

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE : **PLANNING**

DATE : **12TH JUNE 2012**

ADDRESS/LOCATION : **THE RANGERS CENTRE, ROBINSWOOD HILL COUNTRY PARK, GLOUCESTER.**

APPLICATION NO. & WARD : **12/00362/FUL**

EXPIRY DATE : **14 JUNE 2012**

APPLICANT : **GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL**

PROPOSAL : **CONSTRUCTION OF A SINGLE STOREY STORAGE BUILDING TO REAR. INSTALLATION OF A HEAT PUMP AND ENCLOSURE. INSTALLATION OF A NEW WINDOW, REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING WINDOWS AND DOORS, INSTALLATION OF SECURITY SHUTTERS AND ROOF MOUNTED LIGHT TUBES. PROVISION OF AN ACCESSIBLE CAR PARKING SPACE WITH ASSOCIATED HAND RAIL AND ADDITIONAL HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING WORKS AND ENCLOSURES.**

REPORT BY : **BOB RISTIC**

NO. OF APPENDICES/ OBJECTIONS : **SITE LOCATION PLAN**

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The application site is accessed by car from Reservoir Road, and is located to the north-western side of Robinswood Hill Country Park.
- 1.2 This application relates to the Rangers Centre, a single storey building, with an 'L shaped footprint, located to the south of the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust offices and to the east of the public car park.
- 1.3 The existing building is constructed of brick with stained timber detailing to the upper part. The building is currently in a poor condition, having suffered from vandalism.
- 1.4 The application seeks planning permission for various works to the building and surrounding area. The schedule of works are outlined below:

- i) Construction of a single storey building to rear (south eastern) elevation of the building to provide storage for the rangers equipment. The pre-fabricated metal building would be 6 metres wide and 13.5 metres deep and would be clad in brick and timber to match the appearance of the existing building.
 - ii) Installation of a heat pump and enclosure to the north eastern side elevation of the building. The enclosure would be approximately 1 metre high and 1 metre wide.
 - iii) Installation of a new window, to the right hand side of the entrance doors.
 - iv) Replacement of existing windows and doors, installation of new window casements and security shutters
 - v) Installation of 4 no. roof mounted sun tubes to provide daylight to internal rooms.
 - vi) Provision of an accessible (disabled) car parking space to the front of the building with associated hand rail
 - vii) The construction of a concrete hard standing outside the proposed storage building and a grasscrete path to link between the carpark and the existing track network to the south.
 - viii) A security gate and fence to enclose the open area to the northeast of the building and a retaining wall to the southeast of the proposed new storage building.
- 1.5 The renovation of the existing building would provide for a public information area as well as private office space and facilities for the rangers and their equipment. The existing public toilets in the building would also be retained.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 None

3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 The statutory development plan for Gloucester remains the 1983 City of Gloucester Local Plan. Regard is also had to the policies contained within the 2002 Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan which was subject to two comprehensive periods of public consultation and adopted by the Council for development control purposes. The National Planning Policy Framework has been published and is also a material consideration.

3.2 For the purposes of making decisions, the National Planning Policy Framework establishes that policies in a Local Plan should not be considered

out of date where they were adopted prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework. In these circumstances due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.

3.3 The policies within the 1983 and the 2002 Local Plan therefore remain a material consideration where they are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.

3.4 From the Second Stage Deposit Plan the following policies are relevant:

LCA.1 - Landscape Conservation Areas

BE.20 - Extensions

BE.21 - Safeguarding of Amenity

TR.31 – Highway Safety

3.5 In terms of the emerging local plan, the Council is preparing a Joint Core Strategy with Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Councils and has recently published for consultation a Developing the Preferred Options Document in December 2011. In addition to the Joint Core Strategy the Council is preparing a its local City Plan which is taking forward the policy framework contained within the City Council's Local Development Framework Documents which reached Preferred Options stage in 2006.

