

Agenda Item 6

East Area Planning Committee

2nd April 2014

Application Number: 14/00519/CT3

Decision Due by: 23rd April 2014

Proposal: Alterations to existing front elevation including insertion of new door to provide disabled WC.

Site Address: Public Conveniences, Knights Road Oxford Oxfordshire

Ward: Northfield Brook

Agent: N/A

Applicant: Oxford City Council

This application is before the Planning Committee as it has been submitted by Oxford City Council and relates to a Council owned premises.

Recommendation:

The East Area Planning Committee is recommended to grant planning permission for the following reasons:

- 1 The proposal for alterations to the public conveniences on Knights Road is considered to form an appropriate visual relationship with the building and surrounding area whilst resulting in an improvement to the public facilities, making them accessible to all members of the community. At the time of writing no objections have been received and the proposal is considered to comply with policies CP1, CP8 and CP13 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and policies CS 18 and CS19 of the Oxford Core Strategy. Officers therefore recommend that planning permission should be granted.
- 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 must be begun within three years of the date of the decision
- 2 The Materials used in the external elevations should match that if the existing.

Main Planning Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

CP1 - Development Proposals

CP8 - Design Development to Relate to its Context

CP10 - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs

CP13 - Accessibility

Core Strategy

CS18 - Urban design, town character, historic environment

CS19 - Community safety

Sites and Housing Plan

MP1- Model Policy

HP9 - Design, Character and Context

Other Material Considerations:

1. National Planning Policy Framework

Relevant Site History:

- 60/09632/A H- Public conveniences- Approved 26.7.60

Representations Received:

No third party comments have been received during the consultation period to date. At the time of writing the consultation period for this application had not expired. It will however have expired by the time of the Committee meeting. Any responses received will be verbally relayed to the Committee at the meeting.

Officers Assessment:

Site Description and Proposal:

1. The application site comprises of a brick built single storey building with a flat roof that doubles as a balcony and access to the residential flats situated above the adjacent row of local shops, to the north east of the application site. The building contains both male and female public conveniences accessed by two doors fronting on to Knights Road in Blackbird Leys.
2. The application is seeking planning permission to secure alterations to the existing front elevation of the building by inserting two new doors, as well as internal reconfiguration to include the provision of a disabled WC and the blocking up of the existing windows on the rear elevation to create a secure store and service area.

Design:

3. The building is fairly utilitarian in design and function. It currently has two doors on the Knights Road elevation, one to access the female WCs and one to access the male WCs. There are high level windows in between the two doors which currently have metal grilles over the exterior to deter vandalism. The public conveniences are set back slightly from the main road and situated south east of a parade of three local shops.
4. The proposal will result in the addition of two extra doors on the front elevation; one to the disabled WC, one to the male WC, one to the female WC and one to the store which leads to the rear of the building. The proposed new doors and frames are in timber with a sheet metal facing to be painted in Oxford Blue. New pvc fascia will be installed in white and the new brickwork will be finished in bricks to match that of the existing. The paving slabs immediately in front of the building will need to be adjusted slightly to provide level access to the disabled WC.
5. Policy CP1, of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS 18 of the Core Strategy state that new development should respect the character and appearance of the area and be acceptable in terms of access, highway safety and pedestrian movements. It is considered the proposals do respect the character of the area as there are varying styles and different facades and shop fronts along this small stretch of the street which make for an interesting visual street scene. The replacement doors in timber frames and the general refurbishment of the building will improve the current facilities and use materials of a good quality which will help enhance the building within this local street scene.
6. Policy CP 8 of the Oxford Local Plan states that new buildings should relate to their setting and connect to and be integrated with, the wider area and form an appropriate visual relationship with the wider area. Currently the building appears run down and uninviting; the removal of the caged windows and inclusion of the disabled WC will help this building be better integrated with the wider area.
7. Policy CS 19 of the Core Strategy relates to community safety and states that new developments are expected to promote safe and attractive environments which maximise natural surveillance. The reconfiguration of the WCs so that the doors all open directly out on to the street is considered to result in a more attractive environment whilst also improving the natural surveillance in the immediate vicinity as no longer having communal areas will mitigate against any loitering or antisocial behaviour.

Accessibility:

8. Policy CP13 of the Oxford Local plan considers that all proposals provide suitable means of access for all users including members of society with disabilities. This includes access to public facilities such as toilets. The policy says that permission will only be granted for proposals that make reasonable provision for access for all members of the community. This proposal includes level access, wide doorways and low level sink and toilet with grab rail so that it meets the requirements of elderly or disabled users.

Conclusion:

9. Taking into account the above considerations the proposal is considered to result in enhancing the street scene by the introduction of higher quality materials in the refurbishment and will improve the integration and visual quality of the local environment while mitigating against the potential for antisocial behaviour. There have been no objections raised during the consultation of this application at the time of writing the report and officers consider the improvements to these public facilities to make them accessible to all members of the community, should be supported. The proposal complies with policies CP1, CP8 and CP13 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and policies CS 18 and CS19 of the Oxford Core Strategy. Officers therefore recommend the Committee grant planning permission, subject to conditions.

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.

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Date: 19th March 2014