

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 6th September 2016
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
DIRECTOR: Steven Boyes

APPLICATION REF: N/2016/1057

LOCATION: Delapre Abbey , London Road

DESCRIPTION: Installation of 4no non-illuminated signs

WARD: Delapre & Briar Ward

APPLICANT: Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust
AGENT: Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust

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 in paragraph 8 below.

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal is for the erection of four non-illuminated signs of two designs. This includes an arrival sign giving directions to the car park and entrance and three directional signs which would act in a similar way to finger post signs, showing directions to various features within the site.

2.2 The arrival sign would be 2m in height and 0.75m in width with a powder coated steel finish with a grey colour and a concrete base. The direction signs would be 2.4m high and 0.4m in width, again would be finished in powder coated steel with multi coloured layer details and with a concrete base.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The proposed signage would be in the grounds of Delapre Abbey. The arrival sign would be located to the north off the access drive near to the fork in the driveway whilst the three directional signs would be at points around the site, to direct visitors.

3.2 The site falls within Delapre Park Conservation Area and Registered Battlefield. Within the grounds of Delapre Abbey there are eight listed buildings and structures, all of which are Grade II other than the Abbey itself which is Grade II*.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 N/2014/0470 – Two sided sign at entrance to Abbey from London Road – Approved 11/06/14 (temporary consent).
- 4.2 N/2014/0538 – Hoarding sign within car park area – Approved 11/06/14 (temporary consent).
- 4.3 N/2014/1388 - Erection of a 6m flag pole and flag – Approved 28/01/15.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Statutory Duty

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.

Section 66(i) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that the Local Planning Authorities, when considering any listed building consent application or any planning application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

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

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 section is of particular relevance to this application:

Paragraph 67 states that applications for advertisement consent should only be considered in terms of the impacts of amenity and public safety, as established by the Advertisement Regulations. Furthermore, the same paragraph states that poorly placed advertisements can have a detrimental impact upon the quality of the built and natural environment.

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 - Development to achieve the highest standards of sustainable design.

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:

E20 – New Development: Design to adequately reflect the character of its surroundings in terms of layout, siting, form, scale and use of appropriate materials.

E26 – Conservation Areas: Consent for advertisements in conservation areas will be granted so long as the development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of those areas.

6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

Comments received are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **Conservation** – The solid metal arrival sign and directional block signs from the car park have been designed to be a distinctive addition to the setting that reflect the theme adopted throughout the site. Whilst a more traditional timber sign would be appropriate to the location, consider the proposed signs will not harm the setting of the listed buildings at Delapre and park / battlefield and have a reversible impact on the character and appearance of Delapre Abbey conservation area.
- 6.2 **Historic England** – Comments are awaited and will be reported to Committee by means of the Addendum.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The two relevant material considerations for the determination of applications for advertisement consent are the impacts upon amenity and public safety, as stipulates in the NPPF.
- 7.2 In respect of visual amenity, the principal considerations are that the signage would be within the grounds of Delapre Abbey, a Grade II* listed building, and also within the Delapre Conservation Area.
- 7.3 It is considered that the proposed arrival sign would be of a size which is considered to be consistent with its function of welcoming visitors to the Abbey and indicating the location of the car park. Due to its location and size, it is considered that this sign would have a neutral impact on the setting of the listed building or the conservation area.
- 7.4 The three directional signs would be a variation on the theme of traditional finger posts. These signs would be 2.4m high and 40cm wide. The signs would be multi coloured to clearly differentiate the different attractions around the site. It is considered that these features are a necessary part of the function of the signage in guiding visitors around the site and that the positioning of the signs strikes an appropriate balance between an effective function and the need to respect the setting of the listed building and the character of the Conservation Area. The proposed installation is reversible and hence would not cause any undue harm to the heritage asset.
- 7.5 The proposed signage would not impact on public safety as the installation would not obstruct views for car drivers within the Abbey grounds. It is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable and would help to assist to bring forward the Abbey as a major public attraction.
- 7.6 As the proposed signage would require foundations to the installation, it is recommended that a watch brief is required to assess any archaeological impact. A planning condition is therefore recommended accordingly.

8. CONDITIONS

- (1) No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.

