health checks such as breast screening.

In addition, work is nearing completion on the Lidl supermarket and the six Trade City Gravesend units located to the east of Morrison's. This development will be consideration for this proposal and will be discussed within the Parking and Highway section of this report.

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form - dated 14 March 2025 (20250249);
- Application Form - dated 14 March 2025 (20250250);
- Covering Letter by Peacock+Smith - dated 14 March 2025;
- Design and Access Statement by Whittam Cox Architects (170285) - dated 03 February 2025;
- Drawing no. 298_PL_01 - Site Location Plan (scale 1:1250);
- Drawing no. 298_PL_02 - Proposed Site Plan (scale 1:500);
- Drawing no. 298_PL_04 - Existing Site Plan (scale 1:500);
- Drawing no. WBACSOgV1 - Rev. 01 - Proposed Floor Plans and Advertising Elevations.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20220017	Application for consent for non-illuminated hoarding adverts for 'WeBuyAnyCar' car collection point pod.	PERMITTED	09.03.2022
20220016	Erection of a 'WeBuyAnyCar' car collection point pod.	TEMPORARY PERMISSION	09.03.2022
20210992	Erection of a car collection point pod.	REFUSED	19.10.2021
20210991	Application for consent for non illuminated hoarding adverts for the period of five years.	REFUSED	19.10.2021
20190378	Siting of a prefabricated single storey 'Car Store' premises ('pod').	TEMPORARY PERMISSION	01.08.2019
20180012	Display of fascia signs with internally-illuminated lettering on the petrol filling station canopy; fascia signs with internally- illuminated lettering and logos on the car wash; a fascia sign with internally-illuminated lettering and logo and a non-illuminated totem panel sign on the front elevation of the petrol filling station kiosk; a non-illuminated panel on the side elevation of the petrol facing kiosk and a free standing petrol filling station internally-illuminated double sided totem pole sign east of the car wash.	ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT	06.03.2018
20170862	Display of signage to proposed car park valeting unit stating the company name and associated supermarket, price list, product branding and health & safety manifestation comprising fascia signs on two sides of the proposed canopy, fascia signs to three elevations of the proposed portacabin, 4 pvc panels with digitally printed graphics on hoarding and digitally printed vinyl wraps to the external elevations of the proposed portacabin, all signage to be non-illuminated.	ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT	04.12.2017
20170861	Change of use of area within the car park to create a car hand wash and car valeting unit incorporating the siting of a portacabin, construction of a canopy and partial enclosure by 1.8 metre high composite fencing.	PERMITTED	04.12.2017

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS07 – Economy, Employment and Skills
- CS08 – Retail, Leisure and the Hierarch of Centres
- CS11 – Transport

- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- TC8 – Advertisement Control

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- SPG3 – Advertisement Control Policy Guidelines

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Internal Consultees

Local Ward Councillors – No comment received.

Neighbouring properties

20250249 - A notice was displayed on site 03 April 2025. In addition, 49 surrounding properties were consulted and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 25 April 2025.

20250250 - A notice was displayed on site 03 April 2025 and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 25 April 2025.

