



PLANNING COMMITTEE: 7th June 2018
DIRECTORATE: Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
HEAD OF PLANNING: Peter Baguley

APPLICATION REF: N/2018/0448

LOCATION: Kings Heath Community Centre, Nene Drive

DESCRIPTION: Demolition of existing Community Centre and construction of 3no new bungalows

WARD: Kings Heath Ward

APPLICANT: Northampton Partnership Homes
AGENT: Baily Garner

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:

It is considered that the demolition of the community room has been adequately justified and the proposed development would provide an acceptable living environment for future residents and would have no undue detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbouring and nearby occupiers. The development would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. The level of parking proposed would be acceptable and would not lead to a detrimental impact on highway safety and amenity. The proposed development would therefore comply with Policies S1, S10, H1 and RC2 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policies H6, H17 and E20 of the Northampton Local Plan and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is to demolish the Community Centre at Nene Drive and to erect a terrace of three bungalows. The houses would have one bedroom, built to mobility housing standards and would be finished in traditional materials of brick and tile.
- 2.2 The proposal also includes the provision of a total 20 parking spaces to serve the new dwellings and existing residents.

3 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The application site is located within a cul-de-sac which is accessed from Nene Drive on the Kings Heath Housing Estate. It consists of the Nene Drive Community Room which is a single storey

building located at the centre of the cul-de-sac surrounded by a landscaped area. The site is surrounded by single storey dwellings, one two storey dwelling and communal parking that serves all of the properties.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 PA/2017/0217 - Pre-application enquiry regarding erection of dwellings.

4.2 N/1988/0211 - erection of 34 bungalows, 1 warden's house and 1 communal hall with new access road and 21 car parking spaces.

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.

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 17 seek to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for existing and proposed occupiers.
- Paragraph 47 requires Authorities to have a five-year housing land supply.
- Paragraph 49 advises that housing applications should be considered with a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- Paragraph 50 requires a range of housing types to be provided.
- Paragraph 56 good design is a key of sustainable development.
- Paragraph 57 requires development to be of a good quality design.
- Paragraph 70 delivering community needs.
- Paragraph 74 loss of open space, sports and recreational buildings.

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 H1 – Housing density and mix and type of dwellings
Policy RC2 – Community Needs
Policy S1 – Distribution of Development
Policy S10 – Sustainable Development Principles

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
Policy H6 – Other housing development: within primarily residential areas
Policy H17 – Housing for people with disabilities

5.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

6 CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

Comments received are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **NBC Arboricultural Officer** - no objections.
- 6.2 **NBC Public Protection** - makes recommendations regarding vehicle charging points, gas fired boilers and hours of construction work.
- 6.3 **NCC Highways** - note that there is little manoeuvring room in and out of the spaces but as there are already parking spaces there and they are wider than normal bays it is not a concern in this instance.

7 APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

- 7.1 The NPPF supports well-designed sustainable housing development that provides a good standard of amenity for existing and proposed occupiers.
- 7.2 The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy seeks to ensure development is located primarily in the principal urban area within easy access of facilities and encourages the use of previously developed land having regard to achieving high quality design in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.
- 7.3 Saved Policy H6 of the Northampton Local Plan allows for residential development in such residential locations providing that the development is in keeping with the character of the area, does not result in an over-intensive development of the site and does not result in the loss of facilities for which there is a need in the area.
- 7.4 The principle of the development of the site for residential use would be acceptable as the land is situated within a residential area. The development of the site for residential use would also contribute to the Council's 5-year housing land supply.
- 7.5 The existing building on the site is the Nene Drive Community Room which was used as a community room but has since closed. The main reason for the closure was the lack of demand from local community groups and the availability of alternative facilities in the local area. Within walking distance of the site is the Kings Heath Community Centre. Over the last five years a number of attempts have been made to increase the use of the community room. This has failed and the facility is incurring Northampton Partnership Homes with significant costs with no income. The decision was taken to investigate the potential of closing the room, relocating existing community groups and to bring the site forward for housing. Consultation with users of the room has resulted in community groups moving to the Kings Heath Community Centre and the Cardigan Close community room in Dallington. It is considered that it has been demonstrated that the loss of the community facility is acceptable in this instance. There was not sufficient need for such a facility and alternative sites nearby are sufficient to provide community needs within the area.
- 7.6 Subject to acceptable design, consideration of parking provision and impact on amenity, the principle of residential development is considered to be in accordance with the above policy requirements.

Design and Appearance

- 7.7 The proposed dwellings are of a conventional design. They will be finished in traditional materials of brick and tile with white UPVC windows. It is considered that these are in keeping with the character of the area in terms of their appearance and scale. The proposal for 3 dwellings on the plot is similar to the density of the 3 dwellings to the west of the site.