- (2) No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to:
- a. endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
 - b. obscure or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air;
 - c. hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.
- (3) Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.
- (4) Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.
- (5) Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.
- (6) Prior notice shall be given to the Local Planning Authority of the exact date on which it is proposed that installation of the advertisements hereby permitted is to begin. During the construction period representatives of the Local Planning Authority shall be allowed access to the site in order to observe and inspect all excavation works and record all findings of archaeological interest. If required they shall be allowed to excavate such remains, provided that this shall not interfere unreasonably with the progress of the installation of the advertisement.

Reason: In the interests of archaeological research in accordance with Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

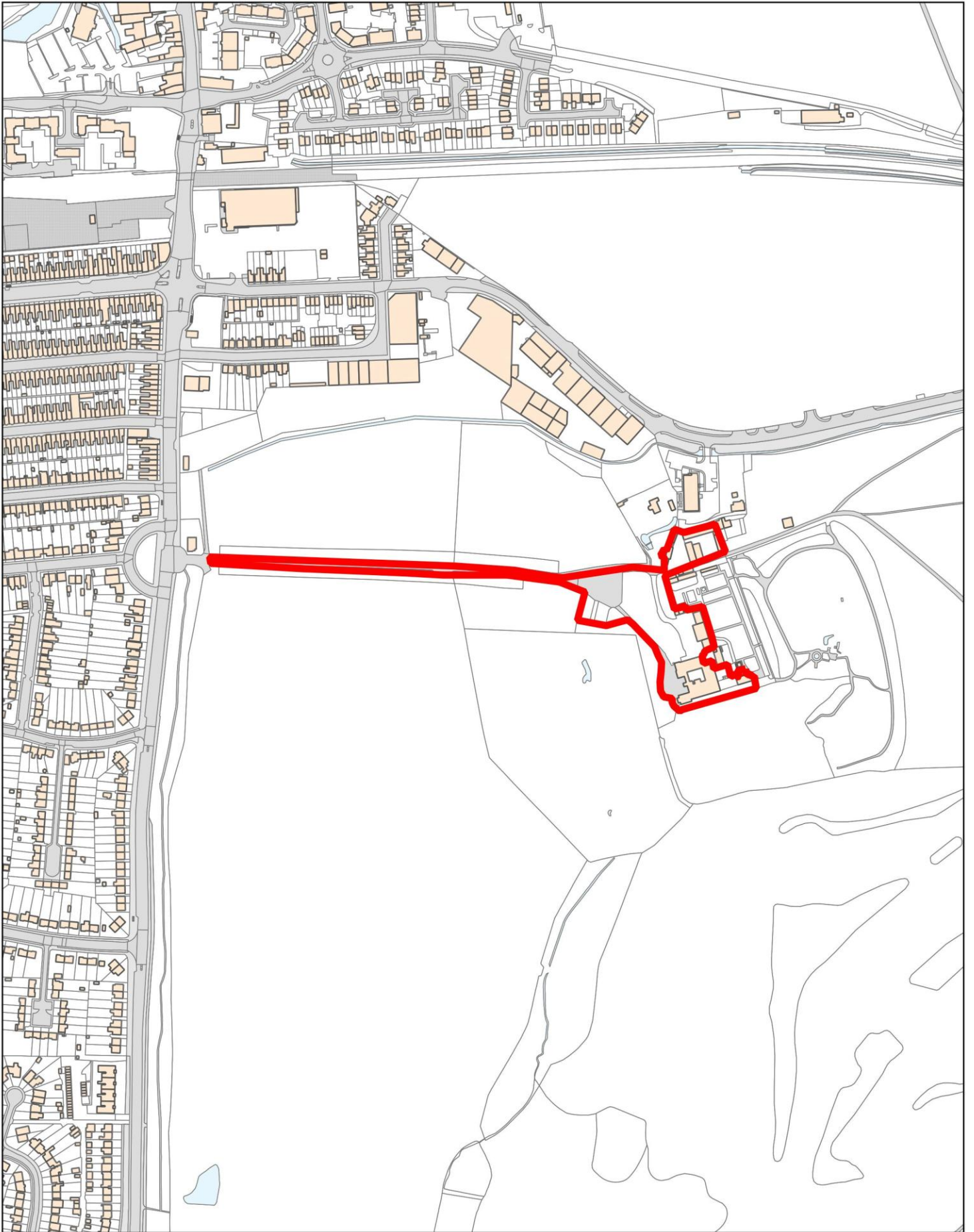
- 10.1 Application file N/2016/1057.

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.



Title: **Delapre Abbey, London Road**

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Scale: 1:4,500

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