



PLANNING COMMITTEE: 29th September 2015
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
DIRECTOR: Steven Boyes

N/2015/0865: Variation of condition 6 of planning permission N/2013/0620 (Change of use to young persons' drop in centre) to allow additional opening hours between 9:30am to 9:30pm on Saturdays, ancillary building in Abington Park, Wellingborough Road

WARD: Park

APPLICANT: Park Avenue Methodist Church
AGENT: None

REFERRED BY: Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
REASON: Council owned land and building

DEPARTURE: No

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1. RECOMMENDATION

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

The proposed increase in the hours of use of the existing building would have no significant additional impacts on the amenities of nearby residents or park users. The proposal would thereby comply with Policies S10 and C2 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal relates to the previously approved change of use of what was a disused former storage building as a young persons' drop-in centre. The hours of use were restricted to 11am to 9.30pm on Mondays to Fridays, with no opening permitted on Saturdays and Sundays. It is now proposed to extend the opening hours to include 9.30am to 9.30pm on Saturdays.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The site comprises a former storage building within Abington Park which has been in the permitted use as a young person's drop in centre since 2013.
- 3.2 The premises are located towards the edge of the park, in close proximity to the residential properties of Archway Cottages, the gardens of which are approximately 17m from the building.
- 3.3 The site is located within the Abington Park Conservation Area.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The change of use of the building to a young person's drop in centre was approved by the Planning Committee on September 3rd 2013.

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) and Northampton Local Plan (1997) saved policies.

- 5.2 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development within a conservation area to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

5.3 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:

7. Requiring Good Design.

12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

5.4 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:

SA – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

S10 – Sustainable Development Principles

C2 – New Developments

BN5 – The Historic Environment and Landscape

5.5 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:

E20 – New Development
E26 – Conservation Areas

5.6 Supplementary Planning Documents

Northamptonshire County Parking Standards SPG 2003
Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

Comments received are summarised as follows:

6.1 **Environmental Health:** no objections.

6.2 **Police Crime Prevention Design Adviser:** no objection to the application to allow additional opening hours. The facility does not appear to generate any crime and disorder – there are no recorded crimes or incidents logged against the address.

6.1 The proposed development has been advertised by way of site notices and letters to neighbouring occupiers. Representations have been received from landlords of the nearby Archway Cottages and from the occupiers of one of the cottages, making points which can be summarised as follows:

There have been incidents involving the young people attending the centre, there is the potential for this to increase which is intimidating to neighbouring residents and therefore would object unless supervision can be guaranteed.

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 The main issues to consider are the potential for any increased impact, particularly on the amenities of nearby residential occupiers, as a result of the proposed increased opening hours.

7.2 The activities provided were stated in the original application as being playing pool and a space to sit and meet friends and have coffee / soft drinks. Laptops etc may be provided for playing games and doing homework. Whilst music would be played the volume of this would be controlled by the supervisor.

7.3 The supervisors keep track of who is attending and repeat visitors will be asked to return a permission slip signed by their parent / guardian. Good behaviour will be expected and those misbehaving may not be allowed to return.

7.4 Comments received by the objectors refer to users of the centre gathering near to residential properties within Archway Cottages and engaging in anti-social behaviour which is intimidating.

- 7.5 Whilst it may be the case, it must also be recognised that this is a general problem which does not result directly from the use of the centre, in fact the purpose of the centre is to discourage such behaviour.
- 7.6 It is considered, therefore, that the prevalence of such incidents would be more likely to be reduced if the proposed extension of opening hours is approved than if not, as this would give at least some of those who may be inclined to such behaviour an alternative.
- 7.7 It is recommended, therefore, that the increase in opening hours is approved as this would on balance be more likely to have a positive impact.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposed extended opening hours for the use would have on balance a neutral impact on the amenities of adjoining or nearby residents, subject to the controls afforded by the proposed conditions.

9. CONDITIONS

- (1) The security measures as approved in respect of Condition 3 of planning permission N/2013/0620 shall be maintained for the duration of the approved use of the premises.

