



PLANNING COMMITTEE: 30th September 2014
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
DIRECTOR: Steven Boyes

N/2014/0927: Temporary change of use of Abbey Cottage from residential (Use Class C3) to office and exhibition space

WARD: Delapre & Briar Hill

APPLICANT: Northampton Borough Council

REFERRED BY: Scheme of Delegation
REASON: Borough Council Application

DEPARTURE: NO

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 **APPROVAL** subject to the conditions attached in Paragraph 9.1 and for the following reason:

The proposal has no adverse impact on the character, appearance or historical significance of the listed building and Delapre Park Conservation Area and the change of use of this building will assist with the long term survival and removal from the Heritage at Risk Register of Delapre Abbey as a whole. The proposed use is considered acceptable and would not cause undue impact on residential and general amenity and highway safety. The proposal thereby accords with Policies E20 and E26 of the Northampton Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for the change of use of the cottage within the grounds of the Abbey to use for office and exhibition space. This would be for a temporary period of three years and is intended to allow the Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust (DAPT) to occupy the space whilst works are taking place on the Abbey as approved under the previous application. It is anticipated that in the longer term the trust will be provided with office space within the Abbey.
- 2.2 The exhibition space would allow for members of the public to be able to come into the office area, speak with DAPT staff and read information on what is happening with the renovation works at Delapre Abbey. This could also include information on any upcoming events. It is intended this space will be well sign posted and access open to the public 09:00 -17:00.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 Delapre Abbey is a Grade II* Listed Building dating from 1145 and forms part of a complex of buildings some of which are also listed Grade II. The property is approached by a tree lined drive and sits within a parkland setting located approximately 1 mile from the town centre. The building is within the Registered Battlefield (Battle of Northampton 1460) and the designated Delapre Park Conservation Area. The building is included on the English Heritage 'At Risk' register.
- 3.2 This proposal relates to Abbey Cottage, a building within the grounds of Delapre Abbey, which is currently in residential use.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 Two separate applications for a change of use to a conference centre and to a hotel which were approved in 1988. These consents have now lapsed.
- 4.2 An application in 2010 enabled the temporary use until 2015 of the stable block as a tea rooms.
- 4.3 In 2010 an application was approved for the temporary use until 2015 of the walled garden for the erection of marquees, to be used for weddings and other functions. This allows for 12 events annually.

- 4.4 In October 2013 an application was approved by the Planning Committee for the Repair and refurbishment of Delapre Abbey, 18th Century Stables and Coach House including construction of kitchen building, glazed link to Coach House, rebuilding conservatory; installation of windows and doors; demolition of second floor courtyard WC; change of use of building to include functions/events (Class D2); conferences, guided tours, visitor and heritage centre and ancillary retail (Class D1); offices (Class B1); café and restaurant (Class A3) and holiday lets. Repair and refurbishment of 19th Century Stables including new brick building façade to north elevation; new openings with doors and shutters; new frameless glazed screen and access ramp; demolition of steel barn and lean-to; change of use of building to business studio/workshops (Class B1).

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 the saved policies of the Northampton Local Plan and, whilst not yet adopted, weight can be attributed to the Submitted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (as subsequently modified).

5.2 National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF states at paragraph 17 that Planning should “conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations”.

At paragraph 126 the NPPF goes on to say that “in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation”.

5.3 Northampton Local Plan

Policy E20 “New Development” states that the design of any new building or extension should adequately reflect the character of its surroundings in terms of layout, siting, form, scale and use of appropriate materials and that development should be designed, located and used in a manner which ensures adequate standards of privacy, daylight and sunlight.

Policy E26 “Conservation Areas” states that development must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area, and not include the demolition of any building which makes a significant contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

5.4 Other Material Considerations - Submitted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

Weight can be given to the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS), this would be significant where a policy has received few representations and unresolved objections are not considered likely to have a significant bearing on the strategy of the Plan. The JCS provides an up to date evidence base and considers the current Government requirements for plan making, being prepared in full conformity with the NPPF. The plan has been the subject of an examination in public and the findings of the Inspector are awaited.

Policy BN5 “The Historic Environment” of the submitted JCS sets out that heritage assets will be conserved and enhanced and that where heritage assets are at risk they will be appropriately conserved and managed.

6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

6.1 **NBC Conservation** – The application is for the change of use (on a temporary basis) from residential to office / exhibition space. There do not appear to be any physical changes to the building and therefore there are no objections. If physical alterations are necessary listed building consent will be required.

6.3 At the time of writing this report the consultation period was still ongoing and no responses had been received from other consultees, nor had any comments been received from neighbouring residents or in respect of the site and press notices. Any comments received will be reported to committee by means of the Addendum.

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 The main issues to consider are the impact of the proposals on the character, appearance and historic significance of the listed building and the conservation area as well as the impact of the proposed change of use on adjoining occupiers and on the setting of the historic park and the wider area.

- 7.2 There are no physical works proposed to the building and therefore there would be no impact on the appearance of the building. Furthermore, it is not considered that the use as an office and exhibition space would have any impact on the character of the building or its historic significance, given the temporary nature of the use which would allow for reversion to the previous residential use.
- 7.3 In terms of the principle of the change of use, it is considered that given the temporary nature of the use and the reasons for this, that this use would be acceptable in principle on a temporary basis.
- 7.4 Regarding the impact of the use, it is considered that the use as offices would not be unduly noisy, to the detriment of the residents in the area and whilst the use would generate some traffic, this would not be significant, particularly in the overall context of the construction works which will be ongoing during the period of the use. It is not considered, therefore, that any undue impact on residential neighbours of the site would occur.
- 7.5 It is considered that the proposed use is acceptable in principle and would not have any undue detrimental impact on adjoining residential occupiers or result in any significant adverse impact on the highway network.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposed change of use will facilitate the location on site of the Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust and the provision of exhibition space to keep the public informed of ongoing works. It is considered that the proposal will assist in facilitating the restoration of the Abbey as a whole and providing information on this, and that the use is acceptable in principle on a temporary basis and would not lead to any adverse impacts.

9. CONDITIONS

- (1) The use hereby permitted shall be discontinued on or before September 30th 2017 and the use of the premises shall revert back to residential under Class C3 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of nearby residential occupiers and the preservation of the historic character of the area, as the use is only required on a temporary basis during the restoration of the Abbey. In accordance with Policies E20 and E26 of the Northampton Local Plan, Policy BN5 of the Submitted Joint Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- (2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan, UARN60212-001A.

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

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Application file N/2014/0927.

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: Location Plan
Date: 16th September 2014
Scale: 1:3500
Dept: Planning
Project: Planning Committee

Title

Abbey Cottage, Delapre Abbey

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