Preliminary Matters

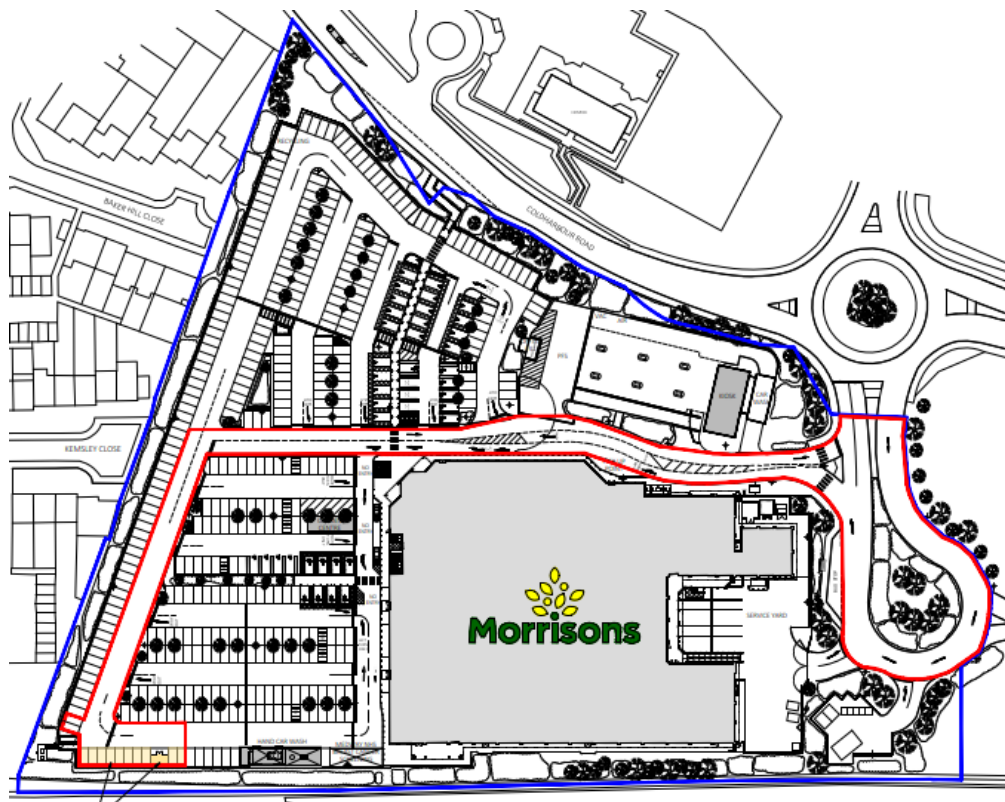
This application seeks continued use of part of a WeBuyAnyCar car collection pod in the Morrisons carpark and follows a temporary grant of planning permission (refs. 20220016/20220017). The temporary permission was granted to ensure that the development did not impact on parking provision for the supermarket.

In order to be granted permanent planning permission by the Local Planning Authority, the proposal must be in accordance with local and national planning policy and no further temporary permissions can be granted.

Officer's Analysis

This application proposes the continued use of a prefabricated 'pod'. The pod will have a rectangular shape

with a flat roof and have a footprint of 15.36m². It will occupy three parking spaces and will be positioned in the western corner of the carpark.



The pod will be an 'off grid' model, which generates electricity from photovoltaic solar panels on the roof and it will be heated through the combustion of HVO fuel.

Considerations for the Development

The principle considerations are:

- Principle of the Development
- Design, Character and Appearance
- Impact on Local Amenity
- Parking and Highways

Principle of the Development

The proposal will locate a small business use offering vehicle valuation and purchasing service to Morrison's customers within the supermarket carpark. The company WeBuyAnyCar.com will operate from the pod.

WeBuyAnyCar.com are a business that purchase vehicles from the public, as a quick easy sale, offering customers an alternative to private sales. There will be no cars sold from this pod. The Design and Access Statement states that only a maximum of 10 cars will be on the site at any time, but ensure that there are 10 available spaces for appointments within the carpark. Furthermore, cars will be held on site until collection, which can be up to 72hrs.

