



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL
Planning Committee

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 2 October 2012
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
HEAD OF PLANNING: Susan Bridge

N/2012/0843: Change of use from retail (Class A1) to activity centre for people with learning disabilities (Class D1) at 140-142 St James Road

WARD: St James

APPLICANT: Mr George Adeseke
AGENT: None

REFERRED BY: Scheme of delegation
REASON: Council owned property

DEPARTURE: No

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 **APPROVAL** subject to conditions and for the following reason:

The proposed development is considered acceptable in this local centre in a sustainable location and would not cause undue harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties or impact on highway safety in accordance with Policies E19 and R9 of the Northampton Local Plan.

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 Planning permission is sought to change the use of the two vacant shop units (Class A1) to an activity centre for people with mental health needs and learning disabilities (Class D1). No external alterations are proposed.

2.2 The proposed centre would open between 10am to 4pm Mondays to Fridays, with some evening activities on Mondays, Wednesday and Thursdays to 8pm. The activities would involve workshops including IT skills, arts and art therapy, and training such as budgeting, cooking,

assertiveness and interpersonal skills. 3 to 6 staff would be employed each day together with a number of volunteers to support 6 to 8 service users.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The application site is located opposite to the St James Community Centre and the St James Clinic and forms part of a parade of 6 commercial units including a convenience store/post office, former library, gun shop and a former crèche which recently obtained planning permission for a change to retail use. It lies within a Local / District Centre as defined in the Northampton Local Plan.

3.2 The site is within walking distance of the Railway Station and close to bus routes on the St James and Weedon Road. There are 4 off-street parking spaces within the rear yard to serve this unit. There are two levels of residential properties above this parade of shop units.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 Planning permission (N/2007/1487) was granted for a change of use of the units to a café and a sandwich shop in 2008. The units were subsequently being used as a sandwich shop and a baby shop but are currently vacant.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Development Plan

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 current Development Plan comprises of the East Midlands Regional Plan, the saved policies of the Northamptonshire County Structure Plan and Northampton Local Plan 1997.

5.2 National Policies:

The NPPF

5.3 Northampton Borough Local Plan

E19 – Implementing Development

R9 – District and Local Centres: Change of Use from Shops

5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance

Northamptonshire County Parking Standards SPG 2003

Planning Out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

6.1 **NBC Public Protection** – no observations.

6.2 **NCC Highway Authority** – no observations.

7. APPRAISAL

Main Issues

7.1 The main consideration is whether the proposed change of use is acceptable within the Local / District Centre and whether it would have undue impact on parking/traffic and amenity of neighbouring properties.

Principle of development and impact on shopping character

7.2 The site is located within a parade of 6 shop units consisting of a mix of commercial uses. Currently there are two retail units and a third one has recently gained planning permission for a change of use back to a retail shop. It is not considered that the proposal would affect the shopping function of the Local Centre to an unacceptable degree. There are other Class D1 uses in the vicinity and the proposal would add vitality to this parade and bring the vacant units back into use.

Impact on amenity of neighbouring properties

7.3 The proposed use would open between 10am to 4pm Mondays to Fridays, with some evening activities on Mondays, Wednesday and Thursdays to 8pm and with the nature of the use for learning and training purposes, it is not considered that it would result in a significant impact on the living conditions of the flats above nor the adjoining shop units in terms of noise and general disturbance. A condition is recommended to control hours.

Parking and Traffic

7.4 The applicant has confirmed that the majority of their clients would come from the Northampton area utilising the local transport links, those who have access to a car would be dropped off and be supported by the staff at the centre.

7.5 The site has a rear service yard and parking area which serves the existing units for parking and associated deliveries. Given that the site is in a sustainable location close to bus routes on Weedon Road, train station and within walking distance of a large number of residential properties, it is not considered that the proposal would have significant impact on highway terms.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable in this Local Centre and would not have an undue detrimental impact on amenity of

adjoining properties or on public highway. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to the conditions below.

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.

