

Southampton City Planning & Sustainability
Planning and Rights of Way Panel meeting 15th March 2011
Planning Application Report of the Planning and Development Manager

Application address: Land opposite Portswood Primary School, Corner of Brickfield Road and Somerset Road			
Proposed development: Change of use of the land to create 17 allotment plots with associated access and parking to include the formation of a new vehicular and pedestrian access from Somerset Road following the closure of the existing access points.			
Application number	11/00135/FUL	Application type	FUL
Case officer	Jenna Turner	Public speaking time	5 minutes
Last date for determination:	25.03.11	Ward	Portswood
Reason for Panel Referral:	Departure from the Development Plan	Ward Councillors	Councillor Vinson Councillor Sollitt Councillor Capozzoli

Applicant: Paul Howard – SCC Open Spaces	Agent: Ali Mew – Capita Symonds
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Recommendation Summary	Conditionally approve
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Reason for granting Permission

The application constitutes a departure from the Development Plan ('saved' Policy H1 of the City of Southampton Local Plan March 2006), but is compliant with the other relevant Policies of the Development Plan set out below. However, since the site has been vacant for an extended period of time and reasonable attempts to secure a residential planning permission have failed, the proposed use is considered appropriate to this location given the need for allotment provision within the city.

Policies - SDP1, SDP4, SDP5, SDP10, NE4 and H1 of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review (March 2006) and policies CS13, CS19, CS21 and CS22 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (January 2010).

Appendix attached			
1	Development Plan Policies	2	Planning History

Recommendation in Full

Conditionally approve

Procedural Context

1. Councils Own Development

- 1.1 The proposed scheme is a Regulation 3 application for Full Permission. A Regulation 3 application relates to proposals made by the Local Authority (in this case as the Open Spaces team) for development that it wishes to undertake as part of its remit as a public sector service provider.
- 1.2 It is general practice that following the proper assessment of the planning merits of the proposal that Regulation 3 applications should be either approved if considered acceptable, or the application should be requested to be withdrawn if not considered acceptable for justifiable planning reasons that would normally result in a refusal.
- 1.3 Although this scheme represents a departure to the development plan it is not one of strategic importance and does not need to be referred to the Government Office.

2. The site and its context

- 2.1 The application site is a vacant, 0.29 hectare site, which was last used by the Local Education Authority as a Children's Assessment Unit. The buildings on the site were cleared in 1997 and the site has been vacant since this time. The site has three road frontages to Somerset Road, Brickfield Road and Northcote Road. There are three hornbeam trees adjacent to the site boundary with Somerset Road which are subject to a Tree Preservation Order. The site itself slopes from west to east.
- 2.2 The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character with the exception of Portswood Primary school which lies opposite the site on Somerset Road. Given the terraced nature of the surrounding residential properties, the surrounding streets experience high-levels of on-road car parking.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The application proposal seeks full planning permission for the use of the site for allotments. A total of 17 allotments would be provided which would each contain a small storage shed, water-butt and composting bin for each plot.
- 3.2 Three off-road parking spaces and loading/unloading area would be provided to the north-west of the site. The parking area would be surfaced in grasscrete. A new pedestrian and vehicular access from Somerset Road would be formed and the existing points of access into the site would be stopped up. The proposed access would be wide enough to accommodate the occasional larger delivery vehicles.
- 3.3 The pedestrian routes through the site would be formed from a combination of concrete paving and grassed pathways. The site would be bounded by new 2 metre high black metal railings and a new beech hedge would be provided outside of the fence line.
- 3.4 The application is submitted against the backdrop of a wider project which would hopefully see the existing allotment holders at Broadlands Road move to this Brickfield Road site. There are no current proposals to redevelop the Broadlands Road plots, although they are located within University Development Area.

4. Relevant Planning Policy

- 4.1 The Development Plan for Southampton currently comprises the “saved” policies of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review (March 2006) and the City of Southampton Core Strategy (January 2010). The most relevant policies to these proposals are set out at **Appendix 1**.
- 4.2 The application site is an allocated housing site by saved policy H1 of the Local Plan Review and expected to deliver some 18 housing units. Furthermore, the site is identified as a housing site by the Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The proposal to use the site for allotments is therefore a departure in planning policy terms.

5. Relevant Planning History

- 5.1 In the last three years, there have been two planning applications for the residential development of this site. Both of these applications were withdrawn; the first application was withdrawn to enable the applicant to resolve issues relating to ecology and archaeology, and the subsequent application was withdrawn as the Local Planning Authority found the scheme to be over-intensive and harmful to the surrounding area. The full details of this are included in **Appendix 2** of this report.

