

East Area Planning Committee:

3rd February 2016

Application Number: 15/03430/CT3

Decision Due by: 28th January 2016

Proposal: Provision of 12no. residents' parking spaces on existing grass verges

Site Address: Land Fronting 136 To 162 Blackbird Leys Road, Site Plan - **Appendix 1**

Ward: Northfield Brook

Agent:

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. No trees will be affected by the proposed parking spaces. No objections have been received and officers 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. 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 In accordance with approved plans
- 3 Parking in accordance with plans
- 4 Tree Protection Plan
- 5 Tree Replacement if Required
- 6 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

Main Local Plan Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

- CP1** - Development Proposals
- CP6** - Efficient Use of Land & Density
- CP8** - Design Developmt to Relate to its Context
- CP9** - Creating Successful New Places
- CP10** - Siting Developmnt to Meet Functionl Needs
- CP11** - Landscape Design

Core Strategy

- CS18_** - Urb design, town character, historic env

Sites and Housing Plan

- HP16_** - Residential car parking

Other Material Considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning Practice Guidance

Relevant Site History:

None

Representations Received:

None

Statutory and Internal Consultees:

Highways

The proposed parking proposal is acceptable to Oxfordshire County Council subject to an appropriate condition regarding parking being developed according to the specified plan.

Tree Officer

No objection to the proposal subject to a condition being attached that states a tree protection plan should be submitted to, and approved in writing by the local planning authority before work commences on site.

Issues:

- Visual impact and trees
- Highways
- Residential amenity

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 it was less usual for social housing tenants to own cars. 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. The original purpose of grass verges was to give some outlook to occupants onto green areas, in order to break up the monotony of structures within estates. However, these grass verges provided no usable amenity space and have been used for informal car parking.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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 truly permanent solution. There is strong interest in more permanent solutions at Parish Council level as well as from the residents of the estates.
7. 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 (Carpenter Close, Normandy Crescent, Chillingworth Crescent, Redmoor Close and four schemes at various points along Pegasus Road).
8. The new spaces would be unallocated.

Officers Assessment:

Site Location and Description:

9. The grass verge is located on the south-west side of Blackbird Leys Road,

where the road runs between its junctions with Cuddeson Way and Pegasus Road.

Proposal

10. It is proposed to provide 12no. off road parking spaces for residents' vehicles, all of which are located on the south-west side of this section of Blackbird Leys Road, together with landscape enhancement to discourage informal parking on green spaces. No trees are proposed to be removed. A number of trees are located within close proximity of the proposed spaces.

Visual impact and trees

11. The bays are broken up into two chunks of six spaces at the north-west end and south-west end of the verge. The north-west end of the verge comprises two sets of three spaces. The south-west end of the verge comprises of one set of two spaces and one set of four spaces.
12. With the groups of bays broken into two sections this prevents the area feeling too car dominated and a useable proportion of the green space is retained in the proposal for residents.
13. The proposal maintains the grassed area to the front of the houses and proposes shrub planting to soften the impact and prevent glare from headlights.
14. It is, overall, considered that the new parking and 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 and making efficient use of the verge which is not usable as amenity space.
15. The proposal 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

16. 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 issues.

Residential amenity

17. Parked cars would face towards the windows of housing located on the south-west side of this part of Blackbird Leys Road. 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 No objections have been received from residents. Officers consider the proposal would not significantly harm residential amenities in this case. The proposal therefore accords with Policy CP10 of the Oxford Local Plan.

Conclusion:

18. 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: 15/03430/CT3

Contact Officer: Matthew Watson

Extension: 2160

Date: 22nd January 2016

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