Residential amenity

- 7.8 In terms of the impact on adjoining occupiers, the properties will front onto the car park area to the east of the site. There will be a separation distance of 26 metres between the front of the proposed dwellings and the front of the dwellings on the opposite side of the car park. To the south of the site the side of plot 3 will face onto the car park. There will be a separation distance of 24 metres between the side of the plot 3 and the rear of properties to the south. The rear gardens of the proposed dwellings will back onto the public footpath that runs to the rear of the site and the front of nos. 104, 106 and 108 Nene Drive. These properties are staggered and there will be a separation distance of approximately 20 metres between them. To the north of the site the side of plot 1 sides onto the public footpath that wraps around the rear and side of the site and beyond this the front elevations of 62 and 64 Nene Walk. There is a separation distance of 10 metres between the side of the proposed dwellings and the properties to the north. This is the same as the relationship between the bungalows to the rear with properties to the north. Whilst it is acknowledged that there will be some overshadowing to the fronts of these properties, due to the single storey height of the proposal, the impact is not considered to be significant enough to warrant refusal.
- 7.9 In terms of overlooking it is noted that there will be side windows in the north and south elevations. These will be secondary windows to living/dining/kitchen areas. Due to the relationship between the proposal and the properties to the north, it is considered that the north side window should be conditioned to be obscure glazed to prevent overlooking. In addition a planning condition is recommended to remove permitted development rights for future extensions to enable the Local Planning Authority to assess any future extensions.

Design of the development and living conditions of future occupiers

- 7.10 The dwellings as proposed are considered to be of an appropriate design and would provide a good level of amenity for the future occupiers. They have been designed to comply with mobility home standards to provide homes for a specially identified need. Garden areas although small would provide an appropriate level of amenity space for future occupiers and are commensurate with surrounding properties. Due to the orientation of the dwellings, an appropriate outlook and level of daylight would be available from the rear of all the proposed houses.

Highway Safety and Parking

- 7.11 There are currently 21 communal spaces within the cul-de-sac. Proposed plans indicate that three disabled parking spaces will be introduced. Considering that the communal parking spaces would previously have been used by visitors to the community room the replacement by 3 one bedroomed dwellings would not significantly increase demand. It can be concluded that the proposal will not unduly impact on highway safety and will provide an appropriate level of parking for future residents. It is also noted that the comments received from the Local Highway Authority indicate no objections to the proposal.

Trees and Landscaping

- 7.12 An Arboricultural Statement has been submitted with the application which identifies that the proposed development will result in the removal 6 trees within the site. The trees are all small and are not of significant amenity value. It states that there loss can be mitigated with landscape planting in new gardens and verges. The Arboricultural Officer has no objections to the proposal on tree-related grounds.

Other Matters

- 7.13 Public Protection Officers have made comments that electric vehicle charging points should be provided and that boilers should meet a minimum standard. As there is currently no dedicated planning policy to support this, it is considered unreasonable to apply a planning condition to this effect.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 It is considered that the demolition of the community room has been adequately justified. The proposed design and appearance of the dwellings are acceptable subject to conditions. Moreover, the residential development of the site would contribute towards the Council's 5-year housing supply. The proposed development would be in keeping with the character of the local area and the overall relationship between the proposed and existing properties is acceptable and would not have any unacceptable adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. The parking arrangement is considered acceptable.
- 8.2 The proposal would therefore comply with Policies S1, S10 and H1 and RC2 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, saved Policies H6, H17 and E20 of the Northampton Local Plan and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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: (P) 01 Rev A, (P) 02 Rev A, (P) 03 Rev A, (P) 04, (P) 05, (P) 06 Rev A.

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

3. Details of all proposed external facing materials 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 to ensure that the development will harmonise with its surroundings in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

4. Full details of the method of the treatment of the external boundaries of the site together with individual plot boundaries shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, implemented prior to the first occupation of the buildings hereby permitted and retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the boundaries of the site are properly treated so as to secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no extensions or outbuildings shall be erected to the dwellings hereby permitted.

Reason: To prevent overdevelopment of the site and to safeguard the amenities of future residents, in accordance with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no additional windows shall be installed on the side elevations of the proposed development.

Reason: To safeguard the privacy of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

7. The side window in the north elevation shall be glazed with obscured glass to Level 3 or higher of the Pilkington scale of privacy or equivalent as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development hereby permitted is first occupied and thereafter retained in that form at all times.

Reason: To safeguard the privacy of the adjoining properties in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan

8. All construction works shall take place between 7:30am and 6pm on Mondays to Fridays and 8:30am and 1pm on Saturdays and no work on Sundays, Bank Holidays and Public Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of surrounding residents in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. The disabled parking spaces of the development hereby permitted as shown on the approved drawing no. (P) 03 Rev A shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the development and retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure adequate provision is made for people with disabilities in accordance with Policy H17 of the Northampton Local Plan.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 N/2018/0448 & PA/2017/0217

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The development is 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.