(2) The premises shall be used for the purpose hereby approved between the hours of 9am to 8pm Mondays to Fridays and 9am to 5pm Saturdays and Sundays.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with Policy E19 of the Northampton Local Plan.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

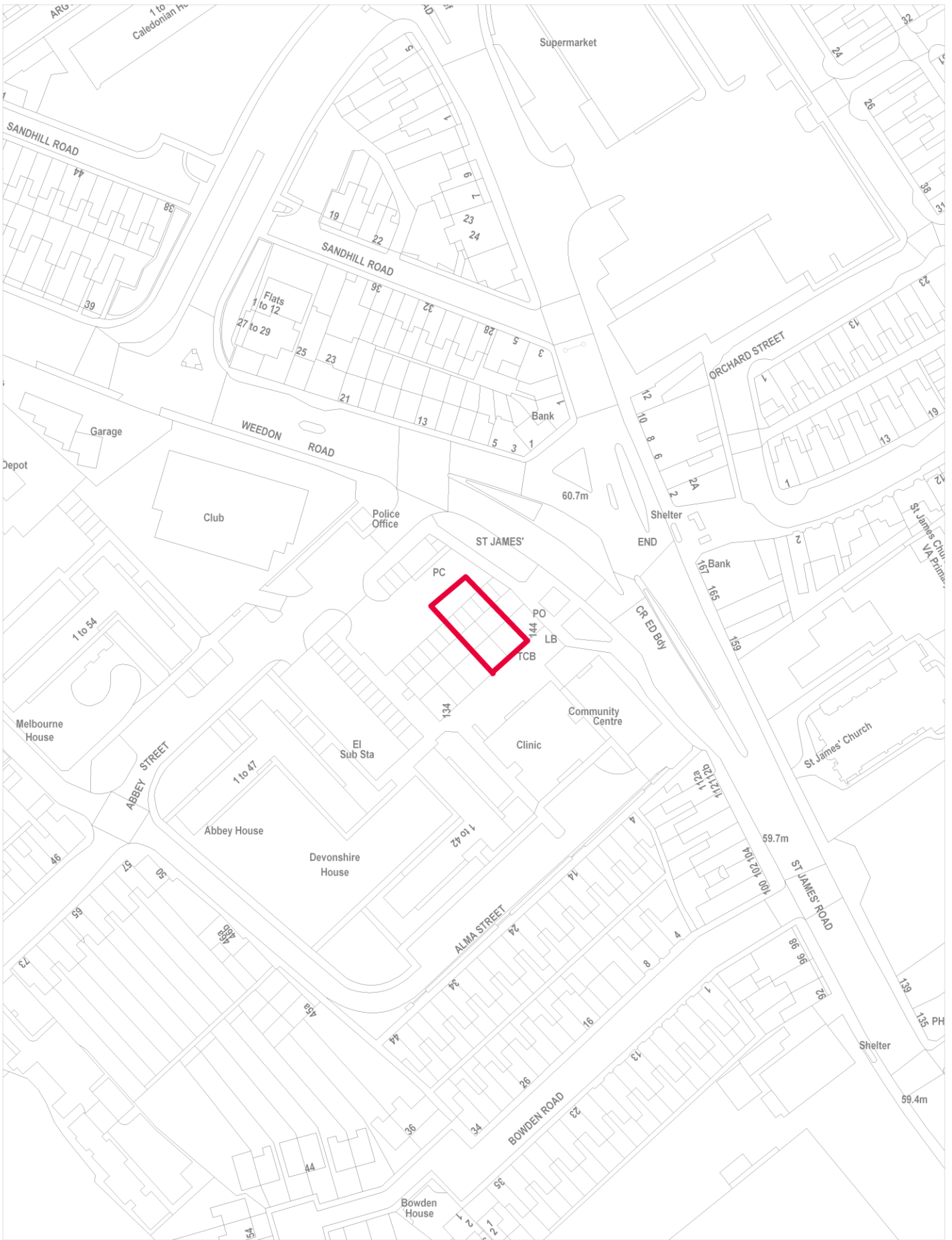
10.1 N/2007/1487 and N/2012/0843.

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.



Name: N/2012/0843
 Date: 21st September 2012
 Scale: 1:1250
 Dept: Planning
 Project: Planning

Title
140 - 142 St James Road

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