



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL
Planning Committee

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 17th October 2017
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
HEAD OF PLANNING: Peter Baguley

APPLICATION REF: N/2017/1169

LOCATION: Blackfriars House, Upper Cross Street

DESCRIPTION: External works to create enlarged off street car park with 2 new parking spaces with secure access, erect new small storage sheds and bike/buggy store for residents on new hardstanding areas and re-alignment of boundary wall

WARD: Castle Ward

APPLICANT: Keepmoat Regeneration Engie
AGENT: Halsall Lloyd Partnership

REFERRED BY: Head of 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 layout, design and appearance of the proposed works would improve the provision of parking and amenity facilities available for the occupiers of the adjacent properties and would assist in the regeneration of the area in accordance with Policies S10, N11 and BN3 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policy 1 of the Northampton Central Area Action Plan and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Spring Borough Neighbourhood Plan.

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal is for various improvement works to the external area surrounding Blackfriars House comprising the expansion of the existing car park to provide two additional parking spaces, the erection of two secure timber and metal frame storage bike/buggy storage sheds and the re-alignment of boundary walls.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The application site comprises an area of existing hardstanding within the curtilage of Blackfriars House, a 3 and 4-storey residential block of flats owned by the Council located on the edge of the

town centre. The building is laid out in an L-shape overlooking areas of grassed amenity space, a drying area and car park accessed from Bath Street.

3.2 The surrounding area is residential and comprises predominantly of blocks of flats.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 There is no relevant planning history.

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 the Northampton Central Area Action Plan (2013) and the Spring Borough 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 quality homes

Section 7 – Requiring good design

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 achieve the highest standards of sustainable design incorporating safety and security considerations.

Policy N11: Supporting Areas of Community Regeneration – supports the regeneration of Spring Boroughs and improvements to the quality of the public sector housing stock, improving the public realm and recreational facilities, and creating safe and sustainable environments.

Policy BN3: Woodland Enhancement – the benefits of development resulting in the loss of veteran trees should outweigh the loss.

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 – all new development must demonstrate a high standard of design and positively contribute to the character of an area.

- 5.5 **Supplementary Planning Documents**
Northamptonshire Parking Standards (September 2016)
Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

5.6 **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 **Local Highway Authority** – if the 2 new parking spaces are to be enclosed by anything physical, such as a wall or hedgerow, then they need to be widened to 2.75m each.
- 6.2 **NBC Arboricultural Officer** – the well-established hawthorn in the courtyard, proposed for removal, has a disproportionately high amenity value considering its quality because of its context, being the only tree visible in the locality. Its removal would have a significant detrimental impact.
- 6.3 **Crime Prevention Officer** – this is a very challenging environment and anything used should be secure. Require further details of the bike store and storage sheds and details of locking mechanisms. No issues with the other measures proposed on site.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues for consideration are the impact of the proposal on residential and visual amenity, existing trees and highway impacts.
- 7.2 The extension of the existing parking area to provide the additional two parking spaces would result in the loss of a prominent tree within the centre of the site. Whilst the tree, by virtue of it being the only tree visible in the immediate locality, is considered to have some amenity value, when balanced with the need to provide additional parking provision, albeit only two additional spaces, it is not considered the tree is of such merit to warrant protection by a Tree Preservation Order, and therefore, on balance its removal is considered acceptable.
- 7.3 The location and principle of the proposed storage sheds and bike/ buggy stores is considered acceptable and would provide additional facilities for the residents. Discussions are ongoing regarding the exact type and security of the storage facilities, the details of which will be reported to Committee in the addendum to this agenda.
- 7.4 The proposal includes the re-alignment of an existing staggered wall to the west of the site to increase the existing drying area for residents. The boundary wall would be of the same height as the existing wall and a materials condition would ensure that materials are sympathetic to the existing boundary treatments.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The development proposals would enhance the provision of parking and storage facilities and general amenity for the residents of Blackfriars House and the proposal is considered to be in

accordance with the relevant planning policies and the aims of the Spring Borough Neighbourhood Plan and is therefore recommended for approval.

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 – 053, Proposed Site Layout – 103_F.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the planning application.

