

REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION AT PLANNING APPLICATION SUB-COMMITTEE**Reference No:** HGY/2008/0917**Ward:** Northumberland Park**Date received:** 17/04/2008**Last amended date:****Drawing number of plans** 5226/1000, 1200A, 1201C, 1210, 1211B, 1212B, 1213A, 1250A, 1251A, 1252A, 1253A, 1260A**Address:** Coombes Croft Library, High Road, N17 8AG**Proposal:** Erection of single storey extensions to front and rear of existing library building.**Existing Use:** Public Library**Proposed Use:** Public Library**Applicant:** Mr Stuart Evans, Haringey Council**Ownership:** Council**PLANNING DESIGNATIONS**

Retrieved from GIS on 07/05/2008
Road Network: C Road
North Tottenham Conservation Area
Adjacent to Blue Ribbon Network (in culvert or open channel)

Officer Contact: Robin Campbell**RECOMMENDATION**

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Coombes Croft Library occupies the ground floor of a mixed use five storey property on the corner of Tottenham High Road and Brereton Road. The block is effectively L shaped. The upper stories of the building are in residential use. The property lies within North Tottenham Conservation Area and dates from the 1950's. To the rear of the property is a private residential courtyard, with a small children's play area. It is understood that access to this area is restricted for the use of the occupants of the surrounding residential properties. Opposite the library on the High Road are a range of mixed use buildings, with retail properties on the ground floor, some of which are boarded up.

The library benefits from a forecourt area at its entrance, created by the setback of the building. There is a large London Plane tree and a Cherry tree within this forecourt area. The library has ramp access and decorated metal gates at the entrance. The library itself has a distinctive design, consisting of block work walls, which have a panelling effect, with high level windows. The rear elevation of the library is of brickwork.

PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant planning history.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application identifies that the proposed development of Coombes Croft Library is required due to the significant increase in demand over the last 5 years. As a result of this, the library is now too small to cope with the level of demand and cannot accommodate the facilities which are required to provide a more complete community service. The proposed development has been made possible through a successful bid for lottery funding which was achieved in 2007. It is proposed to extend the library by 37%. The additional space will enable the library to accommodate a range of community and educational facilities for adults, teenagers and children. These will include new community meeting rooms, WiFi/Internet, as well as ancillary functions such as WC, baby change, boiler, staff room etc.

CONSULTATION

Local Residents

16/05/2008

1 - 19 (o) Kathleen Ferrier Court, Brereton Road, N17
4 – 18 (e) Kathleen Ferrier Court, Brereton Road, N17
729, 731, 752 – 766 (e), 752(a), 752(b), 752(c) High Road, N17
FFF, SFF 752(b); Upper Flat 752(c) High Road, N17
766A, 754A, 756B, 758C, 756A, 758A, 756C High Road, N17

Internal and External Consultation

Ward Councillors
Transportation Group
Conservation Team
CAAC: Tottenham
Environment Agency

RESPONSES

Conservation Officer

This 1950's library building is the ground floor part of an L shaped 5 storey block of flats which stands on a corner site with its principal elevation fronting Tottenham High Road, and side elevation fronting Brereton Road. The site is within North Tottenham Conservation Area, and stands almost directly opposite Bill Nicholson Way which leads to White Hart Lane Football Stadium behind.

Pre-application Consultation

At pre-application stage I advised that the proposal for a front extension to Combs Croft Library appeared to raise design and conservation conflicts. The effect on conservation area is likely to be detrimental considering ;

- There is no planning policy or planning guidance support for front extensions in conservation areas. Refer in particular to the planning guidance of SPG2 C.
- It would have a detrimental effect on public realm caused by the loss of landscaped forecourt, planting bed and tree.

Application Proposals ; Rear Extension

It would need to be clarified what use the rear area currently serves and if it has any access requirements - the residents may have an interest if the rear area serves an amenity function. As the effect of such a rear extension will not impinge on the street elevations or the public realm I see no conflict in design and conservation terms.

Application Proposals ; Front Extension

The existing forecourt works as an attractive public realm with its sense of open space and landscaping in front of the Library, and provides a positive amenity for local residents to enjoy, with its special gates and decorative brickwork relief panels. It provides a very attractive setting for the Library building.

