

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 27th September 2016
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
DIRECTOR: Steven Boyes

APPLICATION REF: N/2016/0766

LOCATION: Lock Up Garages , Althorp Street

DESCRIPTION: Demolition of 14 garages, erection of two dwellings with associated gardens and parking spaces

WARD: Castle Ward

APPLICANT: Northampton Partnership Homes
AGENT: rg+p Ltd

REFERRED BY: Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
REASON: Council owned land

DEPARTURE: No

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 **APPROVAL** subject to the conditions as set out below and for the following reason:

The proposed development would have no undue detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and would not be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area, and would represent an appropriate use for the site and contribute towards the Borough's housing land supply. The proposed development would therefore comply with Policies S1, S3, S10 and H1 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policy 24 of the Central Area Action Plan, Policies OP1, OP2 and AB2 of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for the demolition of 14 garages and the erection of two semi-detached dwellings which would be four bedroom dormer bungalows. These properties would have gardens and associated on-site parking spaces.
- 2.2 The siting and design of the proposed dwellings have been amended following representations received on the original proposal. The proposed dwellings are now fronting onto Althorp Street and with a much reduced building height.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The site is currently occupied by 14 garages in two blocks, these are behind a secure palisade fence. The surrounding area consists of flat roofed housing as well as some traditional terraced houses and also the adjacent Salvation Army Hall.
- 3.2 There is a significant difference in site levels between the application site and the dwellings to the west.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The garages were originally approved in 1962.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Statutory Duty

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014), Northampton Local Plan (1997) saved policies, Northampton Central Area Action Plan (2013), and the adopted Spring Borough Neighbourhood Plans .

5.2 National Policies

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the current aims and objectives for the planning system and how these should be applied. In delivering sustainable development, decisions should have regard to the mutually dependent social, economic and environmental roles of the planning system. The NPPF should be read as one complete document. However, the following sections are of particular relevance to this application:

The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 17 - sets out core planning principles that include seeking to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers; encouraging the effective use of land by using brownfield sites; managing patterns of growth to make fullest use of sustainable transport methods and in sustainable locations.

Paragraph 47 - requires Local Planning Authorities to meet objectively assessed housing needs for their area and to identify and update a supply of deliverable sites to provide 5-years' worth of housing against these requirements.

Paragraph 49 - housing applications should be considered with a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 56 - good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute to making places better for people.

5.3 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014)

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides an up to date evidence base and considers the current Government requirements for plan making as it has been prepared in full conformity with the NPPF. Policies of particular relevance are:

Policy S1: The distribution of development - in assessing the suitability of sites for development priority will be given to making best use of previously developed land and vacant and under-used

buildings in urban or other sustainable locations contributing to the achievement of a West Northamptonshire target of 30% of additional dwellings on previously developed land or through conversions.

Policy S3: Scale and Distribution of Housing Development – provision will be made for about 18,870 dwellings in the plan period 2011 to 2029.

Policy S10: Sustainable Development Principles – development will achieve the highest standards of sustainable design incorporating safety and security considerations, be located where services and facilities can be easily reached by non-car modes; protect, conserve and enhance the built environment; minimise pollution from noise, air and run-off.

Policy H1: Housing Density and Mix and Type of Dwellings – new housing development will provide for a mix of house types, sizes and tenures having regard to the character of the area; accessibility to services and facilities and public transport; living conditions of future residents and impact on amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties.

5.2 Northampton Central Area Action Plan 2013

The Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) provides specific planning policy and guidance for the town centre and adjoining areas where significant regeneration and investment is proposed in the period up to 2026 and is in conformity with the objectives of the NPPF. Relevant policies include:

Policy 24 – Spring Boroughs: Spring Boroughs will be regenerated consistent with encouraging a more balanced community in terms of: age, wealth, household size and reducing the turnover of residents

5.3 Supplementary Planning Documents

Northamptonshire County Parking Standards SPG 2003
Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

5.4 Other Material Considerations

Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan

The Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan was made in April 2016, and now forms part of the development plan for Northampton.

The following policies are relevant to the determination of this proposal:

Policy OP1 – Sustainable Development Principles: New and affordable homes related to local housing demand and the needs of the community; High quality environment for residents, visitors, community groups and businesses; Infrastructure to support improved leisure, recreational and social facilities; Better connections to adjoining areas: Security for occupiers and users through the use of design principles from “Secured by Design”.

Policy OP2 – Family Housing: Proposals for housing developments within Spring Boroughs will be supported if they contribute toward rebalancing the housing stock to ensure Spring Boroughs offers a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures to meet local housing needs; Achieve the design principles set out in Policy OP1 including using “Secured by Design”. Proposals for affordable family housing with private outside space will be particularly encouraged.