Reason: In the interests of security and the prevention of crime, in accordance with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

- (2) The premises shall be open only between the hours of 11am and 9.30pm from Mondays to Fridays and between the hours of 9:30am and 9.30pm on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or Public Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

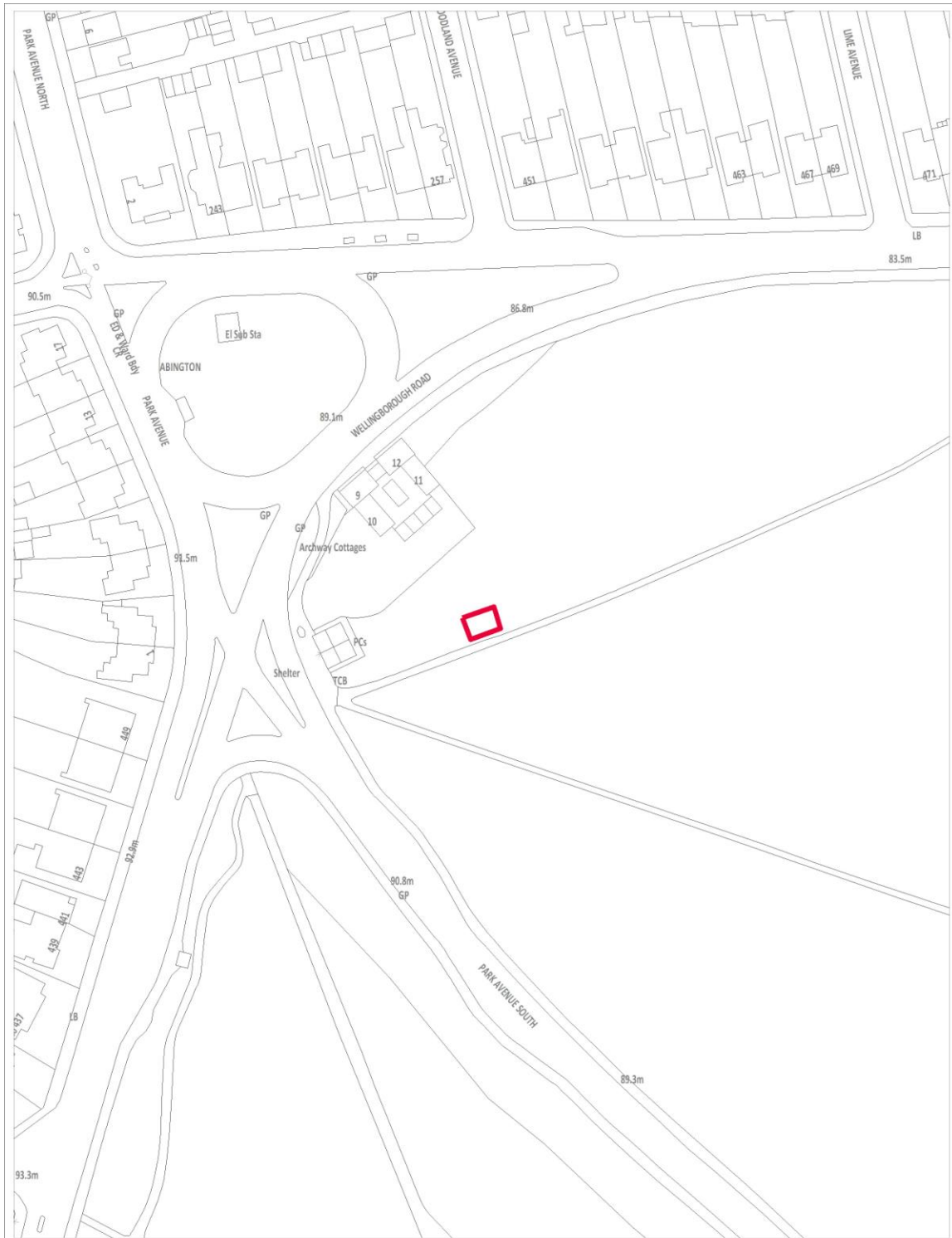
- 10.1 Application files N/2013/0620 and N/2015/0865.

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: 14th September 2015
 Scale: 1:1250
 Dept: Planning
 Project: Planning Committee

Title
Ancillary Building, Abington Park, Wellingborough Rd

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