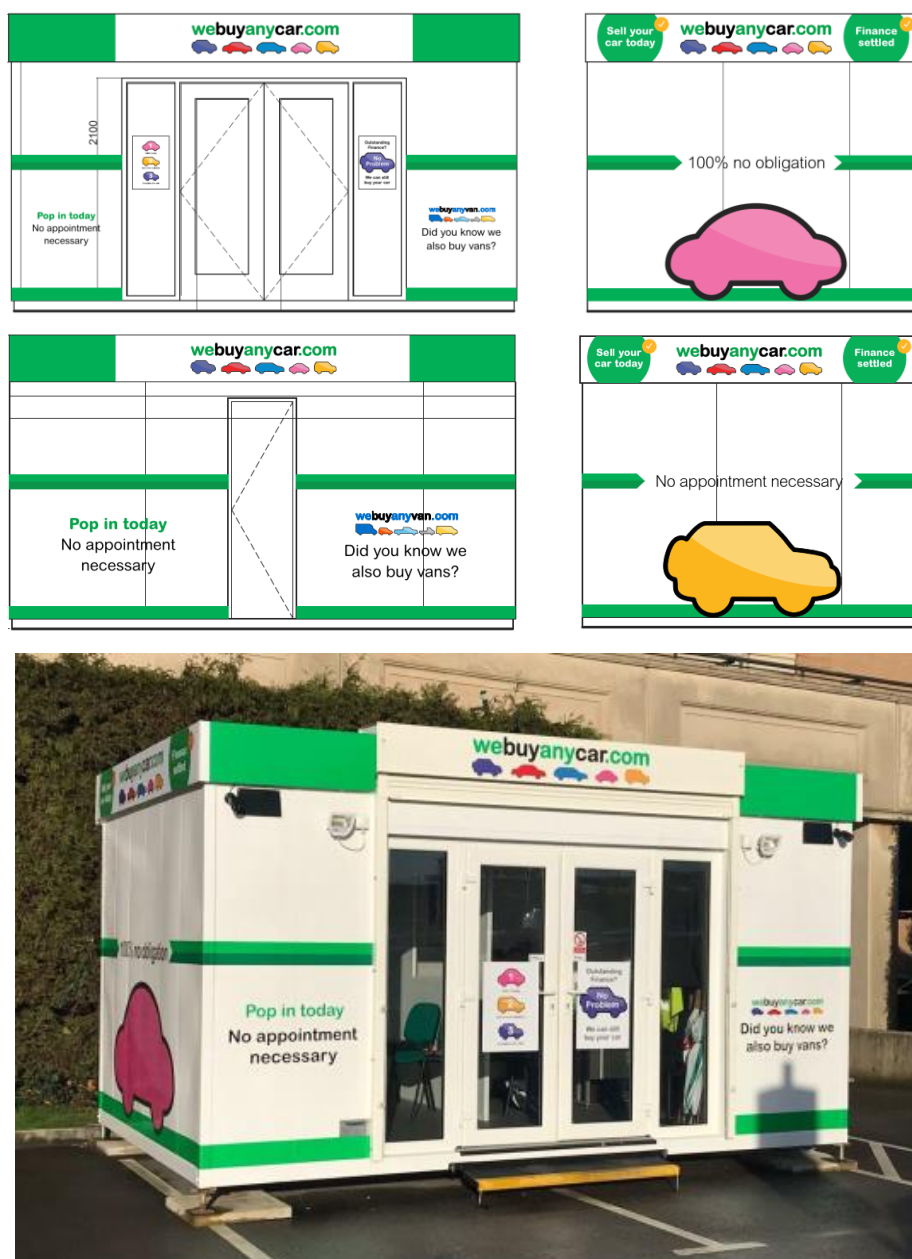
The pod will create two new full time roles of employment and according to the Design and Access Statement *"seeks to revitalise the existing Wm Morrisons car park by offering more choice to customers and generating new employment opportunities through the provision of a WeBuyAnyCar.com pod."*

The proposed development is not considered to have any material impact on the viability or vitality of the town centre, or other centres, and the scale of the development is minimal and it would not detract from the uses within the main town centre. Therefore, a sequential assessment is not required.

Design, Character and Appearance

The proposed WeBuyAnyCar.com pod is single storey portocabin style, prefabricated structure. It is modest in size and will be positioned in the far corner of the carpark, furthest from the entrance to the supermarket. The pod will be viewed against a backdrop of landscaping on the western boundary of the site.

The external vinyl advertising on the pod will be non-illuminated with a colour scheme that is predominantly white with green strips and small colourful cars. The advertisement schedule proposed will be bright and stand out against the landscaping behind, however this is not considered to be detrimental to the visual amenity of the carpark.