Policy AB2 – Central Spring Boroughs: Develop central housing area of Spring Boroughs as new residential to include a high proportion of affordable housing suitable for families. The area will include a high proportion of affordable family housing with gardens.

6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

Comments received are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **Environmental Health** – No objections subject to conditions covering contaminated land and transportation noise. No comments to make on amended plans.
- 6.2 **Councillor Haque** – No observations but request that residents are kept informed, that the site is made secure and that asbestos is removed.
- 6.3 **County Archaeologist** – The potential for archaeological activity within the site is low, therefore no comments to make on this application.
- 6.4 **Local Highway Authority** – Comments on the revised plans are awaited and will be reported to Committee by means of the addendum.
- 6.5 At the time of writing this report, the consultation period in respect of the amended plans is still ongoing and therefore any further representations received will be reported to Committee by means of the Addendum.

7. APPRAISAL

Principle of Residential Use

- 7.1 The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable residential development and encourages the use of brownfield sites, where there is an identified need for additional housing in the area.
- 7.2 The application site is allocated as a housing area in the Spring Borough Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.3 It is considered, therefore, that the proposed use would be acceptable in principle and would contribute towards the Borough's housing land supply.

Impact on the street scene and the character and appearance of the area

- 7.4 The proposed dwellings are modern semi-detached dormer bungalows. The surrounding area consists generally of 1960s flat roofed housing, with the Salvation Army Hall adjacent to the site. The proposed dwellings would, therefore, be of a different appearance to the neighbouring buildings.
- 7.5 However, there are some Victorian terraced houses also existing in the area, which are of traditional design with pitched roofs and the proposed dwellings would reflect this design.
- 7.6 Furthermore, it is not considered that the flat roofed housing in the area represents a model of development which should necessarily be replicated. The proposal is, therefore, considered to introduce an improved appearance of housing to the area and it is concluded that the impact on the streetscene and the character of the area would be acceptable.

Residential amenity and impact on the amenities of adjoining and nearby occupiers

- 7.7 The site is located adjacent to existing two storey dwellings which are at a lower level, being accessed by means of a staircase within the street.

- 7.8 Following concerns raised in respect of the original plans for this site, amendments have been made which now means that the proposed buildings would be dormer bungalows, rather than the two storey houses as previously proposed, and would be 6m from the boundary with the garden of the neighbouring property at 1 Althorp Street. The first floor rooms on the rear of the proposed bungalow, facing towards this neighbouring garden, would be rooflights rather than dormer windows, thereby preventing any unacceptable overlooking impact.
- 7.9 In respect of other neighbouring dwellings, the proposed dwellings would be separated from the neighbouring properties at 4 to 6 Althorp Street by 17m, 5 to 7 Tower Street at the opposite side by between 12m and 14m. This is considered to be of sufficient distance to prevent any undue overshadowing impact. The proposed dwellings would have side facing ground floor windows but overlooking would be prevented by the proposed boundary treatment and planting. The proposed first floor windows would be landing windows only, which would be obscure glazed, therefore not resulting in unacceptable overlooking.
- 7.10 The proposed dwellings would face towards the rear of the Salvation Army Hall, on the opposite side of Althorp Street. This property would not be affected by the proposal as the building is a non-residential property which in any event has few windows facing towards the site.
- 7.11 The proposal would provide a satisfactory living environment for future residents, bearing in mind the site is surrounding by existing residential properties. It is not considered that transportation noise in the surrounding streets would be an issue.

Parking and Highway Issues

- 7.12 Parking would be provided on the plot at a ratio of two spaces per dwelling. This is considered to be an appropriate provision of parking, in particular given the proximity of the site to the town centre.
- 7.13 The proposal would also result in the loss of 14 garages. However, these are no longer in use. As part of the suite of applications across garage sites within Spring Boroughs, the former occupiers of all garages to be demolished have been offered alternative arrangements by Northampton Partnership Homes. Given the proximity of the site to the town centre it is not considered that any loss of parking overall would have a detrimental impact.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 It is considered that the proposed development would provide much needed family housing with an appropriate level of on-site parking and amenity space, whilst having no adverse impact on the street scene or on the amenities of adjoining and nearby residents and other occupiers.

9. CONDITIONS

(1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

(2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 40684/0014A, 40684/002F, 40684/003B, 40684/004B, 40684/005B.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the planning application.

