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|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Case Officer:</b>        | Maria Philpott   |                        |                 |
| <b>Applicant:</b>           | Clayson Country Homes  |                        |                 |
| <b>Proposal:</b>            | Conversion of existing buildings to residential development of 15no.   |                        |                 |
| <b>Ward:</b>                | Towcester Mill   |                        |                 |
| <b>Councillors:</b>         | Cllr Chris Lofts & Cllr Catharine Tarbun   |                        |                 |
| <b>Reason for Referral:</b> | Related Major Planning application<br>Referred by Assistant Director For Planning and Economy for the following reasons: To be considered in connection with S/2019/1728/MAF |                        |                 |
| <b>Expiry Date:</b>         | 11 December 2020   | <b>Committee Date:</b> | 3 December 2020 |

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**

#### **Proposal**

The proposal seeks various internal and external works to facilitate the change of use of the site to 15 1-bedroom dwellings.

#### **Consultations**

The following consultees have raised **objections** to the application:

- Towcester Town Council

The following consultees have raised **no objections** to the application:

- SNC Heritage

The following consultees have made **comments**:

- The Georgian Group

For letters of objection from third parties, please refer to those made in relation to S/2019/1728/MAF. None of the objections make specific comments/objections regarding the works to the listed building.

#### **Conclusion**

The application has been assessed against the relevant policies in the NPPF, the adopted Local Plan and other relevant guidance as listed in detail at Section 8 of the report.

The key issues arising from the application details are:

- Heritage Impact

The report looks into the key planning issues in detail, and Officers conclude that the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions.

**Members are advised that the above is a summary of the proposals and key issues contained in the main report below which provides full details of all consultation responses, planning policies, the Officer's assessment and recommendations, and Members are advised that this summary should be read in conjunction with the detailed report.**

## **MAIN REPORT**

### **1. APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY**

- 1.1. The application site comprises a Grade II listed building (No. 154) and the neighbouring building (No. 152) and various outbuilding and additions, including a long rear projection to the rear of No. 152. The buildings date from the Georgian Period with Victorian additions. There is a courtyard area to the rear of No. 154. The buildings form part of a terrace of buildings fronting Watling Street in the centre of Towcester and the conservation area.
- 1.2. Either side of the site the buildings are occupied as residential properties. To the rear of the site is the Council's short stay car park and the Masonic Hall and to the front of the site on the opposite side of Watling Street there are other residential and commercial properties.
- 1.3. The building has been used as a club with associated offices, function rooms and a 4-bedroom apartment. It has recently become vacant in 2018.

### **1.4. CONSTRAINTS**

- 2.1. The application site is within the Towcester Conservation Area and part of the site relates to a Grade II listed building (No. 154).

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1. The application seeks the conversion of existing buildings to residential development consisting of 15 one bedroomed flats. These are to be provided over three floors, with seven flats on the ground floor, seven on the first floor and one on the second floor (latter in the listed building). Five flats will be provided in the front section of the buildings fronting Watling Street and 10 flats will be provided in the rear projection of the building.
- 3.2. The development includes the creation of a small extension at first floor level at the end of the rear projection (to create Flat 14). The recessed doorway to No. 152 will be brought forward and blocked up and provided with a new window. Various new fenestration will be inserted into the building at the rear providing openings for flats 3-7 and flats 10-14.
- 3.3. As part of the proposals, a single storey lean-to building leading to a single storey building with a pitched roof and positioned at right angles to the rear projection will be demolished.
- 3.4. Various internal and external works are proposed to the listed building in order to facilitate the change of use these include:
- 3.5. Externally – the insertion of a dormer window to the rear, a small two casement window to the rear (ground floor) and the insertion of two doors in lieu of windows on the ground and first floor and as well as changes to the roof in this location to facilitate access to the first floor and walkway.

- 3.6. Internally – insertion of partition walls in the ground floor, removal of rear staircase to first floor, removal of partition walls on the first floor, relocation of entrance door to Flat 8, insertion of partitions to the second floor and general associated plaster and ceiling works.

## RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1. The following planning history is considered relevant to the current proposal:

| <u>Application Ref.</u>        | <u>Proposal</u>   | <u>Decision</u> |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| S/1975/1319/P                  | Extension of existing toilets and bar store   | Approved        |
| S/1985/0739/P & S/1985/0740/LB | Use of ground floor flat as extension to club and erection of ground floor passageway and partition | Approved        |
| S/2000/1121/A                  | Externally illuminated projecting sign  | Approved        |
| S/2005/0488/P                  | Timber clad existing single storey pre-fabricated concrete building at rear                         | Approved        |

Neighbouring site:

On one of the adjacent sites at No. 158 Watling Street, permission has recently been granted for the refurbishment of The Olde Wheatsheaf under S/2020/0429/FUL and S/2020/0430/LBC.

## 3. PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

- 5.1. No pre-application discussions have taken place with regard to this proposal.

## 4. RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

- 6.1. This application has been publicised by way of a site notice displayed near the site, by advertisement in the local newspaper, and by letters sent to all properties immediately adjoining the application site that the Council has been able to identify from its records (amend as appropriate). The final date for comments was **20<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (in respect of the amended plans)** although comments received after this date and before finalising this report have also been taken into account.
- 6.2. Please see S/2019/1728/MAF for all third party comments received, although none of the comments received raise specific concerns or objections relating to the listed building works themselves.
- 6.3. The comments received can be viewed in full on the Council's website, via the online Planning Register.

## 5. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

- 7.1. Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council's website, via the online Planning Register.

## PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS

- 7.2. TOWCESTER TOWN COUNCIL: **Object** – Please see comments on S/2019/1728/MAF

### CONSULTEES

- 7.3. SNC HERITAGE: - **No objections (following receipt of amended plans)**. Please see comments on S/2019/1728/MAF
- 7.4. THE GEORGIAN GROUP: [First response] **Comments**. The Group recommends that the applicant provide further information on the significance of the interior of the grade II listed house to ensure that its historic fabric and significance is not harmed by these proposals. In addition, amendments should be made to the planned roof lights to the principal façade.
- 7.5. [Second response] **Comments**. The Group re-instates its original concerns over the harm caused by inserting roof lights, not only to the building but also the Towcester Conservation Area as a whole.

## **6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

- 8.1. Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Planning Authority to have regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting when consider an application for listed building consent.
- 8.2. The Development Plan comprises the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) which was formally adopted by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014 and which provides the strategic planning policy framework for the District to 2029, and the recently adopted South Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2). The relevant planning policies of South Northamptonshire's statutory Development Plan are set out below:

### WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT CORE STRATEGY 2014 (JCS 2014)

- SA – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- BN5 – The Historic Environment and Landscape

### SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PART 2 LOCAL PLAN (Part 2 LP)

- SS2 – General Development and Design Principles
- HE1 – Significance of Heritage Assets
- HE5 – Listed Buildings
- HE6 – Conservation Areas

## **APPRAISAL**

- 9.1. The key issues for consideration in this case are:
- Heritage impact

### 9.2. Heritage Impact

#### *Legislative and policy context*

- 9.3. The site is within the Conservation Area of Towcester and relates to a Grade II listed building. The site is also in an area of known archaeological interest.

- 9.4. Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that: *In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority...shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possess.* Therefore weight must be given to these matters in the assessment of this listed building consent application.
- 9.5. Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are designated heritage assets, and Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that: *when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.* Policy BN5 of the JCS 2014 echoes this guidance.
- 9.6. Policies HE1, HE5 and HE6 of the Part 2 LP guide development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings including conservation areas and listed buildings. Policy HE2 covers Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeology, Policy HE3 Historic Parks and Gardens, and Policy HE7 Non-Designated Heritage Assets.