6. Consultation Responses and Notification Representations

- 6.1 Following the receipt of the planning application a publicity exercise in line with department procedures was also undertaken which included notifying adjoining and nearby landowners, advertising the scheme as a Local Plan Review departure (24.02.11) and erecting a site notice (22.02.11). At the time of writing the report **1** representation has been received. The following is a summary of the points raised:
- 6.2 ***The proposal should make use of one of the existing points of access into the site***
Response
The proposed access into the site has been designed in full consultation with the Council’s Highways Officer and represents the best solution in highway safety terms.
- 6.3 Comments from Highways, Trees, Open Spaces and Planning Policy will be reported verbally at the Panel meeting. These officers were also consulted at the pre-application stage.

7. Planning Consideration Key Issues

- 7.1 The key issues for consideration in the determination of this planning application are:
- i. Principle of development;
 - ii. Impact on the character of the area;
 - iii. Residential amenity; and
 - iv. Highways and parking.

7.2 Principle of Development

- 7.2.1 The application site is allocated in the development plan for residential purposes

and, as such, whilst the site is not previously developed, the principle of utilising the site for allotments is not automatically acceptable. However, the constraints of the site mean that it has not been possible to find a residential scheme for the site which is both viable and acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.

- 7.2.2 The application site has been vacant since 1997 and, as can be seen from the planning history section of this report, the Council has made efforts to secure a residential planning permission on the site. However, both previous residential planning applications were withdrawn since the site-specific constraints of the site meant that the Local Planning Authority was not able to offer support for the proposals.
- 7.2.3 Firstly, the protected hornbeam trees to the Somerset Road frontage, which are valuable amenity features within the street scene, render a large portion of the site undevelopable. Accordingly, the residential proposals for the site included higher-density development to the east end of the site by incorporating three-storey development. The reliance on three-storey development to bring forward a residential scheme for this site was not acceptable in terms of the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 7.2.4 Furthermore, previous redevelopment proposals were also constrained by the parking issues on the surrounding streets. The residential proposals for the site resulted in the loss of on-street car parking availability by creating additional points of access into the site. Since the streets which surround the site experience high-levels of on-street car parking throughout the day, the loss of on-street car parking would exacerbate the already acute parking issues within the area.
- 7.2.5 The Planning Policy team has advised that the loss of the site to a non-residential use would not compromise the Council's ability to meet its housing targets. In addition to this, it is also important to note that there is a significant demand for allotments within the city with a lengthy waiting list which the proposed scheme would help to address. As such, it is considered that there are over-riding factors which means that the alternative use of the site for allotments overcomes the policy allocation in this instance.

7.3 Character and Design

- 7.3.1 The proposal would retain the open character of the site which creates an important visual break in the housing development within this area whilst improving upon the current over-grown condition of the site. The structures provided as part of the proposal (sheds, refuse storage and composting bins) would not have a significant impact on the character of the area.

7.4 Residential Amenity

- 7.4.1 A key consideration in this respect is whether the activity associated with the allotments would create disruption to the neighbouring residential occupiers. The pedestrian and vehicular trips associated with the proposed use would be less than would be anticipated to be associated with a residential development of 18 units and the previous use of the site for education purposes. Highways Development Management raised no objection at the pre-application stage.

7.5 Highways and Parking

7.5.1 The proposed access into the site would benefit from good visibility and on-site turning is incorporated to ensure that vehicles can enter and leave the site in a forward gear. Sufficient car parking is proposed to serve the use and the parking area is also designed to accommodate vehicles unloading materials to the allotments.

8.0 Summary

8.1 The proposed use would meet an identified use within the city and provide a welcome resource for local residents. Furthermore, the proposal would have a positive impact on the character of the area. Whilst the site is an allocated housing site, the site constraints make a viable residential development difficult to achieve and the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable, despite it being a departure from the Development Plan.

9.0 Conclusion

9.1 Subject to the imposition of the suggested conditions attached to this report, the proposal would be acceptable. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 Documents used in the preparation of this report Background Papers

1 (a) (b) (c) (d) 2 (b) (c) (d) 4 (f) 6 (c) (i) 7 (a) (b) (e) (o) 9 (a)

JT for 15/02/11 PROW Panel

PLANNING CONDITIONS

01.

