

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 6 September 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Oldham (Chair); Councillor Golby (Deputy Chair);
Councillors Birch, Davenport, Haque, J Hill, Kilbride, Lane,
McCutcheon, Patel and Shaw

OFFICERS: Steven Boyes (Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning) ,
Rita Bovey (Development Manager), Ben Clarke (Principal Planning
Officer), Andy Holden (Principal Planning Officer), Theresa Boyd
(Planning Solicitor), Kirk Harrison (Democratic Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Dennis Meredith. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Matt Golby (Deputy Chair).

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th July were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

RESOLVED: That under the following items, the members of the public listed below was granted leave to address the Committee:

N/2015/1454

Simon Copson

N/2016/0412

Tony Skirrow
Sarah Williams
Councillor Penny Flavell
Rob Lamb

N/2016/0581 & 0582

Peter Sayer
Scott Walker
John Marlow
Carrie Goodridge
Fiona Diamond

N/2016/0790

Tom Jasser
Martin Trevor

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PREDETERMINATION

Cllr Suresh Patel declared a personal interest in item 10c.

5. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

There were none.

6. LIST OF CURRENT APPEALS AND INQUIRIES

The Development Manager advised the Committee of the list of Current Appeals and Inquiries and elaborated thereon. The application relating to 54 Adams Avenue had been refused by the Committee but the Planning Inspectorate had not agreed with its decision and had allowed the appeal. The basis for the decision was that the additional demand for car parking would not have had an adverse impact. She also advised members that the appeal in relation to Collingtree for 378 dwellings had been dismissed.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

7. OTHER REPORTS

There were none.

8. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL APPLICATIONS

There were none

9. NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL APPLICATIONS

There were none.

10. ITEMS FOR DETERMINATION

- (A) N/2015/1454 - DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING WARD BLOCKS. RESTORATION OF THE CLOCK TOWER AND CONVERSION TO RESIDENTIAL USE COMPRISING 13NO APARTMENTS, RESTORATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND CONVERSION TO RESIDENTIAL USE TO PROVIDE 4NO APARTMENTS, THE ERECTION OF 120NO APARTMENTS AND 98 HOUSES (235NO DWELLINGS TOTAL) WITH ASSOCIATED ROADS AND UNDERGROUND CAR PARKS. FORMER ST CRISPIN HOSPITAL, BERRYWOOD ROAD**

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report on behalf of the Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning and elaborated thereon. It was advised that planning permission was sought on the former St. Crispins Hospital site for apartments, houses and associated car parking. The Officer confirmed that there would be a loss of trees associated with the proposal but that this was a regrettable

consequence of an otherwise positive application. It was also confirmed that there was not likely to be any significant increase in traffic and the Highway Authority has no objection.

The proposal would be similar to the existing design within the St. Crispins estate but not identical. The development would consist of apartment blocks, terraced housing and underground car parking. The apartment blocks would be 4 storeys, rather than the three storeys of the ward blocks, which overcomes the problem of floor height with conversion of the blocks. The design was not a reproduction but was sympathetic to the historic site. The clock tower would be retained and turned into a thirteen apartments, including a single apartment over several floors and the administration block would also be retained. Ultimately, the recommendation to permit demolition of the derelict and fire damaged buildings was not taken lightly but was based on an independently verified viability assessment which showed that refurbishment would not be economically viable. It was considered that the substantial harm which would result from the loss of the buildings would be outweighed by the substantial public benefit of the regeneration and bringing back into economic use of the site. Assurances were sought from the developer that the development would go ahead they would not be able to simply clear the site and sell the land and this would be secured by planning conditions

Simon Copson from RDC Developments addressed the Panel and spoke in favour of the application. He advised the Committee that the proposal was the culmination of 2 years work and that the buildings had endured years of standing derelict in one of Northampton's finest developments. The proposal was sympathetic to the original buildings and the existing area. The site included a public square and had received a lot of positive response from residents. He confirmed that work would be able to start straight away.

In response to questions from the Committee the Principal Planning Officer confirmed that there would be 340 car parking spaces and off-site affordable housing would be secured using contributions made in respect of this development and built in a location to be agreed with the local authority where provision had been identified as necessary within the town. The scheme was viable and would help to demonstrate the authority's commitment to the 5 year housing land supply.