It is considered that the proposals are of appropriate design and would not cause harm to the street scene, the character and appearance of the supermarket, or the surrounding area and, therefore, complies with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS)

(2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Impact on Local Amenity

Neither the pod unit, nor the advertising proposed would have any detrimental impact on the amenity of any surrounding property. The pod unit is small and single storey, the advertisements are not illuminated and as such, it is considered in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF) by virtue of safeguarding amenity.

The opening hours of the WeBuyAnyCar pod can be restricted by condition. The hours of operation requested are 06:00-22:00 Monday to Saturday and 10:00-16:00 on Sunday. Although these are longer than the temporary permission Monday to Saturday, the hours are shorter on Sundays, and are not considered to have impact on local amenity.

Parking and Highways

This application seeks continued use of 14no. spaces on the Morrisons carpark for the WeBuyAnyCar pod. The only material difference from the previous temporary permission (ref. 20220016/20220017) is the collection strategy, which replaces the transporter vehicle collections with individual car removal within a maximum 72hr period. The individual car collection would create less disruption on the highway network and is therefore positive.

As aforementioned in this report, the delegated officer report for the previous temporary permission (ref. 20220016/20220617) noted the supporting carpark survey, justifying the temporary consent based on the carpark survey, which:

“was undertaken for a short period of time in early November, which is not a peak period for the carpark. The peak period is likely to be around Christmas where the visitors to the shop would increase significantly. As such, it is considered that a temporary permission would be suitable in order to for additional carpark usage information to be gathered throughout the year, which would serve to demonstrate whether or not a long term approval can be issued. To do so it is recommended that more surveys are undertaken at different times, including peak periods”.

This was supported by a planning condition:

9. During the operation of the temporary planning permission hereby granted the applicants shall undertake car park capacity surveys in accordance with a method and with a frequency to be first agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The parking surveys shall ensure that it covers peak times and during busy seasonal periods when the Morrison's car park is likely to be operating close to full capacity. Such information as may be agreed from the car park capacity surveys shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and shall be presented in a tabulated format indicating the number of vehicles parked and the number of spare spaces.

It is noted by the Local Planning Authority that no additional carpark surveys have been undertaken in the 3year period since the temporary permission contrary to Condition 9 of the temporary consent. However, the Covering Letter (by Peacock+Smith) does highlight that “the client has not been made aware of any issues raised by customers or the Council in respect of the operation of the pod and its impact on the car park and surrounding highways”, and although additional surveys would be welcomed this is acknowledged. While it could be prudent to grant temporary permission given the reasons of the previous report for more information and the lack of survey data in support of this planning application, the National Planning Practice Guidance (paragraph 014) states:

It will rarely be justifiable to grant a second temporary permission (except in cases where changing circumstances provide a clear rationale, such as temporary classrooms and other school facilities). Further permissions can normally be granted permanently or refused if there is clear justification for doing so. There is no presumption that a temporary grant of planning permission will then be granted permanently.

In this instance, the Council is not aware of any complaints and Morrisons as the landowner has not raised concerns with WeBuyAnyCar over parking issues, and therefore a second temporary permission is not justified.

Therefore on balance, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in parking and highway terms, with a more suitable collection strategy and no uplift in parking spaces from the temporary permission. As such, it is in accordance with local and national highway policies subject to conditions relating to the removal of purchased cars within a 72hr period.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning policy.

The WeBuyAnyCar pod is not excessive in size, is positioned to the rear of the carpark and has been in situ for approx. 3years and would have no detrimental impact on the character of the area or amenity. The proposed collection strategy is an improvement on the previously approved and the development would not encroach further into the carpark to its existing level, and therefore would not have any impact on parking provision or the highway network.

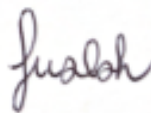
As such, it is recommended that planning permission and advert consent is granted, subject to conditions.

Recommendation

20250249 – Permission

20250250 – Advertisement Consent

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mr Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	2 nd May 2025	Dated:	09 May 2025

