

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 21st November 2017
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
HEAD OF PLANNING: Peter Baguley

APPLICATION REF: N/2017/1317

LOCATION: Garage 1 Garage Block, Moat Place

DESCRIPTION: Conversion of 3no residential garages and bin storage areas to a 2 bedroom flat on the lower ground floor of the existing block of flats

WARD: Castle Ward

APPLICANT: Keepmoat Regeneration Engie
AGENT: Halsall Lloyd Partnership

REFERRED BY: Head of Planning
REASON: NBC 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, on balance, would have no significant 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 would provide for the housing needs of the area. The proposed development would therefore comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies S1, S10, H1, BN7 and BN9 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policies 1, 10, 16 and 24 of the Central Area Action Plan and Policies OP1, OP2 and AB2 of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan.

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The application relates to the conversion of 3 residential garages and bin storage area to a 2 bedroom flat on the lower ground floor of the existing block of flats.

2.2 The layout of the flat provides two bedrooms, a lounge, kitchen/diner, bathroom with separate WC and storage room and a smaller cupboard. One parking space is indicated on frontage of the flat.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The site forms part of a four storey block of flats located on the corner of Lower Bath Street and Moat Place in the Spring Boroughs area of the town. It comprises three garages and two bin stores located on the lower ground floor. There is an area of communal landscaping to the east of the site and to the west of the site there is a road that is to the far side of a hard surfaced forecourt area.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 There are no previous applications on this site that are relevant to this proposal.

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 Central Area Action Plan (2013), and the adopted Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan.

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:

Paragraph 7 – There are three dimensions to sustainable development. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles: an economic role, a social role, an environmental role.

Paragraph 14 – Central to the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

Paragraph 17 – sets out core land-use planning principles, which seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and proposed occupiers; encouraging the effective use of brownfield sites; managing patterns of growth to make fullest use of sustainable locations.

Paragraph 35 - sustainable transport – developments should be located and designed where practicable to create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists and pedestrians.

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 in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Paragraph 50 – To deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends and the needs of different groups in the community.

Paragraph 53 – Local planning authorities should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

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 SA: presumption in favour of sustainable development requires the Council to take a positive approach that reflects a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that proposals should be determined in accordance with the development plan.

Policy S1: Distribution of development which directs development to the urban area of Northampton and encourages the use of previously developed land.

Policy S4: Northampton Related Development Area sets out the housing needs for the plan period for Northampton.

Policy S10: Sustainable Development Principles - Seeks to achieve the highest standards of design and to protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings.

Policy H1: Housing Density and Mix and Type of dwellings – considers the location and setting of the site, the character of an area, living conditions for future residents and amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties. The principles of Policy H1 require that development should make most efficient use of land.

Policy BN7: Flood risk – regeneration projects need to demonstrate that there is no increased risk of flooding to existing properties and proposed development is (or can be) safe and shall seek to improve existing flood risk management,

Policy BN9 – planning for pollution control refers to the need to minimise the adverse impacts of noise.

5.4 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 1: Promoting Design Excellence – make efficient use of land by promoting an appropriate mix of land uses in order to increase the vitality and vibrancy of an area and a wider range of choice for users.

Policy 10: Parking – which restricts private parking for non-residential uses within the Town Centre boundary.

Policy 16: Central Area Living - which identifies the need to provide a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures, including affordable housing within a number of names areas including Spring Boroughs. It specifically refers to the provision of one or two bedroom apartments within the policy.

Policy 24 – Spring Boroughs. This policy supports the regeneration of the area in circumstances where much of the housing stock in the borough is of poor quality and there is need to improve inadequate standards of amenity for residents.

5.5 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Northamptonshire Parking Standards (September 2016)

Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

Residential Extensions and Alterations Design Guide SPD

5.6 **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 Plan seeks to support proposals which improve the quality of the environment, community facilities, infrastructure, security and connectivity.

Policy OP1: Sustainable Development Principles seeks to provide new and affordable homes for occupation by families in Spring Boroughs related to the local housing demand and needs of the community in terms of size, design, tenure and affordability. Development should have regard to amenity of nearby residents and the character and appearance of the local area in which it is located.