RESOLVED: That the application be APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement and the conditions as set out in the report and as amended by the addendum and for the following reason –

The proposal is essential to secure the substantial public benefit of the regeneration and bringing back into a viable use of a prominent site, which has been in an increasing state of dereliction over a number of years. The proposal includes the restoration of the clock tower, this being the most significant feature of the site and a prominent landmark in the Conservation Area. The proposed development would make a significant contribution to the Borough's housing supply. These substantial public benefits would outweigh the substantial harm resulting from the loss of significant historic buildings within the Conservation Area. It is considered that it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that the scheme would not be viable if the level of affordable housing and S106 contributions required is applied, and that, on balance, the reduced overall level of contributions would be outweighed by the environmental

and social benefits of the proposal. The development is therefore considered in accordance with Policies S3, S10, H1 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policies E20 and E26 of the Northampton Local Plan and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

. Members commented that they fully supported the application although some members were uneasy at the provision of off-site affordable housing rather than on-site.

(B) N/2016/0412 - DEMOLITION OF FARMHOUSE, ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS AND THE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OF 'LITTLE NORWAY'. CONSTRUCTION OF TWO WAREHOUSE AND DISTRIBUTION UNITS (USE CLASS B8) WITH ANCILLARY OFFICE ACCOMMODATION, TOGETHER WITH EARTHWORKS, ACCESS, SERVICE YARDS, PARKING ARRANGEMENTS, LANDSCAPING AND OTHER ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING CREATION OF FOOTPATH. DEVELOPMENT LAND SOUTH OF BEDFORD ROAD, OFF LILIPUT ROAD

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report on behalf of the Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning and elaborated thereon. It was advised that planning permission was sought for a decision that was deferred from the previous meeting for 2 warehouses on Bedford Road South East of Brackmills in Northampton. The design incorporated a curved roof in order to reduce its impact on the local area and had been deferred to seek responses on the scale of the development, its impact on the conservation area as well as alternative sites and the impact of additional traffic.

The application itself had not been amended but the key points were that the proposal was 322m to the nearest building and 320.8m to the church at Great Houghton village. The proposal was separated from the village by screening which, within 10 years would completely obscure the building. Consideration had been given to an alternative site at Grange Park but this was considered to be inappropriate while there was no scope for the development elsewhere. This would mean that, if permission was not granted, then the developer would be required to seek alternative sites outside the borough. This would mean that the proposal for 391 staff by 2021 would not benefit Northampton. In terms of traffic, there was a likelihood of only 1-3% increase on current levels of usage which was seen as negligible and would be mitigated by works being carried out the roundabouts nearby. The Section 106 Agreement would also secure measures to increase the provision of public transport.

Councillor Tony Skirrow from Great Houghton Parish Council addressed the Committee and spoke against the proposal. He advised members that the developer had been given time to address the application in 4 areas but had changed nothing in that time. The separation distances between the development the village was unchanged and the slope of 1:3 on the bund would make it practically impossible for it to be used by walkers and cyclists. He believed the proposal would cause environmental and social harm as well as traffic congestion. The Cabinet was due to discuss a new Local Plan and currently promoted the use of brown field sites. As such this application went against planning policy of the Borough Council.

Sarah Williams addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She stated that the application had not been amended since the last time it came to the Committee. She felt the application was inappropriate because it was on green field land and for heritage reasons. The development would destroy species on the land, would have an impact on an already busy road and would have a negative visual impact on the gateway to the town. It was also contrary to the local plan. The proposed bund was not a country park and was not in keeping with what was already there and would not support the national cycle route. The proposed occupier of the site was an EU company whose jobs would not support families but provide casual employment for very few. The application had not been well publicised and the benefits of it would not outweigh the harm it would do to the community.

Robert Lamb addressed the Committee and spoke against the proposal. He advised members that the traffic on the road was already heavy and backs up every morning. The application had not changed but merely added more reference points which made the building seem further away. Contractors were likely to come from outside the area and not Northampton and the occupiers would be a company that paid very little corporation tax. The proposal seemed to be self serving and would cause harm to the local area.

