HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

24/02370/HHFUL

OFFICER REPORT

Case No: **24/02370/HHFUL** **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: **Erection of two storey side extension including the removal of a tree on site, and proposed detached timber car port**

Location: **Abbots House Priory Gardens Chesterton**

Applicant: **Mrs Elaine Stowers-Upton**

Grid Ref: **512774 295460**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site at Abbots House is occupied by a two-storey detached dwellinghouse located within Priory Gardens in Chesterton. Whilst the site is not within a Conservation Area, there are number of Listed Buildings in the vicinity including the Grade I Listed St Michael's Church. The site is in Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning, with a blanket Tree Protection Order (TPO) alongside a number of individual TPO's covering the south and east of the application site.

This application seeks permission for the erection of a two-storey side extension including the removal of a tree on site, and proposed detached timber car port.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

Throughout the lifetime of the application, the description has been changed to reflect that only one tree is to be removed as part of the proposals. Further, revised plans have been received as the result of the unauthorised removal of a TPO tree. This includes the introduction of two new trees which are to be planted as a result of the trees that are proposed to be/ have been removed, of which will be discussed in subsequent sections of this report. In this instance, aside from HDC's Arboricultural Officer, on the balance of fairness, further consultation on this matter was not considered to be necessary.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):

* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)

LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies where applicable

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):

* Place Making Principles parts 3.7 Building Form and 3.8 Building Detailing

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (2022)

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

0402376TREE - Felling of a Sycamore (Consent)

1400725TREE - Felling and removal of one Sycamore tree (Consent)

18/01689/FUL - The erection of a new family dwelling with garaging and access. (Permission)

21/02474/HHFUL - Proposed extensions and alterations. (Permission)

23/02222/TREE - T1 Sycamore to be removed, shade-intolerant species that is being overcrowded by adjacent trees, has started to limb drop and has a suppressed crown. G2 - 3 Sycamores to have Ivy removed so an informed decision can be made on the health and viability of long-term retention. In addition, it may be necessary to remove small-diameter limbs that are poorly attached. (Consent)

24/01558/HHFUL - Proposed two storey side extension including removal of two trees. (Withdrawn)

CONSULTATIONS

Chesterton Parish Council - No comment received at the time of determination.

HDC Arboricultural Officer - Support the application subject to two English Oak trees being planted to replace the illegally removed tree, and the other Sycamore to be removed. Further comments in subsequent sections of this report.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received at the time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Design and Visual Amenity
- Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity
- Impact on Trees
- Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement

* Design and Visual Amenity

The application site at Abbots House is a detached two-storey dwelling located within the cul-de-sac of Priory Gardens in Chesterton. The application seeks permission for the erection of two-storey side extension including the removal of a tree on site, and proposed detached timber car port.

When considering the built form of the proposed two-storey side extension, whilst the extension is moderate in scale, by virtue of its design the extension is to act subservient to the host dwelling. The proposed extension measures 9.2 metres in length, protecting off the eastern elevation of the host dwelling, and measures 5.7 metres in width. The extension consists of a pitched roof design with pitched dormer windows at first-floor level, matching the design of the host dwelling, measuring a maximum height of 7 metres, and eaves at 3.8 metres. This is set down lower than the maximum height of the host dwelling, helping the extension act subservient and integrate within the application site. The extension is to be successfully integrated within the application site with the proposed use of materials to match existing, and is considered acceptable with regards to design, with no detrimental impact on the character or appearance of the street scene or wider area. Whilst guidance in Huntingdonshire's Design Guide (2017) states that integral garages should not be encouraged, this is only guidance and is used to inform on design for new, larger developments as well as minor schemes such as this. In this case, the dwelling has to be viewed in context, and officers are satisfied that this will not cause harm to the character of the area.

When considering the form of the proposed car port, whilst this is modest in scale, the application site benefits from a considerable sized plot, with the design and appearance of the car port complementing both the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Further, it is considered that the proposed location of the car port within the application site successfully encloses it within the site and does not result in any detrimental impact to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, with the car port to be built on an area of existing hardstanding. The car port is to measure a maximum depth of approximately 5 metres, with a width of 5.8 metres. The proposed car port would have a maximum height of 4.5 metres, with eaves at 2.9 metres. Whilst the materials differ from that of the dwelling, it is considered that the use of timber is acceptable for the type of development proposed. Further, its proportions are considered appropriate in the context of the site and surrounding area, with the car port not appearing visually dominant within the plot, resulting in no detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the surrounding area.