(3) Details and/or samples of all proposed external facing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

(4) No development shall take place until a desk top study in respect of possible contaminants within the site is completed and a site investigation has been designed. The scope and methodology of the desk top study and the site investigation report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The site investigation and appropriate risk assessments shall be carried out and the results shall be used to produce a method statement for the necessary remedial works (and a phasing programme), which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All remedial works shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved method statement and phasing programme. Confirmation of the full implementation of the scheme and validation report(s) shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 2 weeks of completion (or within 2 weeks of completion of each respective phase). In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the effective investigation and remediation of contaminated land sites and in the interests of health and safety and the quality of the environment in accordance with Policy BN9 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. This is a pre-commencement condition to enable investigation to take place early.

(5) Prior to the commencement of construction works on site, details of the existing and proposed ground levels and finished floor levels of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of residential and visual amenity in accordance with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. This is a pre-commencement condition to enable timely submission of details.

(6) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no extensions or other form of enlargement to the dwellings hereby permitted.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and in accordance with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

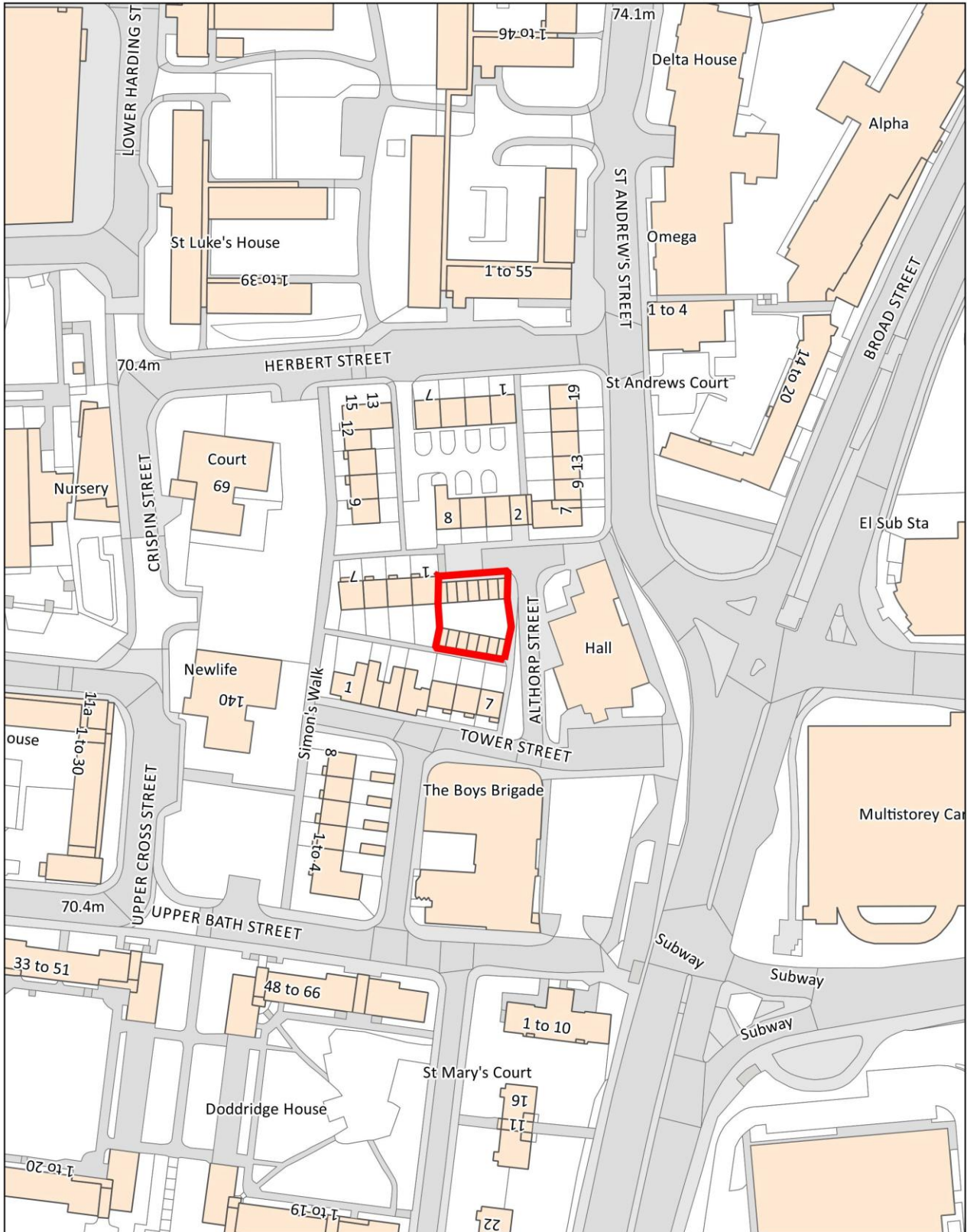
10.1 Application file N/2016/0766

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None

12. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

12.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.



Title: **Lock up garages, Althorp Street**

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