

COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: 18 April 2013 **Ward:** Guildhall
Team: Major and **Parish:** Guildhall Planning Panel
 Commercial Team

Reference: 13/00165/FUL
Application at: Robinson Court Walmgate York
For: Change of use of ground floor from office (use class B1) to 2
no. flats (use class C3) with external alterations
By: York Association For The Care And Resettlement Of
Offenders
Application Type: Full Application
Target Date: 14 May 2013
Recommendation: Approve

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of ground floor office space (Use Class B1) to form 2 No. flats (Use Class C3) at Robinson Court, Walmgate. The building is currently the headquarters for YACRO (York Association for the Care and Resettlement of Young Offenders) and provides accommodation and management offices in the adjoining residences in Robinson Court. The additional 5 no. bedrooms in 2 No. flats would allow YACRO to increase its capacity at Robinson Court. At present there is a waiting list of 43 customers for this type of accommodation.

1.2 Robinson Court is a two and three storey building that provides 12 No. 1 person bed-sitting rooms and 3 No. 2 person flats for special needs housing (7/05/7600/PA, permitted 8.1.1992). A single storey pitched roof extension at the rear was approved on 10.1.1996 to provide additional administrative and training facilities (7/005/07600B/FUL).

1.3 The current application seeks permission for 2 No. flats in the single storey rear extension and the ground floor offices. This would provide 5 No. additional study/bedrooms; 3 No. bedrooms in a flat fronting Walmgate accessed from the arched court and 2 No. bedrooms accessed from the garden fronting Pavers Lane. A small office would be retained within the rear extension and this would be occupied by the scheme managers.

1.4 Internally, the alterations would involve a refit to provide residential accommodation of an acceptable standard. Externally, 2 No. windows and 2 No. doors would be inserted in the side elevations of the building. They would be designed to match the existing doors and windows. Access would be improved by

providing a ramp adjacent to where an existing window would be replaced by a door.

1.5 This application would result in new residential accommodation in 2 No. flats in 63.6 sq.m and the retention of 5.4 sq.m office space.

1.6 The application is presented to Sub-Committee at the request of Cllr. Brain Watson as the changes would result in alterations to the management of Robinson Court. The presence of the on-site office was fundamental to the complex by providing supervision that has led to the success of the venture.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

Areas of Archaeological Interest GMS Constraints: City Centre Area 0006

Conservation Area GMS Constraints: Central Historic Core CONF

City Boundary GMS Constraints: York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams GMS Constraints: Central Area 0002

Listed Buildings GMS Constraints: Grade 2; 114C Walmgate York YO1 2TL 0909

Listed Buildings GMS Constraints: Grade 2; Gate Approx 100m SW St Margarets Church 0908

2.2 Policies:

CYHE3-Conservation Areas

CYGP1-Design

CYGP11-Accessibility

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

INTERNAL

3.1 Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development- No objections

3.2 Environmental Protection Unit- No objections

EXTERNAL

3.3 Guildhall Planning Panel- No objections

3.4 Safer York Partnership – In terms of security and management, having discussed the application with YACRO I have no issues or concerns with the application.

4.0 APPRAISAL

4.1 Key Issues

- Use
- Visual impact
- Impact on neighbouring amenity

POLICY CONTEXT

4.2 National planning policy is now contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). It advises that local planning authorities should support a strong town centre economy and conserve and enhance the historic environment.

4.3 The relevant development plan is the City of York Council Development Control Local Plan (2005). The Development Control Local Plan was approved for Development Control purposes in April 2005; its policies are material considerations although it is considered that their weight is limited except where in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. POLICY HE3 seeks to protect the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The policy states that proposals for development in conservation areas should reflect street proportions, which are given to floor heights, door and window sizes and disposition. POLICY GP1 is a general design policy in the Local Plan that, inter alia, seeks to ensure that new development respects its surroundings. POLICY GP11 seeks to support improved accessibility to existing and new developments.

ASSESSMENT

USE

4.4 The proposal to increase additional accommodation at Robinson Court stems from a pressing need to increase specialist accommodation. The existing housing scheme has been successfully managed, and the applicant has provided the following information to support the conversion of the rear annexe to 2 No. additional flats.

4.5 Currently, on site supervision takes place in the main building site where keyworkers, support staff, and a night worker have an open plan office. There would be no change to this. Robinson Court would remain a 24 hour staffed scheme and has the benefit of a full, monitored CCTV system covering the main building and the annexe, including a new camera covering the proposed new doorway. Staffing levels at Robinson Court have been agreed by Supporting People, who commission the service to ensure high quality supervision. There is a close liaison with North Yorkshire Police and there are no concerns about the proposed increase in residential capacity. YACRO also monitors a CCTV camera on the police's behalf

covering Margaret Street and the area around the One Stop, which has already aided investigations into a serious offence.

4.6 It is intended that the two scheme managers will continue to work from the annexe in the proposed office space. The main administration of Robinson Court is being run off-site from Tower House Business Centre, Fishergate. It contains a state of the art IP Telephone exchange system which answers the phone in Fishergate and connects callers to the Robinson Court site.

4.7 On the basis of the above information, it is considered that the loss of office accommodation within the main building and annexe would not detrimentally affect the management of Robinson Court. As such, the proposed residential use would be compatible with the surrounding residential uses in the locality and the conservation area. There would be no conflict with Policy HE3 of the Local Plan.

VISUAL IMPACT

4.8 The proposed external alterations to the building would match the existing and would not detract from the appearance of the modern building. The location of the proposed ramp would be visually contained and would not detract from either the building or the wider conservation area. It is considered that the alterations would respect their surroundings and comply with Policy GP1 of the Local Plan.

NEIGHBOURING AMENITY

4.9 The area is largely residential and the addition of 2 No. flats within the existing built form of Robinson Court would not detrimentally affect neighbouring amenity levels. There would be no conflict with Policy GP1 of the Local Plan.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The proposed additional residential accommodation at Robinson Court would meet a perceived and pressing need without impinging on the successful management of the scheme. There would be no conflict with Planning Policies HE3, GP1, and GP11 of the Local Plan and national policy guidance as contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

1 TIME2 Development start within three years -

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and other submitted details:-

Drawing " Robinson Court: North Wing Proposed Plan Version 7," Received 25 January 2013

Drawing " Robinson Court: North Wing: Proposed Elevations, rev A, Received 25 January 2013

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:- Notes to Applicant

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal, subject to the conditions listed above, would not cause undue harm to interests of acknowledged importance, with particular reference to the use, the impact on the listed building, neighbouring amenity and flood risk. As such the proposal complies with Policies GP1, GP11, and HE3 of the City of York Development Control Local Plan (2005); and national planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework(2012).

2. STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL`S POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE APPROACH

In considering the application, the Local Planning Authority has implemented the requirements set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) in seeking solutions to problems identified during the processing of the application. The Local Planning Authority took the following steps in order to achieve a positive outcome:

- Additional information about the use as requested and detailed in email of 20.3.2013
- Additional plan for clarification

Contact details:

Author: Fiona Mackay Development Management Officer (Wed - Fri)
Tel No: 01904 552407