



PLANNING COMMITTEE: 4th March 2014
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
HEAD OF PLANNING: Susan Bridge

N/2014/0042 **Erection of a single and two storey rear extension for use as meeting room and office space, together with additional parking spaces at the Lodge, Wootton Hall Park**

WARD: East Hunsbury

APPLICANT: Northamptonshire Police Federation
AGENT: Mr Barney Bonner

REFERRED BY: Councillor Phil Larratt
REASON: Concerned about permanent change of use, impact on amenity and problem of car parking

DEPARTURE: No

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 APPROVAL subject to conditions and the following reason:

The extension proposed would have no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, the amenity of neighbouring residents or generate excessive levels of car parking. It therefore accords with Policies E20 and B19 of the Northampton Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The application seeks planning permission to erect single storey and two storey rear extension to an office building, formerly a dwelling. The extension would run across the rear of the building with half of this being two storey and the other half single storey with a flat roof. It would project five metres from the existing rear wall.

- 2.2 It is also proposed to create 17 car parking spaces, several of which would utilise the existing hard standing serving the building. 11 spaces would be formed using grasscrete.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The site is a converted dwelling currently used as offices for the Northamptonshire Police Federation. It comprises a ground floor with accommodation in the roof space. The building occupies a substantial plot within Wooton Hall Park with an open plan frontage, and is bordered to the south by residential properties.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 Planning permission was granted in 1996 for the change of use from a dwelling to an office. This permission was granted subject to a condition restricting the use of the office to Northamptonshire Police Authority and upon their use ceasing the building was to return to residential use.

Planning permission was granted in January 2014 to vary this condition to allow for occupation by the Police Federation.

There have been several applications for rear extensions, incorporating two storey elements withdrawn.

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 saved policies of the Northampton Local Plan.

5.2 National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.3 Northampton Local Plan

E20 - New Development

B19 - Business development in residential areas

5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance

Northamptonshire County Parking Standards SPG 2003

Planning Out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

Representations received are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **Northamptonshire County Council Highways** – have no observations.
- 6.2 **NBC Public Protection** - have no comments.
- 6.3 **Councillor Phil Larratt** - There is planning history regarding Wootton Hall Park and such premises as these returning to residential use having been used for office purposes. This application would bring about a permanent change of use, as such an extended and altered building will never return to residential use.

This proposal will also have an impact on the adjacent property, and the residents of this property have significant objections that they would like to put before the Planning Committee.

There is also the matter of car parking. There are already problems in the area, and this proposal will significantly add to them.

- 6.4 **Wootton Hall Park Residents Association** - object to the application; vehicles manoeuvring in and out of the parking bays will create dangerous situation and there will be no footpath for residents and create a danger for pedestrians; Wootton Hall Park has been designated as a residential area and is not suitable for any expansion of office or business premises; Wootton Hall Park Sports Social Club is currently under used and the Police Federation should use that for their occasional meetings.
- 6.5 **1 Wootton Hall Park** – object on the basis that the extension would result in the building becoming a permanent office that cannot be converted back to a dwelling; car parking spaces on a blind corner would present a hazard to other road users; the extension is oversized and out of scale with the rest of the building and would not improve the character of this residential street; the proposed extension would affect outlook; there is already a meeting room available including parking at the County Council Sports Pavilion on Wootton Hall Park and there are meeting rooms available at the Police Headquarters.
- 6.6 **The applicant's agent** - has responded to the objections outlined above and confirmed that the building can be returned to residential use in the future. He also highlights the fact that the Highway Authority support the application. The issue of the size and impact of the extension is also rebutted as he considers that the massing and positioning of the proposed extension does not have an adverse impact on the neighbouring property.

7. APPRAISAL

Appearance

- 7.1 The existing building is currently occupied by the Police Federation. The proposed extension would provide additional office space on the first floor and a meeting room on the ground floor. Whilst significant in its size, the proposed extension would respect the character of the existing building and be in keeping with the scale and design of the host building. The extension is located to the rear of the building, and whilst there will be views of the side elevations from the access road, it is considered that the overall impact on the appearance of the wider area would be minimal.
- 7.2 It is proposed that the extension would be constructed in timber cladding. The existing building is constructed from a light colour brick. It is considered that the use of timber cladding would be acceptable and would add interest and give the extension a more modern appearance.

Impact on amenity

- 7.3 The impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents is considered to be acceptable. The site is immediately adjoined by one dwelling to the south. The two storey extension is located on the northern half of the building, approximately 10 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring dwelling. The single storey element is located approximately four metres from this boundary. It is considered that due to this separation there would be little adverse impact on the neighbouring property in terms of overshadowing or overbearing. There are no windows proposed which would face towards the neighbouring dwelling.
- 7.4 The extended offices may generate an additional level of activity at the site. However given the existing use of the building and other activities taking place in the vicinity it is not considered that this would be so significant as to adversely impact on residential amenity to a level which would warrant the refusal of permission. No objection has been received from Environmental Protection on grounds of noise and disturbance.