Externally the proposed front extension is approx. 6.800 deep x 5.700 wide x 3.000 high. The proposed extension would be sited on the entrance bay of the building, its footprint projects out to the back of pavement and the three dimensional form of the extension projects out from the building and the effect would be visually obtrusive. The elevations have irregular elevation of panels to the front extension which have a substantially blank appearance.

The proposed extension will appear very intrusive on the forecourt of the library, breaking up what is a unified public realm where one can sit in the sun. The residual north area of the forecourt will be left in the shadow of the extension with little amenity value.

The proposed extension will cut through the roots and wide canopy of the cherry tree, and will be sited close to the tree trunk, severely and adversely affecting the tree, likely leading to its loss.

Planning guidance recommends that extensions to buildings in Conservation Areas should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. They should generally be confined to the rear or least important facades and should not upset the scale, proportions and architectural integrity of the building. This proposed front extension conflicts with this guidance and appears arbitrary, more like an ad-hoc rear extension. The effect will visually jar and appear incongruous on the front of this 1950 building, and be detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

I therefore consider that the proposal conflicts with Policies UD4 , CSV1, CSV5, and planning guidance SPG1a and SPG2, and recommend refusal.

Councillors

Cllr John Bevan

- Identifies that the lack of external wood cladding to the proposal is a plus point;
- Concerned that the front extension enhances the appearance and character of the existing and that it does not appear “out of place”;
- Considers that the front and rear extensions should not have flat roofs, to ensure rain-water can run off;
- Does not consider that security needs to be a paramount issue in the design due to match days at Spurs Football stadium;
- Identifies that the internal ceiling at the existing library has had an ongoing problem with flooding from the flats above. Requests that this issue be investigated as part of this application.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

Haringey Unitary Development Plan 2006

Policy G1 Environment
Policy G2 Development and Urban Design
Policy G9 Community Well Being
Policy G10 Conservation

UD2 Sustainable Design and Construction
UD3 General Principles
UD4 Quality Design

TCR1 Development in Town and Local Shopping Centres

M3 New Development Location and Accessibility
M4 Pedestrians and Cyclists
M10 Parking and Development

OS5 Development Adjacent to Open Spaces
OS10 Other Open Space

CW1 New Community / Health Facilities
CW2 Protecting Existing Community Facilities

CSV1 Development in Conservation Areas
CSV5 Alterations and Extensions in Conservation Areas

ANALYSIS/ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION

It is proposed that Coombes Croft Library will have front and rear extensions, in order to provide additional accommodation for the library to provide more facilities and to cater for the high demand which it is currently subject to.

The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, which refers to the key issues of use, design, layout, scale, appearance, landscape and sustainability.

The proposed front extension would provide a new entrance way to the library and accommodate an informal meeting room and Wi/Fi area. The rear extension is proposed to accommodate two meeting rooms along with ancillary uses such as; store room, staff room, boiler room, staff WC etc. Retractable soundproof partitions are proposed for the rear extension to provide more flexible space. The proposed extensions consist of approximately 100 sqm (front extension: 37.7 sqm, rear extension: 61.7.sqm).

Key Issues for Consideration

- 1) Principle of Development
- 2) Impact of proposed development on Conservation Area (Design and materials);
- 3) Impact on Open space / Amenity area / Landscaping
- 4) Sustainable Development

1) Principle of Development

Policy CW1 (New Community / Health Facilities) of the Haringey UDP 2006 supports the development of new community facilities in appropriate locations, where there is a local need, where it is accessible and where it can be used for more than one community purpose.

The site is in existing use as a public library, therefore, the principle of an extension of this use is acceptable, taking into account the identified demand by the Haringey Library Service. In addition, the proposed development is consistent with Policy G9 (Community Well Being) of the UDP (2006) which states that development should meet the borough's need for enhanced community facilities from population and household growth. The site has no specific development allocation within the Haringey UDP 2006.

2) Impact of proposed development on Conservation Area

Policy CSV1 (Development in Conservation Areas) requires that developments protect or enhance the character and qualities of the buildings and/or the Conservation Area.

Policy CSV5 (Alterations and Extensions in Conservation Areas) requires that such developments in Conservation Areas should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and retain / reinstate characteristic features such as doors, windows or specific materials. SPG2 (Conservation and Archaeology) also contains guidance with respect to Alterations and Extensions in Conservation Areas. Policy UD4 (Quality Design) requires proposals for alterations / extensions, which require planning permission, to be of high design quality.

As such, the proposed development needs to be assessed in terms of the impact of the proposed design and materials on the Conservation Area.

