



**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015  
**DIRECTORATE:** Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning  
**DIRECTOR:** Steven Boyes

**N/2014/1207:** Single storey extension to café, Park Café,  
Abington Park, Wellingborough Road

**WARD:** Abington

**APPLICANT:** Mr A Ansell  
**AGENT:** Architectural Solutions

**REFERRED BY:** Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and  
Planning

**REASON:** Council owned land and applicant is elected  
Member

**DEPARTURE:** NO

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**APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:**

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

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

The development would appear as a sympathetic addition to the building with no adverse visual impact on the Conservation Area and would provide public benefit in terms of improving the range of facilities available within Abington Park. This public benefit would outweigh the loss of a tree and would comply with the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

**2. THE PROPOSAL**

2.1 The application seeks planning permission to erect a single storey extension to the existing cafe building. This will form a continuation of the existing building providing a kitchen area, office and food store. This would provide the café with a larger kitchen/preparation area and

a larger servery. Originally an off-shot outside furniture store was included within the scheme however this has subsequently been removed.

- 2.2 To facilitate the development a Lime tree would need to be removed.

### **3. SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 3.1 The café stands alone within Abington Park and is sited almost within a group of trees. To the front of the café is a grassed area. The park is within Abington Park Conservation Area.

### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 No relevant history.

### **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 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 emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans where relevant.

#### **5.2 National Policies - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The NPPF indicates in paragraphs 56 and 57 that good design is important and should contribute to making public places better for people.

Paragraph 70 outlines that the provision of facilities should be viewed positively to enhance the sustainability of communities.

Paragraph 73 states that “access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities”.

Paragraph 131 encourages local planning authorities to consider sustaining and enhancing heritage assets, the contribution heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality and new development making a positive contribution to local character.

Paragraph 134 outlines that harm to a heritage asset should be weighed against public benefit.

### 5.3 **West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy – Adopted December 2015**

The 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. The JCS has been adopted by the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee. Following adoption the JCS forms part of the development plan and is consistent with Section 38(6) and therefore carries full weight when considering planning applications.

Policy S10 Sustainable Development Principles sets out that development will achieve high standards of design and will protect, conserve and enhance the built and natural environment.

Policy BN5 The Historic Environment and Landscape outlines that heritage assets will be conserved and enhanced.

### 5.4 **Northampton Local Plan 1997 (Saved Policies)**

Policy E20 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development where design reflects the character of its surroundings.

Policy E26 indicates that planning permission will be granted in conservation areas where the character and appearance of those areas would be preserved or enhanced.

### 5.5 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Abington Park Conservation Area Assessment 2005.

## 6. **CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS**

Comments are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **NBC Arboricultural Officer** has commented, “The trees adjacent to the existing café are very prominent specimens which are in good condition and contribute significantly to the amenity of the area and are important features within the conservation area. It is accepted that the proposed construction methods will reduce the potential for root severance and damage and the overall conflict with the RPA of trees T5, T7 and T8 is below the maximum percentage recommended within BS5837:2012 but I consider the removal of tree T2, a fine young mature specimen with a long useful life expectancy located within a conservation area is unacceptable irrespective of any proposed replacement planting.

Accordingly, I would recommend that the application is refused.”

- 6.2 **NBC Conservation** have no objections to the application in principle and are of the view that matching the extension to the existing structure will minimise the impact. There are some concerns regarding extending an existing unattractive structure.
- 6.3 Three objections received from **51 Wantage Road and 8 Greenway (2 letters)** on the grounds of the loss of the tree and that this is contrary to the purpose and history of the park; the visual impact and appearance of the existing café and the exacerbation of this by the proposed extension and problems arising from the operation of the café.

## 7. **APPRAISAL**

### **Design/Appearance**

- 7.1 It is considered that the design and appearance of the proposed extension is acceptable. The extension, which measures 7.7 X 8.1m is of modest size and reflects the form of the existing building and as such would appear as a sympathetic addition.

### **Conservation Area/Trees**

- 7.2 In terms of the impact of the extension on the appearance of the conservation area, this is considered to be neutral for the reasons outlined above. It is not considered that the extension would have a visual impact on the conservation area over and above that which the existing building has.
- 7.3 However the development would require the removal of a Lime tree of a good quality, the retention of which would ordinarily be considered desirable within a conservation area and which undoubtedly contributes to the amenity of this.
- 7.4 It is however considered that the café makes a contribution to the amenity of those who use the park and is a facility which adds to the quality of Abington Park as a leisure and recreation venue for local residents and, indeed, as an attraction for those living further afield. The extension and improvement of the café would therefore be of further benefit to the park and the users of this.
- 7.5 It is considered, on balance, that the improvement to the facilities within the park and the wider public benefits which this would bring would, in this instance, outweigh the desirability of preserving the tree. In addition should Members be minded to grant planning permission a condition would be imposed to require not just a replacement tree but additional trees to be planted. The intention of this would be that in the long term there would be a betterment in terms of the trees within the park and the amenity which these provide.

## 8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 On balance the public benefit of the development is considered to outweigh the harm of the loss of a single tree and the development would have no adverse visual impact on the wider conservation area. This would accord with the advice contained in the NPPF and policies of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

## 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:

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 E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

4. Before development commences a scheme for tree planting within Abington Park, including a timetable, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed scheme shall be implemented thereafter in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure there is no long term loss of amenity through tree removal to comply with Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

5. The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement.

Reason: In order to ensure adequate protection of existing trees on the site in the interests of achieving a satisfactory standard of development and maintaining the amenity of the locality in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

6. All trees shown to be retained in the approved plans shall be protected for the duration of the development by the fencing indicated within the submitted Arboriculturist's Report, the positions of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any development works shall take place. Within the fenced areas no development works shall take place on, over or under the ground, no vehicles shall be driven, nor plant sited, no materials nor waste shall be deposited, no bonfires shall be lit nor the ground level altered during the periods of development.

Reason: In order to ensure adequate protection of existing trees on the site in the interests of achieving a satisfactory standard of development and maintaining the amenity of the locality in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

**Informative:** In relation to Condition 4 above the applicant is advised that the required scheme should make provision for the replacement of the tree to be removed with a tree of the same species as well as additional compensatory planting.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 N/2014/1207.

## **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: 8th January 2015  
 Scale: 1:1250  
 Dept: Planning  
 Project: Planning Committee

Title

### Park Cafe, Abington Park, Wellingborough Rd

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