

East Area Planning Committee:

6th April 2016

Application Number: 16/00048/CT3

Decision Due by: 4th March 2016

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

Site Address: Land Fronting 2 to 12 Jasmine Close, Oxford

Ward: Blackbird Leys

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 Landscaping
- 4 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:

None

Statutory and Internal Consultees:

Highways

Concerns that the proposed development will not deal with existing car parking issues within the road as there is unrestricted parking in the road that could lead to the spaces being obstructed. On this basis, unable to support the proposed scheme.

Issues:

Visual impact and trees

Highways

Residential amenity

Background to proposals

1. 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 car ownership was lower. In the 1980s, additional parking bays were constructed primarily in Blackbird Leys and some other high density areas as the demand for parking grew.
2. The original purpose of grass verges was to give some outlook to occupants onto green areas, in order to add visual interest to the streetscape. However, these grass verges provided no usable amenity space for play and recreation

and, in many cases have been used for informal car parking.

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 has increased, with some householder have 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 truly 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 (Carpenter Close, Chillingworth Crescent, Redmoor Close and four schemes at various points along Pegasus Road).
7. The new spaces would be unallocated.

Officers Assessment:

Site Location and Description:

8. The grass verge is located in Jasmine Close, at the eastern side of Blackbird Leys. The existing verge does not contain trees but is mowed grass. The area is used informally as parking (and is rutted as a result).

Proposal

9. It is proposed to provide 10no. off road parking spaces for residents' vehicles, all of which are located on the eastern side of this section of Jasmine Close, together with landscape enhancement to discourage informal parking on green spaces. Five trees are proposed as part of the development.

Visual impact and trees

10. The bays are broken up into three different groups, the impact of this would ensure that the cars would not dominate the streetscene.
11. 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. The proposed planting would also ensure that there would not be informal parking on the remaining areas of verge. Officers have included a recommendation that a condition be included that would secure the submission of a detailed landscaping scheme prior to commencement.
12. 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.
13. 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

14. Oxfordshire County Council, as the Local Highway Authority has been consulted on the proposals; they are not supportive of the scheme because they have suggested that the lack of controlled parking on the street means that the proposed resident parking spaces could be obstructed. No objections have been received in relation to impact on highway safety. Officers have been mindful of these concerns but recommend that the proposals represent an opportunity to enhance an area that is already being used informally for parking and on balance the development would be an improvement that could positively contribute towards parking capacity in the area.

Residential amenity

15. Parked cars would face towards the windows of houses on Jasmine Close (on either side of the road, depending on the way the cars are parked). 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 and by the presence of low boundary walls. 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:

16. 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: 16/00048/CT3

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Date: 21st March 2016

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