Policy OP2: Family Housing supports proposals for housing developments within Spring Boroughs subject to the scheme contributing towards the rebalancing of housing stock to offer a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures.

Policy AB2: Central Spring Boroughs seeks to promote development that transforms the area into a safe and attractive neighbourhood with safe routes within the neighbourhood and include a high proportion of affordable family housing with gardens and the remodelling of the area to rebalance the housing stock by providing more family housing.

6. **CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS**

Comments received are summarised as follows:

6.1 **NCC Highways** – no comments to make on the application.

6.2 **NBC Public Protection** – no comments.

6.3 **Northamptonshire Police** – no objections but recommendations made regarding improving home security of the proposed flat.

7. **APPRAISAL**

Principle of the proposal

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. The application site is within a residential area and is defined as a housing area in the Spring

Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore considered that the principle of this residential use would be acceptable. Although it only provides one dwelling, this makes a contribution to housing supply for the Borough.

Impact on street scene

- 7.2 The front elevation of the garages are indicated to be replaced with windows serving the two bedrooms and the lounge, along with a front door. On the rear elevation, two high-level windows are proposed, which serve the kitchen and bathroom (this will be obscure glazed). It is considered that the proposed alterations would be in keeping with the character of the building and street scene.

Impact on surrounding properties

- 7.3 The proposal does not involve the extension to the garages, but merely the change of use of the space and insertion of windows to the front and rear. On that basis the proposal does not impact on light to the neighbouring properties.
- 7.4 In terms of privacy, the proposed windows are at ground level and will not directly overlook any of the adjacent properties.
- 7.5 The parking space on the frontage of the proposed unit would result in a vehicle manoeuvring under the windows of the upper flats, however, the current situation could result in three cars making similar manoeuvres. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not cause undue noise and disturbance to nearby residents. It is therefore considered that there is no significant demonstrable harm to the surrounding properties.

Parking and Highway Impact

- 7.6 The scheme proposes the loss of three garages, although it is understood that these are not currently in use. With the addition of a parking space for the flat, that only results in the loss of two spaces, in an area close to the town centre and public transport links.
- 7.7 In terms of highway safety, a parking space is indicated on the drawings that can be driven into without significant manoeuvring in the highway and allows the vehicle to stand clear of the highway without causing obstruction.
- 7.8 The local highway authority has not raised any objections to the application on highway grounds.

Flood Risk

- 7.9 A flood risk assessment has not been submitted with this application, due to the floor area of the proposal. However the property is not in a high risk flood area and the proposal does not increase the non-permeable surfacing in this area of the town.

Amenities for future residents

- 7.10 The proposed flat provides a good layout and good sized rooms for the future residents. The windows on the rear elevation are high level (in terms of the rooms) but close to the ground and located under a walkway to other flats on the rear. They will contribute to light and ventilation to the rooms, but will not provide a view.
- 7.11 The larger storage room is of good size and provides an area for the future residents to use in the absence of a loft or outside storage area. This room does not have a window, so a condition is proposed to ensure that this is not used for any purposes other than storage.

- 7.12 The comments from the Crime Prevention Officer regarding security for future residents are noted and will be addressed by the applicant accordingly.
- 7.13 Bin storage areas will be reprovided in other parts of the area and there would not be detrimental impact on the amenity of existing residents.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed development would meet the objectives of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan by providing much needed additional housing and that this would have no adverse impact on the amenities of adjoining and nearby. The proposal is acceptable and recommended for approval.

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: N1447-101 and N1447-011.

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

3. The external walls and roof of the extension shall be constructed with materials of the same type, texture and colour as the external walls and roof of the existing building.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity to ensure that the extension harmonises with the existing building in accordance with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policies 1 and 24 of the Northampton Central Area Action Plan.

4. The storage room shown on the approved plans shall only be used for storage and not for any other purpose.

Reason: To ensure that a satisfactory standard and layout of accommodation is provided in the interests of the amenity of occupants and nearby residents in accordance with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policies 1 and 24 of the Northampton Central Area Action Plan .

5. Details of the provision for the storage of refuse and materials for recycling shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented prior to the first occupation or bringing into use of the building hereby permitted and thereafter retained.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policies 1 and 24 of the Northampton Central Area Action Plan. .

