

Parish: Northallerton
Ward: Northallerton North & Brompton
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Committee date: 23 August 2018
Officer dealing: Mr P Jones
Target date: 6 September 2018

18/01394/FUL

Creation of 32 additional car parking spaces.
At Hambleton District Council, Civic Centre Stone Cross, Northallerton Road
For Hambleton District Council

This application is referred to Planning Committee because the Council is the applicant

1.0 SITE, CONTEXT AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The application site comprises the car parking and landscaped areas around the Council's offices at Stone Cross and serving the Hambleton Leisure Centre. The site is dominated by the Civic Centre building and the adjacent Leisure Centre, with car parking areas interspersed with herbaceous planting, grassed areas with tree planting.
- 1.2 The nearest independent residential properties are on Brompton Road, over 150m away. The Civic Centre caretaker's accommodation is immediately adjacent to the Leisure Centre.
- 1.3 The application has come about owing to additional pressures on parking at the Civic Centre and the Leisure Centre.
- 1.4 The existing car park provides a total of 254 spaces and the proposed development would increase this provision to 286 spaces, an increase of 32 spaces. The additional parking would be set out in three blocks across the site. The largest, providing 22 additional spaces, would be created in a grassed area in the north of the site, near to the caretaker's accommodation. An additional five spaces would be near the Brompton Road frontage, and the dedicated parking for the Leisure Centre would be extended southward by six bays.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT HISTORY

- 2.1 90/0555/FUL – Extension to swimming pool; Granted 5 April 1990.
- 2.2 17/00370/FUL - Single storey extension to provide additional fitness suite & toning studio spaces together with an accessible WC provision and a 24 hour access doorway; internal refurbishment works to revamp the existing changing areas, and provide new dance & group cycle/multi-purpose studios together with a new platform lift provision from the main entrance area; Granted 31 March 2017.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 The relevant policies are:

Core Strategy Policy CP1 - Sustainable development
Core Strategy Policy CP2 - Access
Core Strategy Policy CP16 - Protecting and enhancing natural and man-made assets
Core Strategy Policy CP17 - Promoting high quality design
Core Strategy Policy CP19 - Recreational facilities and amenity open space
Development Policies DP1 - Protecting amenity
Development Policies DP3 - Site accessibility

Development Policies DP4 - Access for all
Development Policies DP5 - Community facilities
Development Policies DP16 - Specific measures to assist the economy and employment
Development Policies DP31 - Protecting natural resources: biodiversity/nature conservation
Development Policies DP32 - General design
Development Policies DP33 - Landscaping
Development Policies DP37 - Open space, sport and recreation
National Planning Policy Framework - published 24 July 2018

4.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Northallerton Town Council – No observations.
- 4.2 Highway Authority – No objection.
- 4.3 Internal Drainage Board – No objection.
- 4.4 Public comments – None received.

5.0 OBSERVATIONS

- 5.1 The main issues to consider are: (i) whether the principle of development in this location is acceptable; and the impact of the development on (ii) the character and appearance of the site; (iii) flooding; (iv) road safety and; (v) residential amenity.

Principle

- 5.2 The site is within the Development Limits of Northallerton. Core Policy 19 and Development Policy 37 of the Hambleton Local Development Framework seek to support the enhancement of existing recreational assets, whilst DP3 and DP4 seek to ensure that development is appropriately provided for in terms of access. The principle of access and parking improvements for the Civic Centre and Leisure Centre are therefore supported by Local Development Framework policy.

Character and appearance

- 5.3 One of Hambleton's strategic planning objectives, set out in The Core Strategy Local Development Document (2007), is "To protect and enhance the historic heritage and the unique character and identity of the towns and villages by ensuring that new developments are appropriate in terms of scale and location in the context of settlement form and character."
- 5.4 Policies CP17 and DP32 require the highest quality of creative, innovative and sustainable design for buildings and landscaping that take account of local character and settings, promote local identity and distinctiveness and are appropriate in terms of use, movement, form and space.
- 5.5 The National Planning Policy Framework Planning supports this approach and states that planning permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.
- 5.6 The applicant indicates that the occupancy level of the Civic Centre has gradually increased since around 2012 as the re-organisation of Council Office accommodation has allowed outside organisations to licence space within the building, with fee income supporting the operating costs of the building. The co-location of four

National Health Service and housing organisations in the Civic Centre has increased the occupancy of the building.

