



**North Northamptonshire Area Planning Committee  
(Thrapston)  
29 March 2023**

<b>Application Reference</b>	<b>NE/22/01044/FUL</b>
<b>Case Officer</b>	<b>Chris Hill</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>37 High Street, Irthlingborough, NN9 5TE</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>Conversion of building to 4No 1 Bed flats, together with two storey rear and side extension and change of use from retail / storage to residential.</b>
<b>Applicant</b>	<b>NMT Developments - Mr Richard Neale</b>
<b>Agent</b>	<b>Mr Nick White</b>
<b>Ward</b>	<b>Irthlingborough</b>
<b>Overall Expiry Date</b>	
<b>Agreed Extension of Time</b>	<b>02 June 2023</b>

**Scheme of Delegation**

This application is brought to committee because of a sustained objection by the Town Council, 5 or more objections from the public have been received, and by decision of the Planning Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

**1. Recommendation**

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- 1.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.

**2. The Proposal**

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- 2.1 The proposed development is for the change of use an existing commercial building, located at No. 37 High Street, Irthlingborough from Class E (Commercial, Business and Service) to that of Use Class C3 (Residential). It also proposes a two storey side and rear extension that would outlook eastwards onto Spinney Road.

- 2.2 The north facing elevation, facing the High Street, would retain the ground floor shop-style window. The existing timber sash window on the first floor would be refurbished.
- 2.3 The east facing elevation of the existing building, facing Spinney Road, would be altered in the following ways:
- Conversion of existing doorway to that of a timber sash window at ground floor.
  - Additional first floor timber sash window at first floor.
  - Replacement timber panelled door, located approximately at the midpoint of the overall elevation.
  - Side/rear extension set back 0.29 metres from the existing front elevation.
- 2.4 The extension would measure 5.974 metres in width, be 4.787 metres in depth, be 7.005 metres in maximum height to ridge and 4.296 metres in height to eaves. It would include a pair of ground floor timber sash windows at the ground floor facing Spinney Road, and a pair of flat roof lead clad dormers to serve the first floor roof space. The south facing elevation, facing in the direction of No. 4 Spinney Road, would present a gable end with a single ground and single first floor timber sash window. The two storey element described above would sit in front of an existing single storey element and enclose a small rear bin and cycle storage, accessed via a gate accessed from Spinney Road. It would be enclosed by an existing boundary wall and partial close board fence replacement. Two conservation style roof lights would be located on the west facing roof of the extension.
- 2.5 The extension is proposed to be constructed of stone to match the existing stone of the building and its extension. It would feature a slate roof to match the existing, black UPVC rainwater goods and timber lintels over ground floor openings.
- 2.6 Of the proposed residential units, unit 1 and unit 3 would be located within the ground and first floor of the existing building, specifically the corner element adjoining the High Street and Spinney Road. Unit 2 and 4 would be located in the ground and first floor of both the southern end of the existing building and proposed extension. The singular doorway facing Spinney Road would serve as the communal entrance for all four units. No parking is proposed for the development. No communal amenity space is provided.

### **3. Site Description**

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- 3.1 The application site is situated within the settlement of Irthlingborough and comprises a two-storey end-of-terrace dwellinghouse with existing ground floor retail use. The dwelling is not itself a listed building, but is opposite both 62 and 64 High Street both of which are Grade II listed. The site also lies within Irthlingborough Conservation Area (CA) and within 2 kilometres of the Upper Nene Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA).

- 3.2 The building itself has a number of boarded up windows and entrances, which are assumed to be due to a poor state of repair. The building is otherwise in a generally reasonable state of repair. The southern end of the building is itself an extension, permitted in 1976 and assumed to have been constructed shortly after such granting of permission.
- 3.3 The existing permissible use of the building is that of a Class E (Commercial, Business and Service). It is presently vacant.

#### **4. Relevant Planning History**

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- 4.1 76/00558/FUL - Extension to shop premises – Granted 16.06.1976

#### **5. Consultation Responses**

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A full copy of all comments received can be found on the Council's website [here](#)

##### **5.1 Irthlingborough Town Council**

Comments received 01.09.2022:

OBJECTION on the following grounds: -

1. Loss of retail premises in a run of shops where the others are still used as businesses - computer consultants and café.

2. Overdevelopment - If the building were to be converted into four flats, the flats would be very small and poorly designed with unit 1 having the former shop window in the bedroom.

3. Replacement Windows - The proposed aluminium windows are not in keeping with the existing windows in the non-statutory historic terrace property within the Conservation area.