Councillor Penny Flavell addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She asked the Committee to consider the proposal very carefully in the knowledge that they refused to grant permission at the last meeting and that nothing in the proposal had changed. She asked the Committee to consider whether it would really bring additional jobs into the town and whether the benefit was more for Decathlon than the community.

In response to points raised by the speakers the Principal Planning Officer confirmed that access to the site would be via a hard surfaced path and the reason for the proximity to the local area was that there was lots of land associated with the site whereas the building itself would be much further away. Decathlon had stated that there would be jobs available to the local community.

In response to questions from member the Principal Planning Officer confirmed that the developers had not changed the proposal but responded to concerns raised by members at the previous meeting. He also confirmed that traffic resulting from the site would increase by approximately 1-3% which was negligible.

The Committee discussed the report.

RESOLVED: That the application be APPROVED in PRINCIPLE subject to the prior completion of a legal agreement and conditions set out in the report and for the following reason:

The development would support the continued economic growth of Northampton and would provide additional employment opportunities. These significant public benefits would outweigh the less than substantial harm to heritage assets. Furthermore, subject to conditions and the legal agreement, the development would have a neutral impact upon the landscape and natural environment, residential and visual amenity, the highway system and flood risk. The development is therefore in conformity with

the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework; Policies BN2, BN5, S1, S7, S8 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy; and Policies E9 and E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

(C) N/2016/0581 & N/2016/0582 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT AND PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO STUDIO. 20 HIGH STREET, GREAT BILLING

The Development Manager submitted a report on behalf of the Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning and elaborated thereon. It was advised that planning permission was sought for a two storey extension on a Grade II* listed site. The existing property was a single storey flat roofed garage which was to be converted to a two storey artist's workshop.

The extension would increase the building's height to 5.4 m with the windows set within the eaves level. There had been some concern raised by local residents, particularly from Pound Lane as the proposal would make the building visible by 1.1m above the ridge height of the outbuildings.

It was advised that advice from the Conservation officer was that the building was enclosed within its plot and would not affect the conservation area. The windows that were overlooking a neighbouring property would be obscure glazed and, overall, the building represented a moderate extension that was acceptable within the property.

Councillor John Marlowe from Billing Parish Council addressed the Panel against the proposal. He advised members that he was not opposed to change but had a responsibility to represent the views of the community. The recent site visit had justified residents' concerns that the proposal would be a dominant structure that was an erosion of the conservation area and would create a loss of privacy and interrupt a 300 year old roof line. The neighbours had wanted to protect a hidden gem and felt that the applicant ought to be able to design a studio that was more in keeping with the setting.

Mrs Carrie Goodridge addressed the Committee to speak against the proposal. She advised members that she had bought her house 13 years ago largely due to the cottage setting and the communal garden. She felt that the proposal would affect the gardens and the 300 year old roofline as well as overlook a private garden. She was happy for the applicant to create a single storey extension or one that was below the roofline.

Ms Fiona Diamond addressed the Committee and spoke against the proposal. She owned and lived at 8 Pound Lane and felt that the two storey extension was at odds with the report submitted with the application on the impact on the historical aspect of the area. Without the perimeter buildings it would be an isolated building. She invited the applicant to resubmit a proposal with a single storey extension instead.

Mr Peter Sayer, the architect and joint applicant, addressed the Committee and spoke in favour of the application. He advised members that the existing building was an ugly brick box in the garden and its flat roof severely limited its life. He had been involved with conservation and planning officers from the outset of the process and

the proposal had been endorsed by senior planning officers who had stated that it would not have an impact on the setting or harm its character. He required layout space for paintings and storage of art materials. The proposal would not extend the footprint of the building. In response to questions from members Mr Sayer explained that the amount of glass had been severely reduced from the original plans and he had taken care to ensure that the colours and materials used would be sympathetic to its surroundings and included the use of reclaimed materials.

Mr Scott Walker addressed the Committee and spoke in favour of the application. He had lived in the village for 7 years and felt that the existing studio was inadequate. He was aware of the objections and did not share the views of others as the building would hardly be visible. He advised members that the village had a history of building evolution of which this would be part. He felt that the Committee should consider the views of the professionals.

In response to questions from the Committee the Development Manager advised members that there were varying rooflines throughout the village. Officers felt that the proposal was acceptable and only roof tiles would be visible above the roof line.

