

Committee Report

Item No: 1

Reference: DC/18/03314

Case Officer: Gemma Pannell

Ward: Hadleigh South

Ward Members: Cllr Sue Burgoyne, Cllr Kathryn Grandon

RECOMMENDATION – GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION WITH CONDITIONS

Description of Development

Planning Application. Erection of extension to swimming pool, erection of connecting corridor and demolition of existing pool hall

Location

Hadleigh Pool and Leisure, Stonehouse Road, Hadleigh Ipswich Suffolk IP7 5BH

Parish: Hadleigh

Expiry Date: 18/09/18

Application Type: FUL - Full Planning Application

Development Type:

Applicant: Babergh District Council

Agent: Brooks Architects

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee as Babergh District Council is the applicant.

Details of Previous Committee/Resolutions and Member Site Visit

None.

PART TWO – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of Policies

Babergh Core Strategy 2014:

- CS1 Applying the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development in Babergh
- CS6: Hadleigh
- CS12 Sustainable Design and Construction Standards
- CS15 Implementing Sustainable Development in Babergh

Relevant saved policies of the Babergh Local Plan (Alteration No.2) 2006:

- CN01 Design Standards
 - CN08 Conservation Areas
 - CR07 Landscaping
 - EN22 Outdoor Lighting
 - RE01 Sports Facilities
-

- TP15 Parking Standards for New Developments

Relevant Supplementary Planning Document:

- Suffolk Adopted Parking Standards (2015)

Suffolk Design Guide

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Consultations and Representations

During the course of the application consultation and representations from third parties have been received. These are summarised below.

A: Summary of Consultations

Hadleigh Town Council

Approve.

BMSDC Heritage

Summary: The Heritage Team considers the proposal would cause a low level of less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets.

The issues of heritage concern relate to the potential impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the conservation area, as well as the setting of listed buildings, including the GII* East House to the north west and the GII 40-42 George Street to the north.

Pre-application advice was sought on the scheme and the current application is broadly representative of those discussions, with minor changes to the form of the brick and rendered corridors to the south east and some external finishes. Within the initial pre-application response, the Heritage Team considered that there would be a moderate level of harm to the designated heritage assets and in particular has reservations about the relocation of the pool building to the west of the existing leisure building. In addition, there was concern regarding the visual impact of the air handling units being exposed in their existing position which are currently partially screened between the pool and leisure building.

The Heritage Team maintains the view that the relocation of the pool building to the west would cause a low level of harm to the character of the conservation area and setting of neighbouring listed buildings. The proposal is of considerable scale and massing, and the repositioning of the pool building would encroach towards the immediate setting of the GII* East House to the north west and erode the glimpsed views through the conservation area from George Street at the north, into the former potential historic parkland; a feature which contributes positively to the character of the area.

Amendments to the design including the brick panelling in combination with the rendered exterior finishes, aid the breaking-up of the proposed building's mass, as well as providing a softer tonality to relate to its environment. One area where an existing brick panel to the single-storey element of the north east elevation has been removed and now appears to be only render. The existing brick panel should be retained here to give a coherent approach and articulate all elevations in a similar way to the proposed pool building, reducing the massing of the building as a whole (particularly here where the air handling units are positioned and viewed above). Louvred screening has been proposed to the single-storey flat roof to disguise the air handling units. Whilst this approach at first floor level would appear somewhat incongruous and 'retrofitted', it would provide a less industrial appearance to this area, subject to appropriate detailing which should be controlled by condition.

The Heritage Team therefore concludes that the proposal would cause a low level of less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets and therefore recommends that the public benefits be weighed against the level of harm, in accordance with NPPF 196.

Should the LPA be minded to approve the application, the following conditions should be applied:

- Material details and manufacturer's literature.
- Brick panel of no less than 1m square to be inspected, approved and retained on site for the duration of the build.
- Large scale elevation drawings of all proposed windows, doors and rooflights.
- Detailed section drawings at 1:10 of the eaves and verges.
- Large scale elevation drawings of the air handling unit louvred screen, including materials, colours and finishes.
- Lighting scheme and manufacturer's specification of units.
- Schedule, external location and manufacturer's specification of all proposed air handling units, ductwork, extractor fans and attenuators.

BMSDC Air Quality

No objection.

