

**East Area Planning Committee**

-6th November 2013

**Application Number:** 13/02286/CT3

**Decision Due by:** 29th October 2013

**Proposal:** Provision of 19 residents' parking spaces on existing grass verges.

**Site Address:** Land Fronting 1 To 21 Monks Close (**Site plan: Appendix 2**)

**Ward:** Northfield Brook

**Agent:** Mr Stewart Thorp

**Applicant:** Oxford City Council

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## **Recommendation:**

APPLICATION BE APPROVED

For the following 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. New trees will be incorporated into the scheme. 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.
- 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.

subject to the following conditions, which have been imposed for the reasons stated:-

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Ground resurfacing - SUDS compliant
- 4 Details of verge protection measures to be approved

## **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

### **Other Material Considerations:**

National Planning Policy Framework

### **Representations Received:**

None

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

Blackbird Leys Parish Council – no objection

Highways Authority – no objection

Oxfordshire County Council Environmental Services – Drainage - drain the proposed parking places using SUDs methods as shown

### **Issues:**

Visual impact

Residential amenity

Trees

Access

### **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 unusual 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. 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, and more recently, the City Council have 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 schemes would provide formal parking areas on existing grassed areas in five locations across the City. 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. The five areas are:
  - Blackbird Leys Road, Blackbird Leys
  - Monks Close, Blackbird Leys
  - Normandy Crescent, Lye Valley
  - Chillingworth Crescent, Woodfarm
  - Redmoor Close, Littlemore
7. The new spaces would be unallocated.

## **Officers Assessment:**

### Site description

8. The application site comprises land at Monks Close in Blackbird Leys, a cul-de-sac off Merlin Road. Cars currently park in the turning area and on grass verges, damaging the surface.

## Proposal

9. It is proposed re-design the existing cul-de-sac to create 19 no. residents' car parking spaces along with landscape enhancement and grass verge protection measures to discourage informal parking that currently takes place on adjacent green spaces.

## Visual impact and trees

10. The entrance to the Close and the area around the turning head will provide the parking spaces, but will still retain some grass verges. The area of grass at the western end will be retained. A loss of some of the grass making up the green areas in front of the houses will take place, but the siting of the spaces has been designed in order to achieve the required number of spaces which preserves the open and green character of the Close. Where appropriate, to discourage further informal parking on the grass, the erection of timber posts will be incorporated into the scheme. A condition is suggested requiring details of the timber posts to be approved to ensure they are an appropriate height and would not lead to a sense of enclosure. In addition, to reduce the impact of the new spaces and to mitigate against the loss of grass, some shrub planting and three new trees will be introduced.
11. Overall, the proposal retains a high proportion of green space in the Close and the character of the close would not be significantly altered.

## Access

12. If required in the future, one or two spaces could be converted into dedicated disabled parking bays.

## **Conclusion: Approve**

## **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.

**Contact Officer:** Rona Knott

**Extension:** 2157

**Date:** 24th October 2013

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