APPROVAL CONDITION - Full Permission Timing Condition - Physical works

The development works hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date on which this planning permission was granted.

Reason:

To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

02.

APPROVAL CONDITION – Occupation of Allotments [performance condition]

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the current allotment holders of the Broadlands Road allotment site shall be given first refusal of the allotment plots hereby approved.

Reason:

To ensure that the needs of current allotment holders are met.

03.

APPROVAL CONDITION – Boundary Treatment [performance condition]

Prior to the commencement of the use hereby approved, the boundary treatment shall be provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved and thereafter retained as approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To secure a satisfactory form of development

04.

APPROVAL CONDITION - Landscaping Implementation [Performance condition]

The hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The works shall be carried out before any of the development is occupied or in accordance with a timescale which has been agreed in writing with the local planning authority prior to the commencement of development.

Reason:

To ensure that the works are carried out as approved in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

05.

APPROVAL CONDITION - Landscaping replacement [performance condition]

If within a period of five years from the date of the planting of any tree or shrub, or any tree or shrub planted in replacement of it, it is removed, uprooted, destroyed, dies or becomes in any other way defective in the opinion of the local planning authority, another tree or shrub of the same species and size of that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the local planning authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason:

To ensure that any trees or shrubs planted as part of the landscaping scheme are replaced in accordance with that scheme.

06.

APPROVAL CONDITION – Parking and Access [pre-occupation condition]

Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved both the access to the site and the parking spaces for the use shall be provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The parking shall be retained for that purpose and not used for any commercial activity.

Reason:

To ensure a satisfactory form of development

07.

APPROVAL CONDITION - Approved Plans

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed in the schedule attached below, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

POLICY CONTEXT

Core Strategy - (January 2010)

CS13	Fundamentals of design
CS19	Car & cycle parking
CS20	Tackling and adapting to climate change
CS21	Protecting and enhancing open space
CS22	Promoting biodiversity and protecting habitats

City of Southampton Local Plan Review – (March 2006)

SDP1	Quality of Development
SDP4	Development Access
SDP5	Parking
SDP10	Safety & Security
SDP13	Resource Conservation
SDP14	Renewable Energy
NE4	Protected Species
H1	Housing Supply

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Residential Design Guide (Approved - September 2006)

Other Relevant Guidance

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (February 2005)

Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change - Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (December 2007)

PPS3 Housing (November 2006)

PPG13 Transport (January 2011)

PPS22 Renewable Energy (August 2004)

Relevant Planning History

08/00015/OUT

Withdrawn 22.04.08

Erection of two and three-storey buildings to provide 21 flats (14 x one bedrooms and 7 x two-bedrooms) and 7 three-bedroom houses with associated car parking and amenity space (outlined application seeking approval for layout, scale and means of access).

09/00090/R3OL

Withdrawn 29.04.09

Erection of two and three-storey buildings to provide 21 flats (14 x one bedrooms and 7 x two-bedrooms) and 7 three-bedroom houses with associated car parking and amenity space (outlined application seeking approval for layout, scale and means of access).

The Council were unable to approve the application for the following reasons:

i. Height – Impact on Street scene

The three-storey height of the proposed development would appear out of keeping with the prevailing two-storey character of the surrounding area and would also have a harmful impact on the amenities of the neighbouring residential occupiers through overlooking, loss of light and over-shadowing. The proposal would thereby prove contrary to the provisions of policies SDP1, SDP7 and SDP9 of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review (2006) and as supported by the Residential Design Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document September 2006 (part 3 refers).

ii. Car Parking Issues

The proposed development would reduce the amount of on-street car parking available to existing residents and, having regard to specific parking pressures in the vicinity of the site, will result in an intensification of the problems associated with the high-levels of on-street car parking in this area. The proposal would therefore have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the existing residents and could result in parking in unsecure locations which are remote to their properties. Furthermore, notwithstanding the Council's adopted parking standards, the development could lead to overspill car parking on the surrounding streets, further exacerbating existing parking problems within the vicinity of the site. The development would therefore prove contrary to policies SSP1 of the Local Plan Review (adopted version March 2006).

iii. Over-development and Too Many Flats

The proposal in terms of the number of units proposed represents an over-intensive development of the site given the established character of the area and fails to achieve an appropriate mix of houses to flatted units on the site. The proposal would therefore be contrary to policies SDP1, SDP7, SDP9 and H7 of the Local Plan Review and emerging policy CS16 of the Southampton Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

H01/1662/3054

CAP 03.06.85

Erection of a double temporary classroom unit

880956/3054/WH

CAP 05.09.88

18-25 and 37-44 Somerset Road, land between 16 to 18 Northcote Road and between

22 to 37 Somerset Road

Demolition of houses, closure of Somerset Road, closure of Somerset Road, use of land for educational purposes in conjunction with adjoining educational land and construction of turning head.

