

P & EP Committee: 27 November 2007

ITEM NO 01

07/01296/FUL: CONSTRUCTION OF MONUMENT TO COMMEMORATE WAR DEAD AT
THE GREEN, THORNEY, PETERBOROUGH

VALID: 28 AUGUST 2007

APPLICANT: MR R S JARY

AGENT: ABO (STRUCTURAL) LTD

REFERRED BY: CLLR SANDERS

REASON: VISUAL IMPACT

DEPARTURE: NO

CASE OFFICER: MISS A MCSHERRY

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1 SUMMARY/OUTLINE OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The main considerations are:

- The siting, scale and design of the proposed memorial
- The impact on the Conservation Area and surrounding Listed Buildings

The Head of Planning Services recommends that the application is APPROVED.

2 PLANNING POLICY

In order to comply with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies set out below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan Policies

Relevant policies are listed below with the key policies highlighted.

The Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement)

- CBE3** Development affecting conservation areas should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of that area
- CBE7 Development must not be detrimental to the setting of a listed building
- DA1** Development must be compatible with its surroundings and not create an adverse visual impact
- DA2 The density, layout, massing and height should be compatible with the site and not adversely impact on nearby properties or the character of the area.
- DA3 The external finish of development should harmonise with the established building materials of the locality
- DA9** A green space serving an important visual or amenity function should not be lost to development

Material Planning Considerations

Decisions can be influenced by material planning considerations. Relevant material considerations are set out below, with the key areas highlighted:

The Village Design Statement identifies the site as an area of open space, which contributes to the visual impact, the historic character and appearance of the village.

3 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for a war memorial to commemorate the people who lived in Thorney and died defending their country. The monument's base will measure approximately 1.9m x 1.9m with a total height above ground level of approximately 2.5m and will be constructed of natural stone. A paving area and a chain link will surround the monument measuring externally approximately 3.75m x 3.75m.

4 DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site is located within the limited rural growth settlement of Thorney and within its Conservation Area. The site is a protected green space in a village, as defined by the Local Plan. The site is positioned to the south of the Abbey Church of St Mary and St Boltoph, and adjacent to the residential properties of The Green. The Green is currently an area of grass open space, with a bench facing out on to the main road.

5 PLANNING HISTORY

No planning history

6 CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS

INTERNAL

Head of Transport and Engineering – Raises no objections to the proposal. Whilst there are no proposed parking facilities, the majority of the visitors to the site will be residents of the village. The busiest day is likely to be Armistice Day, which will generate lots of visitors; however these will be linked with the neighbouring church where the Service of Remembrance will be held. The attendees of the service are likely to walk from the church to the proposed war memorial to lay wreaths, with many of them having already walked initially to the church from their properties in the village.

EXTERNAL

Thorney Parish Council – Support the application. They have however received 4 complaints concerning this application.

English Heritage – Comments awaited.

NEIGHBOURS

16 Letters of objection have been received raising the following issues:

- The lack of community involvement/discussion/agreement
- No need for the development there are already two war memorials in the village/additional financial costs of providing more wreaths to this third memorial site within the village
- Ex servicemen/women have not been consulted
- Thorney Historical Society have not been consulted
- The location will conflict with the location used for the maypole
- The site of the memorial is used for wedding receptions, fetes and events
- The siting, design and materials of the structure
- Unacceptable visual impact
- Impact on this area of open space
- Impact on the Conservation Area/out of character
- Lack of car parking
- Possible attraction for vandalism and anti-social behaviour
- The grass surfacing of this area could be problematic for access particularly in November if the weather is wet/a hard surfaced access would be a shame
- There are more appropriate locations within the village for this structure

- Potential disruption to village events held on The Green by prohibiting the erection of marquees

COUNCILLORS

Cllr Sanders referred the application raising concern about the visual impact of the development.

7 REASONING

a) The siting, scale and design of the proposed memorial

The principle of the erection of a war memorial monument is considered to be acceptable.