Overall, taking the above factors into consideration, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable with regard to design and visual amenity and would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the area. It therefore accords with Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Impact on Heritage Assets

As detailed in the previous sections of this report, whilst the application site does not fall within a Conservation Area, there are a number of Listed Buildings in the vicinity, including the Grade I

Listed Church, and therefore it is necessary to consider the impact of the development on its designated heritage assets.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, 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 possesses.

Para. 212 of the NPPF sets out 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'.

Para. 213 states that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification'

Local Plan policy LP34 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

In this instance, Officers have undertaken a site visit, and note that the proposed extension is to be located on the side elevation of the dwelling away from nearby heritage assets. Taking this into account, alongside the considerable separation distance and boundary treatments, this results in limited views of the extension, resulting in no significantly detrimental impact on the Listed Buildings. Further, by virtue of its scale and location, the proposed car port will not be visible in views from Listed Buildings, therefore resulting in no detrimental harm to the designated heritage assets.

As such, given the above, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable with regards to its impact on the designated heritage assets. The proposals do not cause any harm to the adjacent Grade I Listed Church and its setting, as well as resulting in no harm to the other nearby Grade II Listed Buildings due to the location and scale of development. It therefore accords with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan to 2036, the provisions of the NPPF (2024) and the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990.

*Residential Amenity

Given the scale and location of the developments proposed, alongside having regard to the proximity and separation to the adjacent dwellings, it is not considered that there would be any unacceptable material impacts in terms of loss of privacy or overlooking, nor would there be any overbearing or loss of light impact.

Overall, taking these factors into account, the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a significant impact upon residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of HDC's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Impact on Trees

It is noted that the proposals involve the removal of a Sycamore tree to facilitate development, which is also presented as part of the application as being significantly damaged. As such, HDC's Arboricultural Officer has been consulted on the proposals, and stated from an initial investigation

that it appeared that a TPO'd tree had been removed in order to facilitate the development. Following this, a site visit was undertaken by HDC's Arboricultural Officer, who noted that it was clear that a large area of the rear garden had been recently cleared of trees and residual stumps to the presence of an area of disturbed soil and stump grindings. As a result, an enforcement visit confirmed that a Sycamore tree protected by a TPO had been removed without permission from the Local Planning Authority. HDC's Arboricultural Officer highlights that the root protection area of the removed tree would have prevented any development in this area, and concluded that the enforcement investigation has presented that the TPO'd tree had been removed pre-emptively in order to facilitate development. The Arboricultural Officer noted that whilst prosecution was considered at length, it was agreed that two English Oak trees would be planted as replacements for the illegally removed one, alongside the proposed removal of the damaged Sycamore tree. As mentioned in preceding sections of this report, revised plans have been received which are to include the planting of the agreed English Oak trees, and this shall be secured by condition.

Therefore, having regard to the above, the development is considered to be broadly acceptable with regard to its impact on trees and accords with Policy LP31 of the Local Plan to 2036.

*Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement

When considering the proposed internal garage to be included within the two-storey element of the proposals, whilst the entrance to the garage meets the minimal internal clear width of 5.5 metres for a double garage as set out in Huntingdonshire's Design Guide (2017), the garage fails to meet the minimal internal clear length for the safe parking of a car. However, when considering the built form of the existing application site, it is noted that there is sufficient off-street parking available to the front of the site, and that the location for the proposed two-storey extension is currently occupied by private garden space and is not utilised for the parking of a vehicle. Further, there are no changes to the access or parking arrangements of the existing dwelling as a result of the two-storey side extension.

Further, it is not considered that the proposed carport will have a detrimental impact on the ability to manoeuvre within the application site, with a site visit confirming a large area of hardstanding to the front elevation of the dwelling for the safe movement of vehicles in and out of the site. The carport will provide covered space for vehicles to park safely within the site, and is considered acceptable in terms of parking provision.

Overall, the development being considered is acceptable with regard to parking provision and vehicle movement, and will not be detrimental to highway safety in the locality. It therefore accords with Policy LP17 of the Local Plan.

*Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:

* Is of an appropriate scale and design
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the designated heritage assets;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
* Is acceptable with regards to its impact on trees;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon parking provision and vehicle movement.

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
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