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

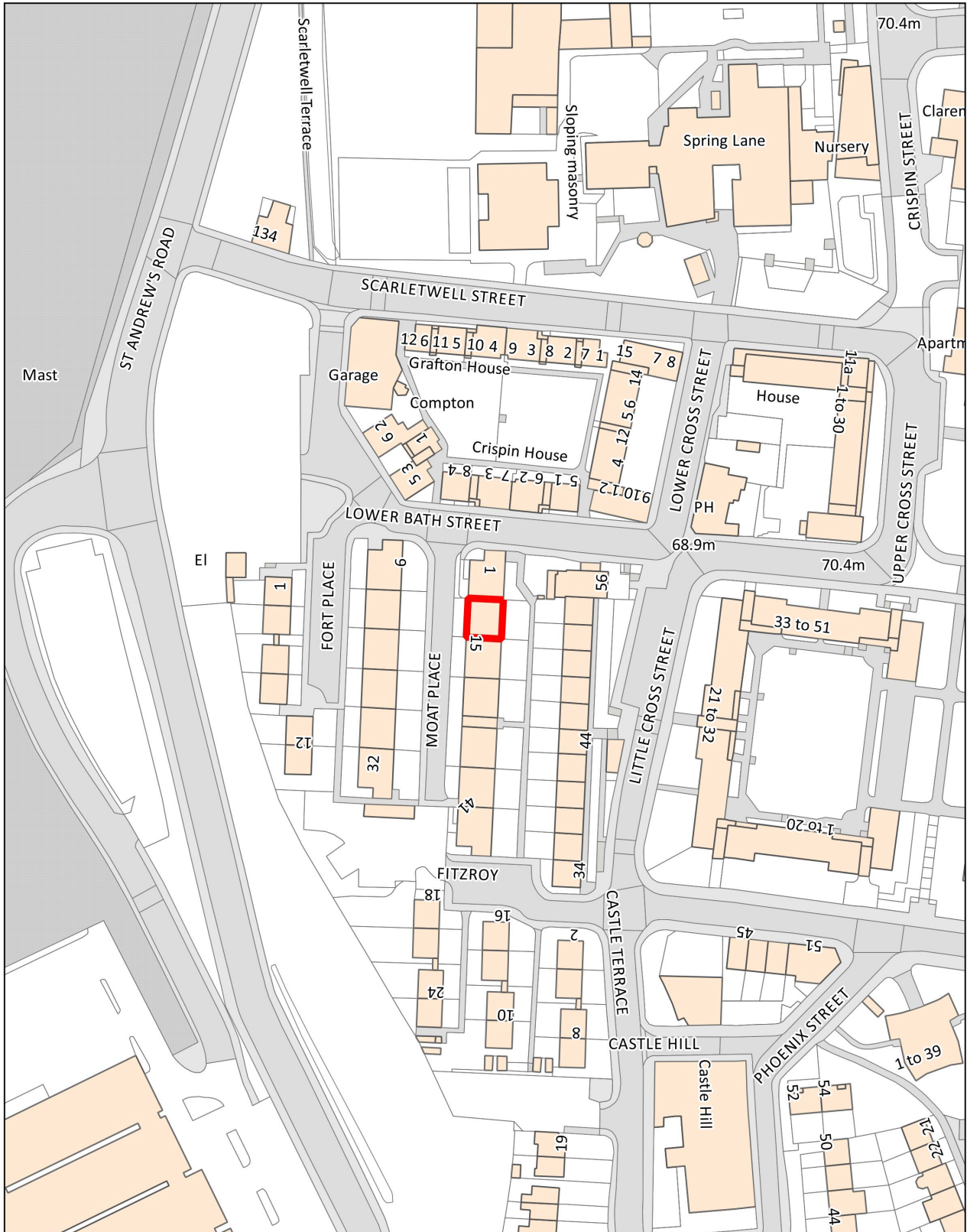
- 10.1 Application file: N/2017/1317.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The development is not CIL liable.

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: **Garage 1, Garage Block, Moat Place**

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Scale: 1:1,250

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