BMSDC Land Contamination

I have reviewed the RSA Geotechnics Report supporting the application and can confirm that I am in agreement with the findings of the report that the risks posed by the former uses of the site is sufficiently low for the development to progress without condition. I have no objection to the proposed development. I would only request that we are contacted in the event of unexpected ground conditions being encountered during construction and that the developer is made aware that the responsibility for the safe development of the site lies with them.

BMSDC Economic Development

No objection. The application for improvements to the existing leisure complex in Hadleigh will ensure that this important facility will be able to cope with additional growth in Hadleigh.

The leisure complex provides valuable local job opportunities as well as a venue for training/meetings that is available for hire by local organisations and businesses.

BMSDC Environmental Health

I can confirm with respect to noise and other environmental health issues that I do not have any adverse comments and no objection to the proposed development.

Due to the nature of demolition and construction sites, however, and the impact on amenity of nearby residential premises for a long period of time, I would recommend that a condition limiting the operating hours of the demolition and construction to 08.00 – 18.00 hours Monday – Friday and 0800 – 13.00 hours Saturdays, with no work to take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

I would also recommend that all demolition materials are properly disposed of and that burning material on site is prohibited.

Reason. To prevent any adverse impacts on the quality of life and health of existing occupiers of nearby residential premises.

Hadleigh Society

No objection subject to ensuring that the exterior wall and roofing materials do match those used on the Leisure Centre building. It is also an opportunity to enhance the Complex's setting within the park with new landscaping of shrubs and medium sized trees on its south western and south eastern elevations

B: Representations

None received.

PART THREE – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

1. The Site and Surroundings

- 1.1 The site is located on the southern side of Stonehouse Road, east of the town centre of Hadleigh. The site, occupied by the Hadleigh Pool and Leisure Centre, is set within 1.5ha of landscaped parkland. The leisure centre comprises a pool building, erected in the 1970s, and a two storey community and leisure centre building erected in 2012.
- 1.2 Beyond the park to the west and south is residential development. A public car park is to the northeast which serves as the principal parking area for the facility, and to the east is St Mary's Primary School.
- 1.3 The site is located in the Town Centre Conservation Area. The buildings occupying the site are not listed. Numerous Grade II listed buildings front George Street north of the site. Two Grade II* listed buildings are also located to the north on George Street (48 George Street and East House).
- 1.4 The main vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is via Stonehouse Road, the existing access road from George Street.
- 1.5 The application site comprises approximately 0.4ha of land. The site is located in Flood Zone 1.

2. The Proposal

- 2.1. The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the pool building west of the centre and construction of a new pool building north of the centre. The pool building will be attached to the centre and will house a 25m x 10.5m community pool and associated utility rooms, e.g. change rooms, store, sauna etc.
- 2.2 The proposed pool building is single storey. The design, including finishing materials, takes its cues from the adjacent 2012 leisure centre, including a mono pitched roof, mix of render and red brick finishing.
- 2.3 There are no changes proposed to existing operating hours, number of staff, number of likely patrons or parking provision. The lighting scheme shall be designed to 5 Lux average (2Lux minimum) with a vertical luminance of the building of not more than 5 Lux (after 10.00 pm). No significant tree removal is proposed. Signage does not form part of the application.
- 2.4 The application is supported by a comprehensive suite of technical documents, including planning, design and access statement, ventilation strategy, financial statement, Hadleigh lighting impact assessment, waste management plan, community engagement plan and utilities assessment.

3. The Principle of Development

- 3.1 The applicant has undertaken extensive pre-application engagement with Council planning officers as well as the proposal being subject to extensive community consultation.
-

- 3.2 Paragraph 91 of the NPPF states that decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which, amongst other matters, enable and support healthy lifestyles, for example through the provision of sports facilities. Paragraph 92 seeks to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, stating that decisions should ensure that facilities are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.
- 3.3 Policy CS6 of the 2014 Strategy sets out the overarching strategy for Hadleigh, stating it will be promoted as a visitor attraction and a wide range of diverse uses and facilities will be encouraged.
- 3.4 Policy RE01 of the 2006 Local Plan supports and encourages sports facilities where there are 'no overriding problems of traffic, and no adverse effects on landscape character, cultural heritage, biodiversity, residential amenity and the environment'.
- 3.5 The principle of retaining and upgrading a local recreational community asset furthers national policy intent and is consistent with local planning policy. The proposal supports paragraphs 91 and 92 of the NPPF and furthers the intent of Policy CS6 and RE01 of the 2014 Strategy and 2006 Local Plan respectively.
- 3.6 With the principle accepted, the key issues for determination are the impacts on the heritage character of the area and residential amenity.