#### *Assessment*

- 9.7. Following the receipt of amended plans, the proposal to convert the buildings to residential is considered to be acceptable. The proposal will cause harm to the listed building in terms of the changes to the internal layout, but this harm is considered to be less than substantial and there are considered to be public benefits to outweigh the harm. The harm has been minimised with the removal of 3 rooflights, the reinstatement of an original outer wall at the rear and the retention of the existing sash windows at the front. The redevelopment of the site will enhance the setting of the listed building and better reveal its significance by making improvements to the front elevations such as reinstating the flush frontage to the adjacent property and demolishing extensions at the rear.
- 9.8. The proposals will also enhance the character and appearance of the site within the Towcester conservation area and will not cause any harm to the setting of the adjacent listed building at No. 150.
- 9.9. In obtaining these changes to the proposal, it is considered that the comments of the Georgian Group have been taken into account and addressed.
- 9.10. Overall, the proposal is considered to preserve the building and its setting and is considered to be in accordance with policies BN5 of the JCS policies SS2, HE1, HE2, HE5 and HE6 of the LPP2 and the NPPF.

## **7. PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION**

- 11.1. The proposed works to convert the listed building will preserve the building and ensure a viable use for the future. The proposal therefore complies Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and with the relevant Development Plan policies and guidance listed at section 8 of this report, and so is considered to be acceptable.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

**DELEGATE TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR PLANNING AND ECONOMY TO GRANT PERMISSION, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS SET OUT BELOW**

**(AND ANY AMENDMENTS TO THOSE CONDITIONS AS DEEMED NECESSARY)**

CONDITIONS

**TIME LIMITS AND GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION CONDITIONS**

**Time Limit**

1. The development and works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than three years from the date of this consent.

Reason : To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Compliance with Plans**

2. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans and details unless a non-material or minor material amendment is approved by the Local Planning Authority under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The approved plans and details are:

MS-5764 received on 21st August 2019;  
003 Rev A, 004 Rev A, 005 Rev A, 007 Rev A, 009 dated 20th December 2019;  
006 Rev B, 008 Rev B dated 15th June 2020;  
002 Rev J dated 24th July 2020

Reason : To clarify the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.

**CONDITIONS REQUIRING LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WRITTEN APPROVAL OR TO BE COMPLIED WITH BY DEVELOPER BEFORE SPECIFIC CONSTRUCTION WORKS TAKE PLACE**

**Schedule of Materials**

3. A schedule of materials and finishes to be used in the external walls and roofs of the dwellings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of those works. The development shall thereafter be completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason : To ensure that the materials are appropriate to the appearance of the locality and to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development in accordance with Policies HE5 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan.

**Brick Sample Panel**

4. The external walls of the extension shall be constructed in brickwork, of a

type, colour, texture, face bond and pointing which is in accordance with a sample panel (minimum 1 metre squared in size) which shall be constructed on site to be inspected and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the commencement of the brickwork. The sample panel shall be constructed in a position that is protected and readily accessible for viewing in good natural daylight from a distance of 3 metres. The panel shall be retained on site for the duration of the construction contract.

Reason : To ensure that the materials are appropriate to the appearance of the locality and to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development in accordance with Policies HE5 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Architectural Detailing**

5. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, further details of the architectural detailing of the exterior of the development, including the windows and doors (and their surrounds), together with the eaves and verge treatment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the construction of the building above slab level. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason : In order to safeguard the visual amenities of the conservation area and the significance of the heritage asset in accordance with Policy SS2 and HE5 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan and Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

### **Windows and Doors**

6. Details of the construction, including cross sections, cill, lintel, reveal and colour / finish of the proposed windows/doors, to a scale of not less than 1:5 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of that work. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason : To ensure that the new works are sympathetic with the character of the listed building and to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area in accordance with policies SS2 and HE5 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan and Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

### **Dormer Window Details**

7. Details of all external facing materials to be used in the construction of the dormer windows hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of those works. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason : To ensure that the materials are appropriate to the appearance of

the locality and to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development in accordance with Policy SS2 and HE5 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan.

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