3.6 On adoption, the Joint Core Strategy and City Plan will provide a revised planning policy framework for the Council. In the interim period, weight can be attached to relevant policies in the emerging plans according to

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies; and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework

4.0 CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The Local Highway Authority raise no objection subject to condition

5.0 PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 The application was publicised by the display of three site notices: One posted upon the building, one posted at the site entrance onto Reservoir Road and one at the footpath entrance from Well Cross Road.

5.2 No public representations have been received.

6.0 OFFICER OPINION

6.1 The application proposes a variety of alterations and additions to the existing building and surrounding area to provide facilities for the rangers as well as improvements to public visitor's facilities.

- 6.2 The application site lies within a Landscape Conservation Area and Policy LCA.1 required that proposals do not detract from the qualities or the character of the area.
- 6.3 The proposed storage building would be set to the rear of the existing building and would comprise a prefabricated steel structure which would be clad in timber and brickwork to match the existing building. The construction of the building would also involve the excavation of an area of land to the rear of the existing building to create a level area and the construction of a 1.4 metre high retaining wall.
- 6.4 The proposed building would be staggered back from the south western end elevation of the existing building by approximately 1.85 metres which would serve to create a subservient appearance to the store building. Additionally the building would be screened to a significant degree by existing tree and shrub planting to the southeast of the site. It is concluded that the proposed building would therefore not result in any detrimental impacts upon the visual amenities of the area.
- 6.5 The siting of the rangers store extension would create an enclosed open yard area to the northeast of the existing building this would be secured in part by the walls of the storage building and also with a new metal security fence and gate. This additional enclosure would be discretely sited between the existing building and adjoining Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust building. The fencing would be further screened from the public car park area by existing trees at the site.
- 6.6 The proposed new window and sun tubes would provide daylight into the central core of the building, which would provide office and workshop space for the Rangers. The existing windows and doors which have suffered from vandalism would be replaced and fitted with metal security shutters. The shutters would be coloured green in order to match those at the adjoining Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust building. These alterations to the existing building would be of an acceptable appearance.
- 6.7 The proposed heat pump enclosure would be discretely sited to north-eastern elevation of the building and within the enclosed open yard area and would therefore have no detrimental impacts upon the visual amenities of the area.
- 6.8 The application proposes a disabled parking space which would be sited to the front (north-western) of the building and would serve to improve access to the area. Gloucestershire county highways have raised no objections to the works. Additionally the parking space and handrail would have no adverse impacts upon the visual amenities of the area.
- 6.9 The proposed grasscrete track would provide a more formal visitor link from the car park to the existing path network at the country park. Additionally the grasscrete would contrast with the proposed concrete hard standing in front of the proposed store building, which would serve to separate the ranger's operational area from the public access to the Country Park. The proposed

works would have an acceptable appearance and would not adversely affect the appearance of the landscape conservation area.

7.0 CONCLUSION/REASON FOR APPROVAL

7.1 The proposed extension and alterations to the building and surrounding area have been carefully considered. It is concluded that the proposed works would have an acceptable appearance which would preserve the appearance of the landscape conservation area and would improve public access to and the enjoyment of the Robinswood Country Park. The application is therefore considered to accord with the provisions of Policies LCA.1, BE.20, BE.21 and BE.31 of the Second Stage Deposit City of Gloucester Local Plan (2002).

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER

That outline planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

Condition 1

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

Reason

To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Condition 2

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved amended drawing nos.2548_ 102L, 104A, 105A, 106C, 150A, 205C, 206D and 502A, received by the local planning authority on 29th May 2012 and any other conditions attached to this permission.

Reason

To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and in accordance with policies contained within Second Deposit City of Gloucester Local Plan (2002).

Condition 3

The external facing materials to the rear storage building hereby permitted shall match in colour, form and texture those of the existing building.

Reason

To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in accordance with policy_LCA.1_of the Second Deposit City of Gloucester Local Plan (2002).

Decision:

Notes:

.....
.....

Person to contact: Bob Ristic
(Tel: 396822)

12/00362/FUL

**The Ranger Centre
Robinswood Hill Country Park
Reservoir Road
Gloucester
GL4 6SX**

Planning Committee 12.06.2012

