

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 25th October 2016
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
DIRECTOR: Steven Boyes

APPLICATION REF: N/2016/1260

LOCATION: St Johns House, St Andrews Street

DESCRIPTION: Prior notification of demolition of existing three level walkways providing pedestrian access between St Johns House and St Mark's House

WARD: Castle Ward

APPLICANT: Northampton Partnership Homes
AGENT: Northampton Partnership Homes

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

DEPARTURE: No

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Authority's **PRIOR APPROVAL WILL NOT BE REQUIRED** for the method of demolition and proposed restoration of the site for the following reason:

The means of demolition and the proposed restoration of the site are considered to be acceptable and would be consistent with the aims and objectives of policies of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application is for prior notification of the proposed method of demolition of three pedestrian walkway bridges which connect two adjacent six and seven storey blocks of flats off St Andrews Street.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The application site consists of three elevated walkways between the flats at St John's House and St Mark's House. The surrounding area is residential in character and consists of flats and houses as well as some associated commercial uses.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 None relevant.

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), Northampton Local Plan (1997) saved policies, Northampton Central Area Action Plan (2013) and Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan.

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:

Section 6 – Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes.

Section 7 – Requiring good design.

Section 8 – Promoting healthy communities.

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:

H1 – Housing.

S10 – Sustainable development principles.

5.4 Northampton Central Area Action Plan 2013

The Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) provides specific planning policy and guidance for the town centre and adjoining areas where significant regeneration and investment is proposed in the period up to 2026 and is in conformity with the objectives of the NPPF. Relevant policies include:

Policy 1 – Promoting Design Excellence.

Policy 24 – Spring Boroughs. This policy supports the regeneration of the area in circumstances where much of the housing stock in the borough is of poor quality and there is need to improve inadequate standards of amenity for residents.

5.5 Other Material Considerations

Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan

The Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan was made in April 2016, and now forms part of the development plan for Northampton. The Plan seeks to support proposals which improve the quality of the environment, community facilities, infrastructure, security and connectivity.

6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

Comments received are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **Building Control** – Confirm the proposed method of demolition is acceptable.
- 6.2 **Environmental Health** – Confirm the proposed method of demolition is acceptable.
- 6.3 One letter received from the occupier of a property in the block, raising the following issues:
- Concerned about safety if the walkways are removed.
 - Questioned whether the walkways could be locked off.
 - If one lift was out of order the other lift could be used instead.
 - Walkway would provide a safe exit in the event of fire.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 This application relates to prior notification for the demolition of three existing raised walkways.
- 7.2 The matters for consideration in applications of this type are the proposed method of demolition and the method the site's restoration. The principle of whether or not the demolition should be carried out is not a matter to be considered.
- 7.3 In respect of the proposed demolition, the walkways would be demolished using an elevated platform. The bridges would then be dismantled from the top down and lowered into skips. The open ends of the walkways where the bridges have been removed will be secured using new stop ends. Rendering to the building will be repaired.
- 7.4 Working hours would be from 7.30am to 5.30pm on Mondays to Fridays and impact on residents of the area would be prevented through adherence to these hours, demarcation of working areas and dust mitigation from cutting equipment.
- 7.5 It is considered, therefore, that the proposed method of demolition is acceptable and prior approval is not required.
- 7.5 Whilst the comments received from a neighbouring occupier are noted, as referred to the above, the principle of whether or not the demolition should take place is not a matter to be considered.
- 7.6 It is considered that the method of demolition and restoration are acceptable.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Application File N/2016/1260.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None.

10. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 10.1 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: **St Johns House, St Andrews Street**

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Date: 13-10-2016

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