The assessment of the proposal in design terms is addressed in two parts; the front and rear extensions.

Front Extension

Design / Scale / Layout

The forecourt area of the library is a positive and important area of public space. The proposed front extension protrudes into this area and it is considered would have the effect of splitting the forecourt area, and hence would affect the overall character of it. However, it is acknowledged that the applicant has reduced the size of the front extension, from that originally conceived, in order to reduce its impact on the streetscape and forecourt. In addition, the overall forecourt area, will not be lost, with the proposal resulting in the creation of a new public realm area, taking into account the proposed landscape treatment of the forecourt. The front extension shall not extend beyond the build line of the existing parade of shops to the north, therefore, would not result in a break in this continuity.

The design of the front extension is considered to reflect features of the existing building, taking into account the panelling effect and rounded edges. Amendments have been made to the specific detailing of the front elevation, rectifying what was considered to be an irregular arrangement of panels and glazing. The revised detailing and fenestration of the front elevation is now considered appropriate in terms of reflecting the character of existing frontage.

The existing decorated gates, which are a feature of the entrance way are proposed to be rehung in front of the new entrance, therefore, retaining this feature.

Materials

It is considered that the choice of panelling / cladding materials are of primary importance to ensure the proposed front extension integrates with the existing. This is particularly the case due to the specific grid panel feature of the front elevation and the existing colour theme, which is integrated in the frontage. Agreement on the specific use of materials is recommended through condition.

Rear Extension

The rear courtyard area functions as a residential amenity area, with a small children's play area. The proposed section for the rear courtyard is currently underutilised and it is considered the proposed rear extension would rejuvenate this courtyard area and make it more appealing for users. The rear extension is not in a prominent position and it is not considered would have a detrimental impact on the character of the Conservation Area or on residential amenity. As just stated, it is considered it would enhance this rear courtyard area.

The Conservation Officer has recommended refusal of the application on the basis of a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area (see Conservation Officer recommendation above).

It is noted that the parade of shops immediately to the north of this site has a long established building line at ground floor which goes to the back of pavement; therefore it is not felt that the front extension to the library, which only occupies a small proportion (around 20%) of the whole frontage, is so harmful as to warrant refusal, subject to appropriate materials being used.

3) Impact on Open space / Amenity area / Landscaping

There are two specific areas of amenity open space affected by the proposed development. The first area is the area of public open space, which consists of the forecourt, fronting onto the High Road. The proposed development would result in the loss of a section of this public realm, however, a new area of public realm shall be created through landscape treatment works. It is proposed to retain the Cherry tree and the London Plane tree within the forecourt.

A landscape scheme is proposed for the front courtyard area, as part of the planning application. This focuses on planting, paving and seating to enhance this area. It is considered that the approval of a detailed landscape scheme shall be required through condition, to ensure appropriate treatment of this area. The proposed rear extension involves the removal of 3 small trees. The opportunity for replacing these trees should be investigated and included within the detailed landscape scheme.

The rear extension would result in the loss of part of the courtyard at the rear of the property. Access to this area is restricted to those who reside in the surrounding apartments. The small area of playground facilities in this courtyard would not be affected by the rear extension.

The existing rear elevation of the library is not of particular aesthetic quality, for example, the barred rear windows detract from the welcoming environment. As such, it is considered that the rear extension has the opportunity to open up this courtyard and address it positively. The proposed rear extension would occupy an area of the rear courtyard which is currently underutilised and which does not contribute significantly to this area. Policy OS10 (Other Open Space) seeks to protect undesignated open space areas from inappropriate development. It is considered the policy is generally consistent with this policy.

4) Sustainability / Biodiversity / Energy Efficiency

Policy UD2 of the UDP contains the Council's sustainability objectives. A statement on Sustainability was included within the Design & Access Statement, as part of the planning application. The statement details the following as part of the development proposal.

Energy efficient glazing is proposed with long-life recyclable cladding material. In addition, thermal upgrading is proposed for the external walls and various specific fit-out features are proposed which would have benefits in terms of energy efficiency.

Policy OS11 of the UDP requires the protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the Borough. The Council encourages developments to enhance biodiversity within and close to buildings. The proposed extensions include the provision for sedum roofs, which can offer biodiversity benefits. As identified earlier, three existing trees are proposed for removal in the rear courtyard. It is considered that replacement planting should be proposed in the rear courtyard to replace the trees to be lost. Further details of this will be required to be agreed with the planning authority.

