

**West Area Planning Committee:**

10 November 2015

**Application Number:** 15/02223/CT4

**Decision Due by:** 15 October 2015

**Proposal:** Provision of 18No. residents' parking spaces on existing grass verges (Amended plan).

**Site Address:** Site Of Verges At 21 To 27 Chatham Road And 10 To 40 Fox Crescent, Site Plan **Appendix 1**

**Ward:** Hinksey Park

**Agent:** **Applicant:** Oxford City Council

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**Recommendation:** West Area Planning Committee is recommended to approve the application for the reasons set out below and subject to conditions 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. Replacement trees will be incorporated into the scheme to mitigate the loss of trees. The proposal is acceptable in design terms and would not cause any unacceptable levels of harm to residential amenity. The proposal accords with the relevant policies of the local development plan. There are no material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.
- 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 Development in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Parking in accordance with plans
- 4 TRO Amendment
- 5 Tree Protection Plan (TPP) 1
- 6 Landscape Plan
- 7 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

## **Main Local Plan Policies:**

### **Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016**

**CP1** - Development Proposals

**CP6** - Efficient Use of Land & Density

**CP8** - Design Development to Relate to its Context

**CP9** - Creating Successful New Places

**CP10** - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs

**CP11** - Landscape Design

### **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:**

Three representations received and are summarised below.

5 Fox Crescent, 40 Fox Crecent, 21 Chatham Road

#### General Comments

- Parking should be allocated to residents as parking congestion in the area is caused by commuters parking within the street
- Delighted to see that the council is looking to invest in the Fox Crescent/Chatham Road area.
- Very pleased to see that initial plans to fell a number of trees have been revised and that the leafy feel of the area will be maintained.
- Spaces should be located on the west side of the Fox Crescent green as cars parked on the north east side, where spaces are proposed, are routinely dirtied by birds in trees

#### Objections

- The green areas are a special feature of the area and make the two streets unique in the area and I hope we can avoid any changes.

## **Statutory and Internal Consultees:**

### Highways

The proposed parking proposal is acceptable to Oxfordshire County Council subject to appropriate conditions regarding parking being developed according to the specified plan and a £2500 sum in the form of a unilateral undertaking for the amendment of the Traffic Regulation Order to remove the double yellow lines from Fox Crescent.

### **Issues:**

Visual impact and trees

Highways

Residential amenity

### **Officers Assessment:**

### **Sustainability:**

1. All new spaces will be constructed to Sustainable Drainage Standards. The new spaces will make a purposeful and improved use of the existing space and help avoid the existing landscaping being gradually degraded.

### **Background to proposals**

2. Most of the parking provision in the City's heartland social housing estates was constructed as the estates were built in the 1950s, 60s and 70s when car ownership levels were lower than today. In the 1980s, additional parking bays were constructed primarily in Blackbird Leys and some other high density areas as the demand for parking grew.
3. Parking pressure on the estates is continuing to increase, being one of the top three issues raised by residents at Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAG's) and in resident surveys.
4. Car ownership on the estates is now commonplace with many families having more than one car and the increased number of Houses of Multi-occupation (HMO's) also adds to the pressure.
5. Parking hotspot locations, particularly at high and low rise flats and cul-de-sacs, have resulted in residents parking on grass verges and larger grassed areas causing damage to the surface. Oxford City Council initially adopted a "defensive" approach by installing bollards and trip rails to preserve the look of the estate grassed areas. However, more recently, the City Council has accepted the need for more "on grass" parking by installing Grass Grid systems at various locations. These "grass grids" have had some success but are not a permanent solution. There is strong interest in more permanent solutions at Parish Council level as well as from the residents of the estates.

6. The proposed scheme would provide formal parking areas on existing grassed areas. Providing a formal parking area with level access should discourage indiscriminate parking on grassed areas which causes damage to the surface, as well as improving highway safety by formalising accesses. This is a continuation of car parking schemes recently approved in locations across the City (Blackbird Leys Road, Normandy Crescent, Chillingworth Crescent, Redmoor Close and four schemes at various points along Pegasus Road).
7. The new spaces would be unallocated.