- 5.7 As a public building the Civic Centre plays host to civic events and meetings in relation to its governance and services, for example Council meetings and Planning Committee, it also hosts regional officer group and public sector services meetings in connection with Council services as well as local Parish and Town Council forums and Leisure and School groups.
- 5.8 The Northallerton Leisure Centre was extended during the autumn and winter of 2017/18 with additional features including the creation of a new gym, activity suites and toning areas, along with health initiatives to increase activity and exercise levels in the population, these have combined to increase the attendance levels at the Centre.
- 5.9 The applicant states that the District Council encourages its employees, occupants and visitors and Leisure Centre users to use public transport or alternative transport to cars, though it is recognised that Northallerton is at the heart of rural North Yorkshire. The audience for the Civic Centre and Leisure Centre in terms of both occupants and users stretch well beyond Northallerton so a proportion of the additional occupants and visitors arrive in vehicles which need to be accommodated.
- 5.10 The proposed development would result in the loss of areas of landscaping which serve to soften the appearance of the buildings and parking areas and contribute to the quality and character of the site. The site generally has a verdant feel owing to the maturity of landscaping and trees on the site. In removing elements of this landscaping to facilitate the additional car parking spaces some of this character would be lost to the detriment of the character and appearance of the site as a whole. However, it is noted that many areas of landscaping within the site have failed, where they conflict with pedestrian desire lines or where planting has been carried out under dense tree canopies. The minor harm caused by the loss of the landscaping must be weighed alongside the other factors identified in this report and the opportunity presented by the application to secure replacement planting.

Flooding

- 5.11 The applicant states that the additional parking spaces would be created on areas of ground currently laid out as grass or landscaping within the areas allocated to car parking and would not encroach onto the playing fields, which is land designated for recreation. The car park surfacing would utilise permeable paving techniques to ensure surface water flood risk is not increased.
- 5.12 The Internal Drainage Board, which has control over the drainage network to which the Civic Centre site drains, is satisfied that the drainage for the proposed development is acceptable.
- 5.13 Given the proposed use of permeable surfaces and soakaways the proposed development is considered to have no detrimental impact in terms of drainage or flooding.

Road safety

- 5.14 The applicant is concerned that the increased usage of the Leisure Centre and increased occupancy of the offices have both contributed to the need to create additional parking spaces within the Stone Cross site. It is stated that if the additional vehicles are not accommodated on the site there is a risk of inappropriate or nuisance parking both within the site and on the nearby public highway.

- 5.15 The proposed development of additional car parking spaces on the site would reduce the risk for the requirement for on-street parking in the vicinity of the Civic Centre and so the proposed development is considered to have a beneficial impact in these terms.
- 5.16 The Highway Authority has no objection to the proposal.

Amenity

- 5.17 The application is for a relatively small alteration to the car parking areas which are a significant distance from independent residential properties on Northallerton Road. It should be noted that the Civic Centre's caretaker's house is within the site and the amenity of the occupier of this dwelling must also be considered.
- 5.18 The main change in terms of potential impact on residential amenity is the increase in activity as a result of the additional parking provision, although it should be noted that the additional spaces are not designed to facilitate greater use of the site but to address problems associated with its current level of use. The level of activity anticipated leads to the conclusion that the proposed development would have no significant impact on residential amenity.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 That subject to any outstanding consultations permission is **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:
1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.
 2. The permission hereby granted shall not be undertaken other than in complete accordance with the drawing(s) numbered C/110/CP/787 received by Hambleton District Council on 04 July 2018 unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 3. The parking spaces hereby approved shall not be brought into use until a detailed landscaping scheme indicating the type, height, species and location of all new trees and shrubs, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The spaces shall not be used after the end of the first planting and seeding seasons following the approval of the landscaping scheme, unless the approved scheme has been completed. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years of planting die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced with others of similar size and species.

The reasons for the above conditions are:

1. To ensure compliance with Sections 91 and 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and where appropriate as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. In order that the development is undertaken in a form that is appropriate to the character and appearance of its surroundings and in accordance with the Development Plan Policies DP1 and DP32.
3. In order to mitigate the loss of current landscaped areas and to contribute to character, appearance and sense of place in accordance with LDF Policies CP17 and DP33.