



PLANNING COMMITTEE: 30th June 2015
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
DIRECTOR: Steven Boyes

N/2015/0431: Laying of hard surface and creation of seating areas with associated landscaping to form memorial garden at Towcester Road Cemetery

WARD: Delapre and Briar Hill Ward

APPLICANT: Mrs Vivienne Jameson

REFERRED BY: Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
REASON: Council 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 proposal would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area; it would not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the grade II listed building. The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan and Policies S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 Planning permission is sought for the laying of hard surface and creation of seating areas with associated landscaping to form a memorial garden at Towcester Road Cemetery. The memorial garden is intended to provide a quiet grieving area for visitors.

2.2 The memorial garden will incorporate soft planting with low specimen trees and will include bench areas focusing on a central location which will contain a sculpture. This sculpture will be no more than 60cm in height.

2.3 No burials will take place within the boundary of the Memorial Garden.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The application site is located to the north eastern side of Towcester Road Cemetery, approximately 135m from the grade II listed Chapel in the centre of the cemetery. Playing fields and residential properties at Friars Court lie to the south and east of the site, with the wider cemetery site to the north and west of the application site.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 There has been no recent relevant planning 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

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 56: Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning. Good design should make a positive contribution to making places better for people.

Paragraph 70: Provision should be made for the use of shared space, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities.

Paragraph 131: Local Planning Authorities should take account of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 132: Consideration should be given to the importance of heritage assets and the significance of the proposed development on the assets conservation.

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 S10 – Sustainable Development Principles – Development will be expected to achieve the highest standards of sustainable design incorporating safety and security considerations and a strong sense of place, be in a sustainable and protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings.

Policy BN5 – The Historic Environment and Landscape – In order to secure and enhance the area’s heritage assets and their settings and landscapes.

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

Due to the age of the plan, the amount of weight that can be attributed to the aims and objectives of this document are diminished, however, the following policies are material to this application:

Policy E20 – New Development

5.5 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

6. **CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS**

Comments received are summarised as follows:

6.1 **NBC Conservation:** The proposed site of the memorial garden is located close to a grade II listed structure in the centre of the cemetery. Any works proposed in this cemetery will impact upon the setting of this listed building. There are no objections to a memorial garden in this cemetery, however it is advised that new structures are kept to a low level and are softened with planting.

6.2 **Northamptonshire Police:** No objections.

6.3 The development has been advertised by way of site notice, press notice and neighbour letters, no representations have been received.

7. **APPRAISAL**

Principle of the development

7.1 The proposal would provide a memorial garden for grieving families adjacent to an area of the cemetery allocated for the burial of new babies. No burials would take place within the application site. It is considered that the proposal would be in keeping with the character of the wider Towcester Road Cemetery and would not have any significantly detrimental impacts on the continuing use of the cemetery. The proposal would be acceptable in principle and can be viewed as an enhancement of the existing cemetery as it would provide a community facility in accordance with the aims of paragraph 70 of the NPPF.

Impact on the setting of the grade II listed building and visual amenity

7.2 The proposed memorial garden would be located to the north-eastern side of cemetery. It would be a relatively modest development consisting of five benches set out in a circle, surrounded by vertical half sleepers to a height of no more than 1.2m. Specimen trees would be planted between the benches. The benches

would be arranged around a central sculpture figure, which is likely to be a baby in two hands, this sculpture would not exceed 0.6m in height. There would be an inner planting circle surrounding the sculpture and a compacted Breedon gravel path.

- 7.3 It is considered that the proposal would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. The proposal would not be readily visible to neighbouring residential properties due to existing mature planting. The proposed planting to the memorial garden would soften the appearance of the development within the wider area and the mixed planting would provide year round interest.
- 7.4 Conservation Officer stated that any works proposed in this cemetery will impact upon the setting of the listed building. The significance of this impact is a key consideration in the determination of this application. The proposed memorial garden would be located approximately 135m from the listed building and no structures would exceed 1.2m in height and planting would be a prominent feature of the memorial garden. It is not considered that the proposed development would adversely affect the setting of the listed building in accordance with policies S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the NPPF.
- 7.5 To ensure an appropriate standard of development, it is considered appropriate to condition further details of the paint finish for the benches and half sleepers and final details of the sculpture, which would be located in the centre of the memorial garden.

Residential amenity

- 7.6 The proposed memorial garden would be located approximately 29m from the nearest neighbouring residential property and would be screened by existing mature planting. Due to the nature of the proposal it is considered that the memorial garden would not cause significant noise or disturbance to neighbouring residential properties.
- 7.7 Northamptonshire Police have confirmed that the cemetery has not had any significant levels of anti-social behaviour in the last twelve months and the local officer has no concerns.
- 7.8 The proposal is considered to be in accordance with policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposal would be acceptable in principle and would enhance the wider cemetery site by providing a beneficial community facility.
- 8.2 The memorial garden would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the cemetery and would not have a significant impact on the setting of the grade II listed building in accordance with policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan, Policies S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and paragraphs 131 and 132 of the NPPF.
- 8.3 The proposed development would not have any significant detrimental impacts on the amenity or living conditions of nearby residential properties in accordance with policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

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: Site Location Plan; D1.1-A, Proposed Garden Layout Plan; D1-A, Proposed Garden Layout Plan.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the planning application/listed building consent application.

