

East Area Planning Committee

4th March 2015

**Application Number:** 15/00235/CT3

**Decision Due by:** 23rd March 2015

**Proposal:** Provision of 13no. residents parking spaces on existing grass verges.

**Site Address:** Site Of Verges At 55 To 98 Kestrel Crescent Oxford  
Oxfordshire

**Ward:** Northfield Brook

**Agent:** Mr Stewart Thorp

**Applicant:** Oxford City Council

---

**Recommendation:** East Area Planning Committee is recommended to approve the application for the reasons set out below and subject to conditions, including those listed below.

Reasons:

- 1 The proposal responds to the growing need to increase resident car parking spaces in the area and to prevent indiscriminate parking on grassed areas. Important trees will be retained and planting will be incorporated into the scheme. Officers were mindful of comments raised through consultation and conclude that the proposal is acceptable in design terms and would not cause any acceptable levels of harm to residential amenity. The proposal accords with the relevant policies of the local 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.

Conditions:

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Ground resurfacing - SUDS compliant
- 4 Tree Protection Plan (TPP) 2
- 5 Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) 2
- 6 Management and monitoring
- 7 Landscaping details
- 8 Oil/petrol filters

## **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:**

98/02064/NF - Green Hill Crowberry Road Sorrell Road Kestrel Crescent Blackbird Leys Estate - Free standing postal pouch box (Amended plans). REF 18th June 2001.

### **Representations Received:**

90 Kestrel Crescent – Great that new car parking spaces are being provided as there is a demand for them, however 8 spaces are not enough, there should be at least 9 or 10 spaces on the verge on the west side of Kestrel Crescent.

### **Statutory and Internal Consultees:**

None received.

### **Issues:**

Need for car parking

Impact upon street scene and trees

### **Officers Assessment:**

#### Application Site and Locality

1. The site comprises two parcels of grass covered highway verge to the front of houses (numbers 55 to 61 and 74 to 98) in Kestrel Crescent in Blackbird Leys. The houses to the west side of this part of Kestrel Crescent are separated from the road by generous verges which give the streetscene a lower-density character than other residential roads within the Blackbird Leys estate. As a result of parking pressure some of the verges have been used for indiscriminate car parking during evenings and weekends. In the past 1-2 years some of these verges have been converted to form off-street residents' parking areas as part of a wider City

Council scheme to reduce on-street parking pressure in the locality.

### Description of Proposed Development

2. The application seeks consent for the creation of three separate car parking areas within highway verges together with associated access. Eight parking spaces are proposed to the front of Nos. 74-98 and five parking spaces proposed at the front of Nos. 55 and 61 Kestrel Crescent. All hard surfacing is proposed to be porous brick paving.

### Need for Car Parking

3. Many of the roads within the Blackbird Leys estate are subject to significant parking pressure which, in part, stems from the lack of off-street car parking for its houses. When the estate was constructed in the 1950's, levels of car ownership were far lower than they are today and so little off-street car parking was 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 which leaves local residents frequently unable to park near their homes.
4. 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 within the Blackbird Leys estate. This application forms part of this wider strategy and follows a number of other recently approved similar schemes in Blackbird Leys.
5. The two verges lie to the front of semi-detached and terraces of houses that benefit from no dedicated off-street car parking. This results in cars being indiscriminately and haphazardly parked on the verge to the detriment of the amenity of local residents as well as the quality of the streetscene. The Blackbird Leys estate lies outside of 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.
6. A condition is consequently recommended that requires the submission and agreement of a management and monitoring plan that would need to set out how the car parking would be controlled and enforced.

### Impact on street scene and tress:

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 the time. Kestrel Crescent provides one of the main secondary 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 balances successfully against the housing terraces. The loss of some of this green space to provide off-street parking is therefore disappointing. However, the parking areas have been carefully designed to ensure that relatively generous proportions of the green verges remain as well as all of the existing trees. In addition, hedging and shrubbery is proposed around the car parking areas to soften their appearance. Conditions are recommended to be imposed to secure this replacement planting as well 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 substantial 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.

#### Other Matters

9. Each of the car parking spaces is of a size and layout that accords with that expected by the Local Highway Authority. 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 close in orientation to 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. However, 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.
10. 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.
11. In the previous applications for parking spaces in Blackbird leys, Thames Water has recommended that the parking areas be fitted with petrol/oil interceptors to prevent possible contamination of the surrounding environment, and therefore officers consider it reasonable to also apply a

condition here to reflect this.

### **Conclusion:**

For the reasons set out above, the proposals would provide much needed car parking facilities for local residents which is considered to outweigh any limited harm caused to the character and appearance of the area. Committee is therefore recommended to resolve to grant planning permission 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 grant permission officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

**Background Papers: 15/00235/CT3**

**Contact Officer:** Davina Sarac

**Date:** 24th February 2015

This page is intentionally left blank