Due to the nature of the development proposed, a prominent accessible location within the village is required, and one where any proposed structure can benefit from a high quality visual setting that can accommodate a number of visitors, particularly on Remembrance Day.

The proposed monument will be positioned centrally upon The Green to allow the monument to have visual prominence and to ensure it is positioned adequately from the surrounding residential properties, so as not to affect their residential amenities. This position also allows people to gather around the structure without blocking any of the surrounding roads. The land is owned by the Parish Council, and so their consent as landowner will also have to be sought which is separate and independent of the planning application process.

A natural stone material is proposed which is considered to be appropriate in this Conservation Area location and in the proximity of many Listed Buildings built of local stone. The structure is squat and sturdy in its design, comprising a solid 1.8m square plinth with a tapering column above, capped with a small cross. Although the Green is quite small, the scale and design of this structure are considered to be acceptable as are the materials which are not uncommon to other such war memorials. It is not considered to be visually out of scale or overly dominant in its context and surrounding area setting.

b) The impact on the Conservation Area and surrounding area

It is not considered that the proposed development will have any detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, or the setting of any of the surrounding Listed Buildings. The structure will not have any detrimental visual impact on the character of the surrounding area, and will provide a focal structure on this Village Green.

Residents have raised concerns that the erection of this structure could prohibit the use of The Green for village fetes/events and any erection of marquees on the land. Whilst this is not a planning matter and should be disregarded, it is also evident that the central position and maximum height above ground level of 2.5m will not prohibit use of this area of open space for village events and should a single marquee be erected over this land the central head height where the monument will sit will almost certainly be in excess of its 2.5m height.

c) The concerns of residents

In respect of the concerns of residents that the planning application was not given adequate publicity, various means of notifying residents were carried out for this planning application, a site notice was put up, an advert placed in the Herald & Post, and the neighbouring properties and Parish Council were consulted, this is consistent with normal procedure, consultation requirements and achieved a high level of response.

The concerns raised by residents about whether there is a need for the development in view of there being two war memorials already in the village, and the additional financial costs of providing wreaths at the site are not material planning considerations. Members should consider the planning merits of the development on this site only, and the availability or possibility of there being other more suitable sites within the village cannot be a reason for refusal of this application should the proposal be found to be acceptable in planning terms.

In respect of the potential for attracting vandalism and anti-social behaviour, war memorial structures will always be susceptible to attracting such behaviour. However this site does benefit from some natural

surveillance as it is overlooked and surrounded by residential properties, which should help to act as a deterrent.

8 CONCLUSIONS

Subject to the imposition of the attached conditions, the proposal is acceptable having been assessed in the light of all material considerations, including weighting against relevant policies of the development plan and specifically:

- The siting, scale and design of the war monument is considered to be acceptable on this site without any adverse visual impact. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policies DA1, DA2, DA3 and DA9 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).

- It is not considered there will be any detrimental impact on the Conservation Area or setting of the surrounding Listed Buildings in accordance with Policies CBE3 and CBE7 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).

- It is not considered that the proposed development will harm this protected green space in the village which has an important visual and amenity function. The development is therefore in accordance with Policy DA9 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).

9 RECOMMENDATION

The Head of Planning Services recommends that this application is APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

C1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

C2 No development shall take place until samples of the stone and paving set materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the monument and paving surround hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: For the Local Authority to ensure a satisfactory external appearance, in accordance with Policies DA2 and DA3 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).

C3 No development shall take place until details of the paving layout and the chain link fence hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: For the Local Authority to ensure a satisfactory external appearance, in accordance with Policies DA2 and DA3 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).

C4 Notwithstanding the approved plans the proposed plaque shall be positioned on the north elevation and not the west elevation as shown, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of Highway safety, in accordance with Policy T1 of the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).

Copy to Councillors Sanders and Bartlett