3. The new boundary walls shall be constructed with materials of the same type, texture and colour as the existing boundary walls.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity to ensure that the extension harmonises with the existing building in accordance with Policy 1 of the Northampton Central Area Action Plan.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

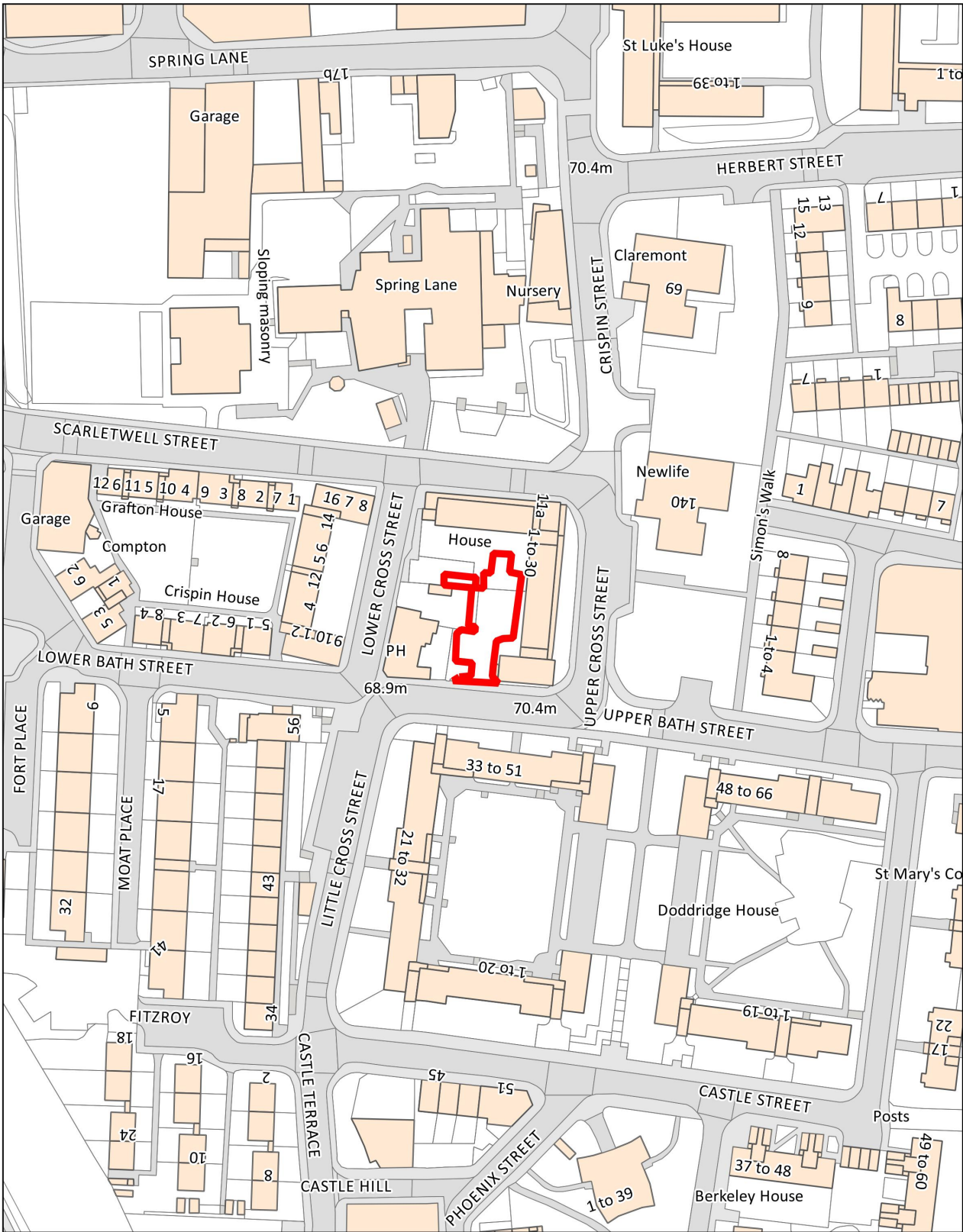
- 10.1 N/2017/1169.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The development is not CIL liable.

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: **Blackfriars House. Upper Cross Street**

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Date: 04-10-2017

Scale: 1:1,250

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