#### **Site Location and Description:**

8. Chatham Road is a short street located off the east side of Abingdon Road. Houses are terraced in fours on either side of the street and there are two small, rectangular greens either side of the street at around its mid-point. The green on the north side of the street contains a small tree.
9. Fox Crescent is located perpendicular to Chatham Road with houses located on plot around the crescent. A green is located on the opposite of these houses and is split into two by a narrow road. The north side of the green contains three mature trees and the south side of the green contains two mature trees. Vehicular traffic is restricted within the crescent by a planter and by bollards adjoining the west of the green to prevent a rat run between Abingdon Road and Weirs Lane and Donnington Bridge Road.

#### **Proposal**

10. It is proposed to provide 18 no. off road parking spaces for residents' vehicles. Six bay spaces are located on the green on the north side of Chatham Road, one of which is a disabled space, five parallel spaces are proposed on the north east side of the green of Fox Crescent and seven bay spaces are proposed to be located on the west side of the green of Fox Crescent.
11. The proposal was revised to remove the gate proposed in the original plans due to impact on the streetscene. The planter located within Fox Crescent is proposed to be retained but reduced in height, with the addition of a tree or shrub planting.

#### **Visual Impact and Trees**

12. This site has a number of trees that are important to the visual amenity of the area, particularly at the Fox Crescent greens. It is proposed to remove the large cherry tree within the green at Fox Crescent and a young cherry tree will be removed from the north green of Chatham Road. The Tree Officer has raised no objections and has stated that the removal of trees is justified due to the condition of the large cherry tree in that it is close to the end of its natural life and the young cherry tree being a small tree that can be easily replaced. To mitigate the loss of trees a condition has been attached to cover re-planting with two new trees. The exact positioning of these trees will be covered by this condition in the form of a landscape.

13. The reduction in height of the planter on the east side of Fox Crescent will not adversely affect the streetscene. Either a tree or shrub planting will be planted within the planter and the type of planting will be covered by condition in the form of a landscape plan. Either of these options will help to enhance the streetscene at this location.
14. The parallel bays proposed on the north east side of Fox Crescent cover a small amount of the green at this point. The seven bay spaces proposed on the west side of the southern green at Fox Crescent cover a sufficient amount of the green and will be broken up by an area of shrubs into chunks of four and three bays.
15. The bays proposed on the north side of Chatham Road cover an appropriate amount of the green and the extent of hardsurfacing will not have an adverse impact on the streetscene at this location by making the area feeling too car dominated.
16. It is considered that the new parking and the potential loss of trees would not harm the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would reduce visual intrusion caused by indiscriminate parking by formalising it within a landscaped setting thereby enhancing the existing street scene.
17. The proposal will not have an unacceptable visual impact on the area and accords with Policies CP1, CP6, CP 8, CP9, CP10 and NE15 of the Oxford Local Plan, policy CS18 of the Core Strategy and policy HP16 of the Sites and Housing Plan.

## **Highways**

18. Highways have been consulted on the proposal and have raised no objections to the amended plans and state that they are acceptable and will not cause highway safety concerns.
19. There have been comments raised in representations regarding whether spaces can be allocated to specific properties. Due to the spaces being provided within the public highway they cannot be allocated to specific properties.

## **Residential Amenity**

20. The cars parking on the north side of Chatham Road and three of the bays proposed on the west side of Fox Crescent will be facing the windows of the housing opposite these parking spaces. There would therefore be potential for glare from headlights into these windows. However, this will satisfactorily be reduced or eliminated by the proposed shrub planting. The proposed bays will be overlooked by the surrounding properties which will create natural surveillance. Officers consider the proposal would not significantly harm residential amenities in this instance. The proposal therefore accords with Policy CP10 of the Oxford Local Plan.

## **Conclusion:**

21. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the relevant policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, and Sites and Housing Plan 2026 and therefore officer's recommendation to the Members of the East Area Planning Committee is to approve the development.

## **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:** 15/02223/CT4

**Contact Officer:** Matthew Watson

**Extension:** 2160

**Date:** 27th October 2015