

EAST AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

5th November 2014

Application Numbers: 14/02816/CT3, 14/02817/CT3 & 14/02818/CT3

Decisions Due by: 5th December 2014

Proposals: 14/02816/CT3

Provision of 7No. residents' parking spaces on existing grass verges.

14/02817/CT3

Provision of 10No. residents' parking spaces on existing grass verges.

14/02818/CT3

Provision of 7No. residents' parking spaces on existing grass verges.

Site Address: Highway verges outside Nos. 108-160 Pegasus Road, Oxford – **Appendix 1**

Ward: Blackbird Leys

Agent: Stewart Thorp

Applicant: Oxford City Council

These applications are required to be determined at Committee as the applicant is the City Council.

Recommendations:

ALL THREE APPLICATIONS BE APPROVED

For the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed development is considered to make a meaningful contribution towards the provision of much needed car parking facilities for local residents to help alleviate existing on-street parking pressure. Subject to a satisfactory scheme of planting, the proposals would not have a significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene as a result of the loss of public green space and existing trees. Consequently, on balance, the proposals would adequately preserve the streetscape and any harm to landscaping features would be more than outweighed by the benefits to the streetscene and local residential amenity as a result of reduced on-street car parking pressure. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with the requirements of all relevant policies of the development plan.
- 2 The Council considers that the proposal accords with the policies of the development plan as summarised below. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity. Any material harm that the development would otherwise give rise to can be offset by the conditions imposed.

Each planning permission being subject to the following conditions:

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Ground resurfacing to be SUDS compliant
- 4 Development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Tree Protection Plan
- 5 The development to be carried out in accordance with the construction measures set out in the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement
- 6 Prior to the car parking areas being brought into use, a landscaping scheme is required to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority
- 7 Management plan required to restrict parking to local residents only

Main Local Plan Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

CP1 - Development Proposals

CP9 - Creating Successful New Places

CP10 - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs

CP11 - Landscape Design

NE15 - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows

Core Strategy

CS18 - Urban design, town character, historic environment

Sites and Housing Plan

HP16 - Residential car parking

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Practice Guidance

Relevant Site History:

None

Representations Received:

Statutory and Internal Consultees:

No comments received.

Officers' Assessment:

Description of Application Sites and their Locality

1. The sites comprise three triangular shaped parcels of grass verge adjacent to each other to the front of three terraces of houses in Pegasus Road in Blackbird Leys opposite the site of the Leisure Centre. The verge outside Nos. 108 – 124 is separated from the verge the front of Nos. 126-140 by a footway that links through to houses at the rear. In turn the verge to the front of Nos. 142-160 is separated from that outside Nos. 126-140 by a residential side road that provides vehicular access to houses and car parking areas behind. Each verge has a handful of trees along the boundary with the footway.

Description of Proposed Development

2. The applications seek consent to develop parts of the three verges to provide 24 off-street car parking spaces for local residents as part of a wider City Council strategy for improving car parking arrangements within Blackbird Leys.

3. Officers' consider the following to be the principal determining issues in this case:

- Need for Car Parking;
- Impact on the Streetscene.

Need for Car Parking

4. Many of the roads within the Blackbird Leys estate are subject to significant parking pressure which partly stems from the lack of off-street car parking for its houses. When the estate was constructed in the 1950s levels of car ownership were far lower than they are today with the result that there was little off-street car parking provided for the houses. However, increased car ownership has led to cars being forced to park on the streets with the result that some of the roads are often congested adversely affecting traffic flows and often leaving local residents unable to park near their home.

5. In response to this parking pressure the City Council has entered into a strategy to try to provide areas for car parking for local residents on land that it owns. These applications form part of this wider strategy and follow a number of other recently approved schemes in Blackbird Leys.

6. The three verges lie to the front of terraces of houses that benefit from no dedicated off-street car parking with the result that cars are often left parking indiscriminately and haphazardly to the detriment of the amenity of local residents as well as the quality of the streetscene. The Blackbird Leys estate lies outside a designated district area with a consequent reduction in opportunity for convenient and sustainable access to services, amenities and employment opportunities. For this reason car ownership is higher than the city average and there is inadequate space available to park such cars. Officers therefore support the proposals to provide additional car parking providing that such car parking areas are restricted solely for

use by local residents. A condition is consequently recommended that requires the submission and agreement of a management plan that would need to set out how the car parking would be controlled and enforced.

Impact on the Streetscene

7. The Blackbird Leys estate was designed to feature wider and greener verges to soften the appearance of the houses and provide a balance between the built and natural environment. Such spaces were able to be provided because the level of car parking provision was low which reflected levels of car ownership at that time. Pegasus Road provides one of the main roads through the Blackbird Leys estate and is therefore well trafficked such that alterations to the streetscene could have a significant impact. Policies CP9 and CP10 of the Local Plan are material to the consideration of the merits of these applications and the policies, inter alia, require street frontages and streetscapes to be maintained or enhanced. Policies CP11 and NE15 of the Local Plan are also of relevance and require existing features of landscape importance to be retained and incorporated alongside new planting so that it is appropriate to the function and character of the surrounding area.

8. The green verges and their trees currently make a positive contribution to the street which, in combination with the greenery on the Blackbird Leys park boundary, balances successfully against the less aesthetically pleasing built development of the estate. The loss of some of this green space to provide off-street parking is therefore disappointing. However, the three schemes have been carefully designed to ensure that relatively generous proportions of the green verges remain as well as the majority of the existing trees. Whilst the proposals would result in the loss of two cherry trees to facilitate two of the access points from Pegasus Road, it is proposed to plant replacement trees as well as hedging and shrubbery around the car parking areas themselves to soften their appearance. Conditions are recommended to be imposed to secure this replacement planting as to require the relevant tree protection measures to be in place to prevent harm to any other trees. As a result, the overall net impact on the character and appearance of the streetscape will not be significant and, when balanced against the overriding need for additional car parking, officers consider the limited adverse impact on the streetscene to be outweighed by the overall benefits of the scheme to the local community. Consequently officers are satisfied that the proposals are generally consistent with the overall requirements of the policies of the development plan.

Other Matters

9. Each of the car parking spaces is of a size and layout that accords with that now expected by the Local Highway Authority and there is sufficient space for adequate manoeuvring within the site to enable safe access and egress. In this respect the proposals are considered to accord with the requirements of policies CP1 of the Local Plan and HP16 of the Sites and Housing Plan. The car parking spaces are laid out so that they are perpendicular to the orientation of the houses they serve which would generally prevent any prolonged disturbance for the occupiers of the adjacent houses caused by car headlights inadvertently shining into ground floor front facing windows. Moreover, to soften the appearance of the proposed car parking from both the street and neighbouring houses, shrubbery is proposed alongside the boundaries with the houses which should also act as something of a screen to alleviate any limited car headlight disturbance. Officers are therefore satisfied that the car parking proposed is of an acceptable standard and that it would not have an undue impact on the living conditions experienced by occupants of neighbouring houses.

Conclusion:

9. For the reasons set out above, the proposals would provide much needed car parking facilities for local residents which would outweigh any limited harm caused to the character and appearance of the streetscene. Committee is therefore recommended to resolve to grant planning permission for each of the three proposed developments subject to the conditions set out at the beginning of this report.

Human Rights Act 1998

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to approve, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Background Papers:

14/02816/CT3, 14/02817/CT3 & 14/02818/CT3

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Date: 23rd October 2014

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