Subject to the above, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in sustainability terms.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The proposed development aims to provide additional accommodation for Coombes Croft Library to cater for the high demand for use and to allow for a greater range of facilities (such as meeting rooms), to be provided. This is proposed to be achieved through a front and rear single storey extension. The site is within North Tottenham Conservation Area. The principle of the extension, in terms of providing additional community facilities, is accepted, in accordance with Policy CW1 of the Haringey UDP 2006.

Front Extension

Overall, it is considered a front extension in this location would result in dividing the public forecourt area and would impact the setting of this area of public realm. However, this impact is sought to be minimised through the proposed front extension being of reduced scale. In addition, a new area of public realm shall be created through the proposed landscape treatment of the forecourt.

It is considered the overall design structure of the front extension does reflect certain features of the existing frontage, in terms of rounded corners and the grid panel panelling. The amended detailing and detailed fenestration in terms of the grid pattern panels and glazing pattern, is now considered acceptable in relation to the existing frontage. Agreement on the specific use of materials is recommended through condition.

Rear Extension

Overall the rear extension would be considered to be acceptable in this location, with no significant impacts on residential amenity and with no detrimental impact on the character or setting of the building or immediate area. It shall result in a positive use of this underutilised part of the courtyard.

It is recognised that the additional floorspace sought through this application is required for the library use and public benefit from this is acknowledged.

Taking the above into account, the proposal is considered acceptable and is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions detailed below.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION

Registered No. HGY/2008/0917

Applicant's drawing No.(s) 5226/1000, 1200A, 1201C, 1210, 1211B, 1212B, 1213A, 1250A, 1251A, 1252A, 1253A, 1260A

Subject to the following condition(s)

1. The development hereby authorised must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.
Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of the provisions of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.
2. The development hereby authorised shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specifications submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: In order to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details and in the interests of amenity.
3. Notwithstanding the description of the materials in the application, no development shall be commenced until precise details of the materials to be used in connection with the development hereby permitted have been submitted to, approved in writing by and implemented in accordance with the requirements of the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: In order to retain control over the external appearance of the development in the interest of the visual amenity of the area.
4. Notwithstanding the details of landscaping referred to in the application, a scheme for the landscaping of the application site with a schedule of species shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority prior to the completion of the development; such landscaping shall be implemented within 6 months of the completion of the development.
Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory setting for the proposed development and in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.
5. Details of a scheme depicting those areas to be treated by means of hard landscaping shall be submitted to, approved in writing by, and implemented in accordance with the approved details. Such a scheme to include a detailed drawing of those areas of the development to be so treated, a schedule of proposed materials and samples to be submitted for written approval from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure the development has satisfactory landscaped areas in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.
6. An Arboricultural Method Statement, including a tree protection plan, shall be prepared in accordance with BS.5837:2005 'Trees in relation to Construction' and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any works commencing on site.
Reason: To safeguard the health of existing trees which represent an important amenity feature.
7. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted a construction method statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development thereafter shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details. The statement shall include:
 - (i) Sequence of construction activity throughout each phase;
 - (ii) Location and specification of acoustic barriers;
 - (iii) Details showing how all vehicles associated with the construction of the development hereby approved are properly washed and cleaned to prevent the passage of mud and dirt onto the adjoining highway;

- (iv) Details of construction lighting and parking;
- (v) The methods to be used and the measures to be undertaken to control the emission of dust, noise and vibration arising from construction works;
- (vi) Details of boundary hoardings and measures to ensure they are maintained in a secure and tidy condition.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts, upon neighbouring residential amenity and does not have an adverse impact upon the Metropolitan Open Land.

8. The construction works of the development hereby granted shall not be carried out before 0800 or after 1800 hours Monday to Friday or before 0800 or after 1300 hours on Saturday and not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In order to ensure that the proposal does not prejudice the enjoyment of neighbouring occupiers of their properties.

Reason's for Approval:

The proposed development aims to provide additional accommodation for Coombes Croft Library to cater for the high demand for use and to allow for a greater range of facilities (such as meeting rooms), to be provided. This is proposed to be achieved through a front and rear single storey extension. The site is within North Tottenham Conservation Area. The principle of the extension, in terms of providing additional community facilities, is accepted, in accordance with Policy CW1 of the Haringey UDP 2006.

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