- (3) Prior to the commencement of development, details of the colour finish for the benches and vertical half-sleepers 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 not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the grade II listed building in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan and Policies S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. The condition is a pre-commencement condition to allow for the assessment of the final details of the development to ensure that it would not have a detrimental impact on the site or the setting of the grade II listed building.

- (4) Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the proposed sculpture 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 not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the grade II listed building in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan and Policies S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. The condition is a pre-commencement condition to allow for the assessment of the final details of the development to ensure that it would not have a detrimental impact on the site or the setting of the grade II listed building.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

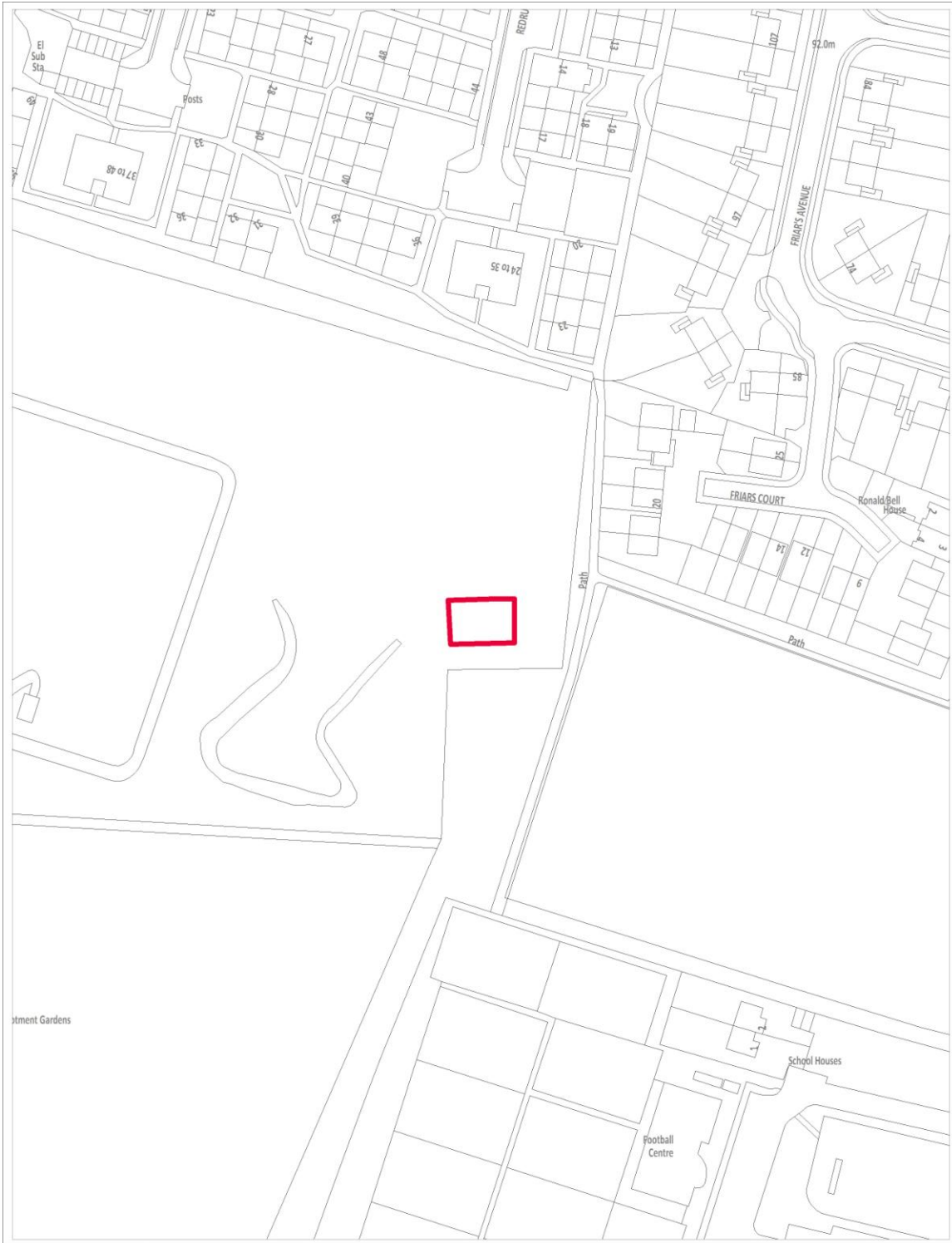
- 10.1 N/2015/0431

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: **Site Location Plan**
Date: **15th June 2015**
Scale: **1:1250**
Dept: **Planning**
Project: **Planning Committee**

Title
Towcester Road Cemetery, Towcester Road

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