The Committee discussed the report.

RESOLVED: That the listed consent application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions set out in the report and for the following reason:

The proposed works would not harm the character and significance of the Grade II* listed building and as a consequence the proposal is compliant with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policies E20, E26 and H18 of the Northampton Local Plan.

That the planning application be APPROVED subject to the conditions set out in the report and for the following reason:

Having regard to the existing pattern of development in the area, it is considered that subject to compliance with the conditions attached to this permission, the proposed development would not have an undue detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, Great Billing Conservation Area and the amenity of adjoining occupiers in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policies E20, E26 and H18 of the Northampton Local Plan.

(D) N/2016/0790 - ERECT 100 PUPIL ALL-THROUGH (3-18 YEARS) SPECIAL SCHOOL INCLUDING ASSOCIATED PARKING, PLAY SPACES AND LANDSCAPING. LAND AT FORMER BECTIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL , WHISTON ROAD

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report on behalf of the Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning and elaborated thereon. It was advised that planning permission was sought for a school for children with special educational

needs on the old Bective Road Middle School site. There was already a primary school next door to the site. The application site had previously been developed and was in need of reuse.. The scheme had been amended in response to police feedback. It was noted that it had not been possible to fully resolve the objections from the Lead Local Flood Authority.

The site would see an increase in vehicles to the area as most of the 100 pupils at the school would arrive by car and be dropped off. S.106 funding had been agreed with the developer to make improvements to the road network as a result.

Mr Tom Jagger, the architect for the proposed site, addressed the Committee and spoke in favour of the application advising members that he was pleased to recommend the proposal for approval as acceptable land use. In response to questions from members he advised that there would be arrangements in place for the arrival and departure of pupils and that there were 69 parking bays for 100 pupils and staff. A committee member raised concern regarding the amount of parking spaces and advised more to be created.

Martin Trevor from Atkins Global Highways advised members in response to questions that there would be 44 staff by 2022 and that they would be providing s.106 money but would not be directly responsible for how this was spent. The Principal Planning Officer confirmed that this would be put towards improvements of the Harborough Road corridor.

RESOLVED: That the application be delegated to the Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning in order to resolve the objections from the Lead Local Flood Authority and to APPROVE the application subject to the prior finalisation of a S106 agreement, and the conditions set out in the report and for the following reason:

The proposed development represents an appropriate land use and subject to conditions, would have a neutral impact upon the character and appearance of the area, neighbour amenity, the environment and the highway system. The development is therefore in conformity with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework; Policies S19 and E6 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

(E) N/2016/0847 - ERECTION OF CARRIAGE STORAGE AND 2NO. GROUND LEVEL TUNNELS. NORTHAMPTON SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINES DELAPRE PARK , LONDON ROAD

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report on behalf of the Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning and elaborated thereon. It was advised that the county archaeologist had confirmed there was no need for a dig to take place. The tunnels were to be 1.5m high with brick ends and metal sheeting in the middle.

RESOLVED: That the application be APPROVED subject to the conditions as set out in the report and as amended by the addendum and for the following reason -

The proposed development due to its siting, design and scale would not have an undue detrimental impact on the amenity, appearance, character of the area in

general, the Conservation Area or the setting of nearby listed buildings. The proposal thereby complies with Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policies E9, E18, E20 and E26 of the Northampton Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

(F) N/2016/0904 - CHANGE IN USE FROM DWELLING (USE CLASS C3) TO HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (USE CLASS C4) FOR 6 RESIDENTS 22 MARRIOTT STREET

This item was withdrawn.

(G) N/2016/1057 - INSTALLATION OF 4NO NON-ILLUMINATED SIGNS. DELAPRE ABBEY, LONDON ROAD

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report on behalf of the Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning and elaborated thereon. It was advised that there would be two types of sign; a 2000mm x 750mm welcome sign and a 2400mm x 400mm finger sign. Historic England had recommended that the design be amended to one that was more in keeping with the heritage of the site but that ultimately the Abbey required signage and the opinion of officer was that these were of an acceptable design.

RESOLVED: That the application be APPROVED subject to the conditions as set out in the report and as amended by the addendum.

11. ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

None.

12. ITEMS FOR CONSULTATION

None.

The meeting concluded at 8.28pm