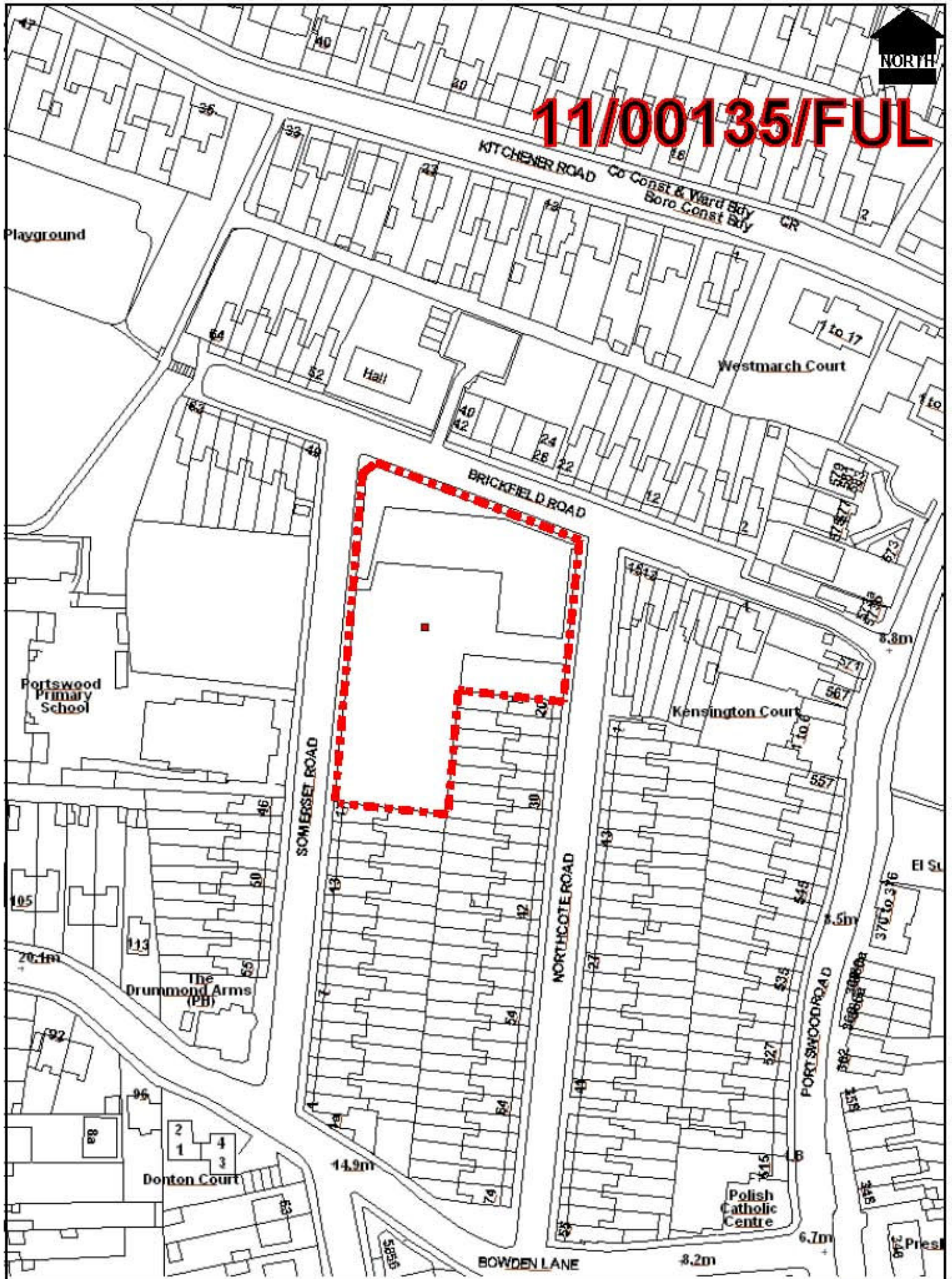
3054/1528/M38

CAP 10.10.77

Erection of a garage to be used for storage purposes

NORTH

11/00135/FUL



Scale : 1:1250

Date : 03 March 2011

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