Highways/Car parking

- 7.5 The objections to the application raise the issue of road safety and the potential danger to road users as a result of vehicles manoeuvring into and out of the new parking spaces. The Highway Authority, however, have no objections to the proposal due to the relatively low levels of pedestrian and vehicular traffic along what is a private road.
- 7.6 The area for the new grasscrete car parking would result in some parking in an area which is currently grassed and bollarded off from the road. Such grassed areas are a prevalent feature in this area and

contribute to the appearance. It is not, however, considered that allowing the car parking proposed would be of significant detriment in particular the grasscrete would allow grass to grow through the ground surface.

Other matters

- 7.7 Several of the objectors make reference to the extensions precluding the building being returned to residential use and in effect this becoming a permanent office. Firstly, the building's current use is as offices and would only be returned to residential if the current users cease operation. Secondly, the proposed extensions could be incorporated into a conversion back to residential in the future.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposed extensions are considered to be acceptable and would not be to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area, the amenity of neighbouring residents or highway safety.

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: 2BW017-FULL-APP-001, 002, 003,004,005,006,007 & 008.

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 and to ensure that the development will harmonise with its surroundings in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

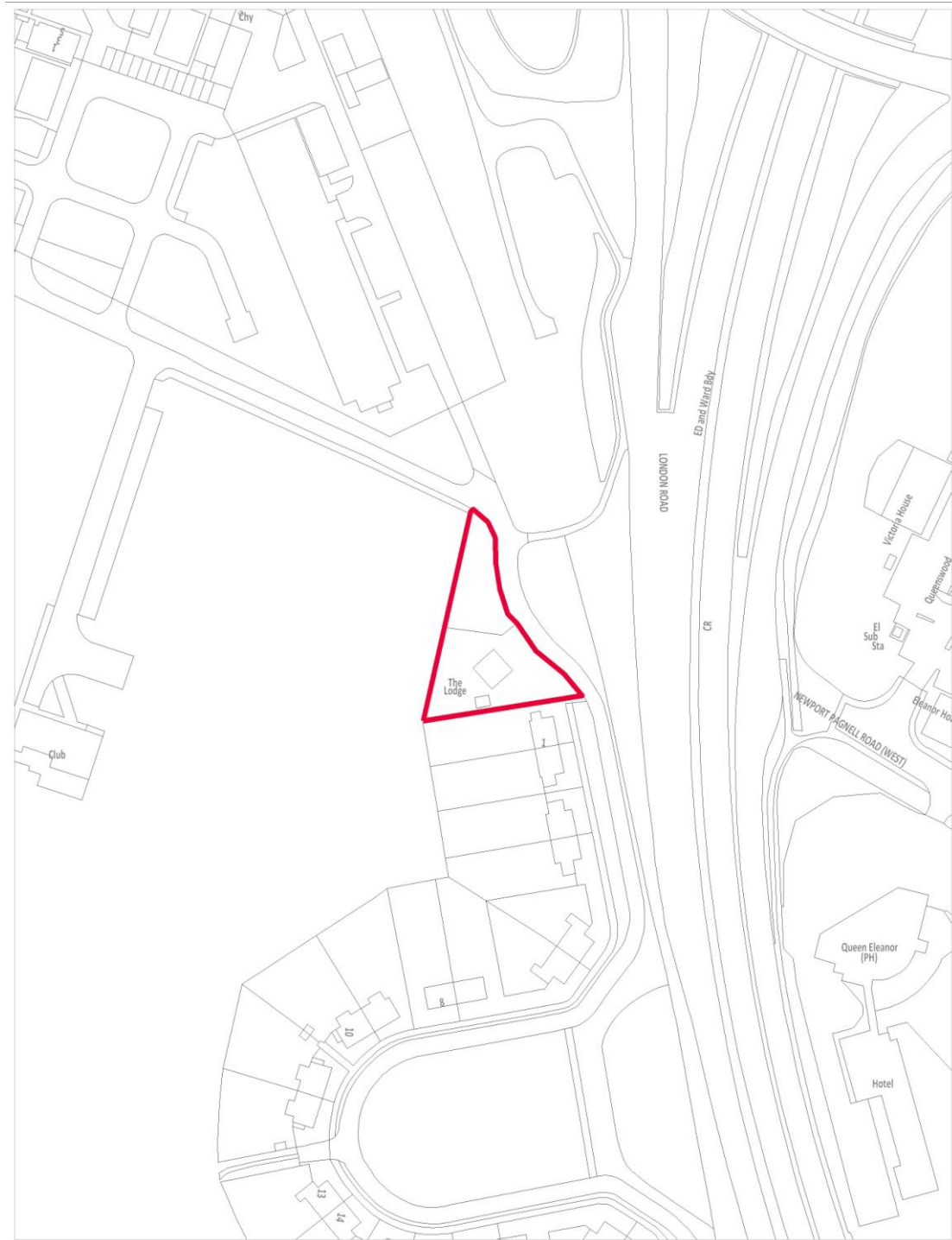
- 10.1 N/2014/0042.

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: Planning
Date: 20th February 2014
Scale: 1:1250
Dept: Planning
Project: Committee

Title
NPF, The Lodge, Wootton Park Hall

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