

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	Full Planning Committee - 30/06/2015	Item No: 5.1
Report Originator	Christina Riley Senior Development Officer	Application No: KET/2014/0591 & 0592
Wards Affected	St. Peters	
Location	Convent Of Our Lady, Hall Lane, Kettering	
Proposal	Full Application: 68 no. dwellings comprising 10 no. conversions from listed buildings, 56 no. new build and 2 no. refurbishments. Landscaping to include the restoration of the gardens and pond to Bryn Haford. Highways and drainage works	
Applicant	WR (NI) Property Realisations Limited	

Officers Addendum Report for KET/2014/0591 and KET/2014/0592

UPDATE FOR COMMITTEE

The DEVELOPMENT MANAGER RECOMMENDS that the applications be APPROVED subject to a S106 Obligation (with minor addition) and conditions as stated

Officers Report

This application was reported to the Planning Committee on 7th April 2015 (see Appendix A for copies of Reports) when Members resolved to approve the planning and listed building consent applications subject to:

- (i) The outcome of further negotiations between the applicant and the Local Planning Authority with appropriate technical advice from the Highway Authority regarding the possibility of highway improvements at Hall Lane or at junction with Northampton Road;
- (ii) A completed S106 obligation; and
- (iii) Conditions stated in the Committee reports.

An investigative meeting has taken place on site with representatives of the Highway Authority, the Local Planning Authority, the applicants and their Highway engineer. The possibility of locating a mini-roundabout at the junction of Hall Lane and Northampton Road was investigated. This was an option put forward by local residents during the consultation event held by the applicants before the application was submitted. It was also suggested through consultation undertaken by the Local Planning Authority as part of the application process.

The professional consideration of potential changes to the highway have also included the written and drawn suggestion (of a roundabout/ footway changes) by a local resident in the few days before the 7th April Committee; plus all of the other highway issues raised at the Committee that were of concern to Members and the public who were represented on those matters.

As a result of technical investigation and full consideration of these matters the following conclusions have been reached:

The suggestion of a mini-roundabout at the junction of Hall Lane/Northampton Road

Northamptonshire Highways including their Design Team considered the provision of a mini-roundabout with the appreciation that it has been asked for in response to concerns arising from the Committee meeting and that an offer had been made by the developer to investigate a solution which may provide assurance to existing residents that something is being done at this junction.

However, it is Northamptonshire Highways considered assessment that this is not a feasible option. It would not be possible to successfully build a mini roundabout at the Hall Lane / Northampton Road junction due to a number of factors:

1. Most importantly, the detrimental impact on traffic flows along Northampton Road i.e. a minor arm with right turning vehicles would force traffic on Northampton Road to give way. Similarly, traffic turning right into Hall Lane would force the traffic going out of the town to have to give way resulting in a higher impact on traffic flows on the main road
2. The ineffectiveness of a roundabout for traffic wishing to enter a queue on Northampton Road
3. The potential approach speeds of vehicles still being too high along Northampton Road
4. The proximity of the existing private access at the apex of the junction – no roundabout design could satisfactorily accommodate this feature
5. The significant cost of relocating the fibre optic services due to the need to laterally shift the road for deflection (i.e. speed reduction) purposes.
6. Signals have also been discounted as inappropriate at this location (not enough flows from Hall Lane)

It is clear from the above response that the roundabout suggestion cannot be supported; whilst cost is mentioned there are a number of other important issues which would prevent a mini-roundabout in this location being both safe and effective.

Firstly, the existing private access (to 99 Northampton Road) could not be safely included within a design for a mini-roundabout. In addition a roundabout in this location would result in more 'stop-start' traffic movement along Northampton Road, which is one of the key entrances into Kettering from the west. Thirdly, there can be no guarantee that a new roundabout would better manage the traffic flows either along Northampton Road or for traffic accessing onto Northampton Road from Hall Lane, or the roads which lead off it. For example, with insufficient traffic from Hall Lane at any one time, traffic on

Northampton Road would still take priority,

In other words the roundabout proposal would not achieve easier access onto Northampton Road from Hall Lane which it seems from consultation responses is one of the primary aims that local residents have for it.

Narrowing of the footway near the junction (as implied in sketch from local resident)

The possibility of narrowing footways to make a larger junction has also been investigated, but this would reduce the footways by an unacceptable amount and has therefore, also been discounted.

Other suggestions

The idea of improving the surface of the highway at the point of access to 99 Northampton Road has not been discounted. Whilst it would need to remain a suitable vehicular access, dropped kerbs and a surface that visually led pedestrians around that corner could be considered. The Applicant has indicated that they would meet the cost of this. Near the junction of Hall Lane and Northampton Road the narrowing of the 'pedestrian verge adjacent to a hedge on the east side of 99 Northampton Road does require pedestrians to use the west side footway for at least a short stretch. However, with improved surface and dropped kerbs these minor changes could be a benefit.

Conclusions

The Local Highway Authority has not objected to the application and has now reviewed and considered in detail possibilities to improve the Hall Lane/Northampton Road junction. They have determined that neither a mini-roundabout nor a narrowing of the footways (to increase the size of the junction) would have benefit on the free flow of traffic to Northampton Road. In fact the suggested possibilities would serve to reduce the free flow of traffic, contrary to the expectations of those raising concerns about traffic.

The traffic impacts arising from this proposed development have been considered recognising traffic flows that could start up any time arising from the extant or last use of the property including a school. The Highway Authority in particular has considered the impacts of the proposals and found no reason to object to it. The requirement for a residential Travel Plan strategy and a site close to public transport and within a short walk of the town centre will also provide realistic alternative options for some to walk or cycle.

Having considered the highways issues in a thorough way, the advice to Committee is that there are no highway reasons to warrant refusal of this application or the proposals whilst at the same time provision can be made through the S106 to improve the footway corner adjacent to 99 Northampton Road which is expected to have benefit.

It must be stressed that the listed buildings of architectural and local historical significance, through Charles Wicksteed's association, have been in a perilous

state for a number of years. Until the current owners invested in their protection, it appeared that these buildings would likely to have been lost. There is now a realistic opportunity not just to save these and see them reused, but for a financially viable proposal of very good quality housing to offer a promising future for this site.

The Listed Buildings on site are still in an extremely poor condition. The applicant's stewardship of the site continues to counter further deterioration to the buildings, (including making the building weather proof and security teams visiting the site regularly) but without further investment in their fabric and the buildings actually being used, the complete loss of these buildings will be inevitable. These applications may represent the last chance to save these important heritage assets

Recommendation:

It is therefore recommended that the resolution of the Committee that they are minded to grant planning permission and listed building consent subject to a S106 and stated conditions is now endorsed with the addition of minor changes to the footway at the vehicular access to 99 Northampton Road.

Background Papers

Title of Document:

Date:

Contact Officer:

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Previous Reports/Minutes

Ref: KET/2015/0591 and 0592

Date: 7 April 2015