

Planning Committee: 22 November 2006

Item Number:

Application No: W 06 / 1487

Registration Date: 03/10/06

Town/Parish Council: Whitnash

Expiry Date: 28/11/06

Case Officer: Rob Young

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Whitnash Library , Franklin Road, Whitnash, Leamington Spa, CV31 2JH
Proposed extensions and new entrance to the library to include new police and
Town Council rooms. FOR Warwick District Council

This application is being presented to Committee as it is a District Council application that is not a minor matter.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Town Council: No objection.

Neighbours: 3 letters of objection have been received, one from a property opposite the site, one from a property in Ashford Gardens, and one from a property in Southam. The following concerns have been raised:

- insufficient parking causing parking problems in Whitmore Road;
- loss of book space; and
- loss of covered area for bikes and pushchairs.

WCC (Highways): No objection.

WCC (Ecology): Recommend bat notes if the proposal will affect existing roof space.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- (DW) ENV3 - Development Principles (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- DP1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- DP2 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version).
- DP6 - Access (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- DP8 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- SC7 - Directing Community Facilities (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)

PLANNING HISTORY

There have been a number of previous applications relating to the library that have been determined by Warwickshire County Council as the County Planning Authority. These include proposals in 1994 for extensions and new buildings to provide a police office (Refs. W940535 & W941294). The District Council was formally consulted on those applications and raised no objection.

KEY ISSUES

The Site and its Location

The application relates to a single storey library building situated on the corner of Franklin Road and Whitmore Road. The existing library is a detached building surrounded by areas of grass and paving. The site is within a predominantly residential part of Whitnash. Dwellings bound the site to the north and east and face the site from the opposite side of Franklin Road and Whitmore Road. There is a parking layby for 5 cars in front of the site on Whitmore Road.

Details of the Development

The application proposes single storey front and rear extensions, together with a new entrance lobby to the Whitmore Road elevation. The rear extension and new lobby would be flat roofed structures, while the front extensions would comprise a flat roofed structure together with a continuation of the existing pitched roof to infill one corner of the building.

The front extensions would provide separate police and Town Council rooms, and an enlarged staff / store room. The rear extension would provide an extension to the IT suite and a new 'confidential booth'. Amended plans have been submitted to include the provision of a covered cycle parking area.

Assessment

I consider that the main issues relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

- the impact on the living conditions of neighbouring dwellings;
- the impact on the character and appearance of the area; and
- parking and highway safety.

Impact on the living conditions of neighbouring dwellings

I do not consider that the proposals would have a significant impact on the living conditions of neighbouring dwellings. The proposed extensions would not infringe a 45-degree sight-line in relation to windows in adjacent dwellings. As the proposed extensions would be low single storey structures set well away from the site boundaries, I do not consider that they would have a significant impact in terms of loss of light or loss of outlook for neighbours. There is likely to be some increase in the number of visitors and in overall activity levels at the site, but considering the low key nature of the use of the premises, I do not consider that this would result in a material increase in noise and disturbance for neighbours.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

I am of the opinion that the proposals would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal includes a flat roofed front extension, which would be a prominent feature on the building. However, this design retains views of the main glazed gable on the front of the existing building.

Furthermore, as this is a stand-alone building set in its own grounds, I do not consider that the proposed extensions would have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Parking and highway safety

I note the concerns of neighbours regarding parking and highway safety. However, the Highway Authority have not objected to the proposals, and therefore I do not consider that the proposals would be detrimental to highway safety. There is a lay-by providing parking for 5 cars in front of the site in Whitmore Road, and I consider that this will remain adequate.

Other matters

The plans have been amended to provide covered cycle parking.

I note the concerns that have been raised regarding loss of book space, but I do not consider that this is a relevant planning consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT, subject to the conditions listed below.

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. **REASON** : To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the approved drawing(s) 4051-02G, and specification contained therein, submitted on 9 November 2006 unless first agreed otherwise in writing by the District Planning Authority. **REASON** : For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Local Plan Policy ENV3.
- 3 All external facing materials for the development hereby permitted shall be of the same type, texture and colour as those of the existing building. **REASON** : To ensure that the visual amenities of the area are protected, and to satisfy the requirements of Policy ENV3 of the Warwick District Local Plan.
- 4 The cycle provision shown on the approved plans shall be completed before the extensions hereby permitted are occupied and thereafter shall kept free of obstruction and available for the parking of cycles associated with the development, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. **REASON** : To ensure that there are adequate cycle parking facilities to serve the development.

INFORMATIVES

For the purposes of Article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2003, the following reason(s) for the Council's decision are summarised below:

In the opinion of the District Planning Authority, the development achieves acceptable standards of layout and design and would not have a significant impact on the living conditions of neighbouring dwellings. Furthermore, the proposal does not give rise to any harmful effects in terms of highway safety which would justify a refusal of permission. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the policies listed.