4. Heritage Character

- 4.1 Policy CS15 seeks to ensure all new development makes a positive contribution to the local character, shape and scale of the area.
 - 4.2 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting which is of considerable weight and importance.
 - 4.3 Policy CN08 states that alterations in a conservation area should, amongst other matters, be of an appropriate scale, form, and detailed design to harmonise with its setting and use materials and components that complement or harmonise with the character and appearance of the area.
 - 4.4 Paragraph 192 of the NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
 - the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
 - 4.5 Paragraph 191 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
 - 4.6 Council's Heritage Officer is generally supportive of the proposal albeit noting that the development would cause a 'low level of less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets'. The Heritage Officer acknowledges the public benefits and that these be weighed against the level of harm, in accordance with paragraph 196.
-

- 4.7 The pool building that is to be demolished is unremarkable in appearance and arguably detracts from, and undermines, the heritage qualities of the parkland setting. The area where the pool building currently sits will be reinstated with grass to match the manicured park. The proposed building is single storey, much lower than the existing pool building. The development will have a far more comfortable visual relationship with the leisure centre, and broader park, than the existing building. These are positive heritage character outcomes.
- 4.8 On balance, it is considered that the significant community benefit brought about by the upgrade of a tiring recreational asset outweighs the limited harm to the conservation area and nearby designated heritage assets.

5. Design and Layout

- 5.1 Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states that decisions should ensure that developments, amongst other things, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, and are sympathetic to local character. The scheme accords with this national policy intent. The adopted architecture is appropriate, matching the existing 2012 development. Landscaping is proposed to soften the development and generally enhance the landscape setting. Landscape details are most appropriately secured by planning condition. The built form is subordinate to the main building, does not compete with it or its wider environs. The proposal raises no issues with regard to design and layout.

6. Residential Amenity

- 6.1 The substantial separation distances to neighbouring residential properties will ensure residential amenity is safeguarded. There will be no change in operating hours nor increase in traffic generation or parking demand. The lighting scheme shall be designed to 5 Lux average (2Lux minimum) with a vertical luminance of the building of not more than 5 Lux (after 10.00 pm). There will be no up lights. It is noted that the application has not attracted any resident objections.
- 6.2 The above said, in line with the recommendation of the Environmental Health Officer and given the established residential properties at the park periphery, it is appropriate to limit construction and demolition working hours and this will be managed by planning condition.

7. Vehicle Access, Parking and Highway Safety Considerations

- 7.1 No changes are proposed to either the vehicle access or existing level of parking provision. As there is no change proposed to the likely quantum of patrons visiting the facility, or change in staffing number, the proposal is unlikely to impact in any material way existing parking levels or traffic flows.

8. Land Contamination

- 8.1 Environmental Health do not raise an objection to the scheme on land contamination grounds.

9. Ecology

- 9.1 There is nothing to suggest that the development will result in adverse ecological impacts, noting there is no loss of significant vegetation and the building to be removed is highly unlikely to contain roosting bats.
-
-

PART FOUR – CONCLUSION

10. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 10.1 The principle of upgrading a valued community asset so that it can be enjoyed for future generations is well supported at national and local policy level. The architecture is modern yet suitably restrained, to match the existing leisure centre building. The single storey scale is subordinate to the double storey centre building. The removal of the 1970s pool building, of unremarkable appearance, is a positive character outcome. Any harm to designated heritage assets will be minimal and outweighed by the substantial community benefit brought about by the upgrade of a community asset.
- 10.2 Residential amenity, highway safety, ecology and contamination are all matters that are acceptable and do not require special attention by way of controlling conditions. Archaeology and landscaping will be required by planning condition.
- 10.3 The development has not attracted a single resident objection and both the Town Council and Hadleigh Society have submitted in express support of the scheme.
- 10.4 The scheme represents sustainable development, in support of local policies and the NPPF. The proposal warrants a positive recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Corporate Manager – Planning for Growth be authorised to grant Planning Permission subject to conditions including:

- Standard time limit
 - Accord with approved plans
 - Prior to commencement of development written scheme of investigation for archaeological works to be agreed and implemented
 - Prior to occupation the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been agreed.
 - Detailed soft landscaping plan and specification to be agreed
 - Implement soft and hard landscaping as agreed
 - Construction and demolition working hours to be between 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturdays, no works on Sundays or bank holidays
-