4. Insufficient parking - the extension is proposed on the current parking area. This leaves no parking provision. The property is on the corner of the High Street/Spinney Road which is a busy junction with very limited visibility. There is no close on road parking provision.

5. Conservation Area - the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area

Comments received 11.01.2022:

Irthlingborough Town Council's Planning Committee have considered the amendment to Planning Application NE/22/01044/FUL and wish to return the following response:-

OBJECTION on the following grounds: -

1. Loss of retail premises in a run of shops where the others are still used as businesses – computer consultants and café.
2. Overdevelopment – If the building were to be converted into four flats, the flats would be very small and poorly designed with unit 1 having the former shop window in the bedroom.
3. Insufficient parking – the extension is proposed on the current parking area. This leaves no parking provision. The property is on the corner of the High Street/Spinney Road which is a busy junction with very limited visibility. There is no close on road parking provision.
4. Conservation Area – the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area

## 5.2 Neighbours / Responses to Publicity

5 of letters of objection have been received. The issues raised are summarised below:

- Inadequate parking provision in the vicinity.
- Blocking of pavements for pedestrian use from parked vehicles.
- Nearby planning permissions will intensify nearby parking.
- Loss of parking on site.
- Contrary to Development Plan policy.
- Loss of privacy.

## 5.3 Local Highway Authority (LHA)

Comments received 06.09.2022:

In respect of the above planning application, the local highway authority (LHA) has the following observations, comments and recommendations:

o Please note that parking beat survey parameters are incorrect however, this is a moot point as the application does not demonstrate any intensification of use, with the requirement for a 1-bedroom flat is 1 parking space with 0.25 visitor spaces per dwelling. This results in a total of 5 parking spaces, with the existing retail use totalling 5.3 spaces. Therefore, the LHA can confirm no objections to this application.

## 5.4 Waste Management Team

Comments received 06.09.2022:

The plan as shown presents issues for waste storage and presentation. The council does not provide 360 litre wheeled bins as illustrated on the Floor Plans. We would require space to either:

Store and manoeuvre a pair of 1100 litre wheeled bins. The access as shown is barely wide enough to allow 1100 litre bins to be moved in and out (these are typically around a metre wide) as it is too narrow. The cycle storage area

would also provide an unnecessary obstacle to manoeuvring 1100 litre bins which should be stored closer to the highway for emptying. It is not clear if the access could be made wide enough for 1100 litre wheeled bins - these should be located in the area currently marked "planting" which would also be more acceptable for the distance collection crews would have to move them.

Or

Each flat would be provided with its own 180 litre refuse and 240 litre recycling bin plus food collection caddies. However, these would be crowded in the space as shown which would cause concern for their correct use and the ease with which residents would be able to wheel the appropriate bin to the highway for collection.

Comments received 14.12.2022:

Previous comments from Waste have been acted upon and as such the waste arrangements are now acceptable

## 5.5 Natural England

### SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENGLAND'S ADVICE DESIGNATED SITES [EUROPEAN] - FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED

The proposal is within the zone of influence of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA), and therefore is expected to contribute to recreational disturbance impacts to the bird populations for which the SPA has been notified.

Mitigation for these impacts is available via a financial contribution towards a strategic mitigation project, set out within the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document.

Notwithstanding this, Natural England's advice is that this proposed development, and the application of these measures to avoid or reduce the likely harmful effects from it, may need to be formally checked and confirmed by your Authority, as the competent authority, via an appropriate assessment in view of the European Site's conservation objectives and in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

## 5.6 Environmental Protection Officer

I have had the opportunity to view the submitted application for NE/22/01044/FUL - Conversion of building to 4No 1 Bed flats, together with two storey rear and side extension and change of use from retail / storage to residential at 37 High Street Irthlingborough NN9 5TE . Environmental Protection have no objections, however, would ask for the following conditions to be placed on the planning permission to preserve residential amenity during construction.

#### Hours of work

No construction work (including deliveries to or from the site) that causes noise to be audible outside the site boundary shall take place on the site outside the hours of 0800 and 1800 Mondays to Fridays and 0800 and 1300 on Saturdays, and at no times on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the protection of the local amenity throughout construction works

#### No burning

There shall be no burning of any material during construction, demolition or site preparation works.

Reason: To minimise the threat of pollution and disturbance to local amenity.

### 5.7 Principal Conservation Officer

Comments received via telephone conversation on 11.11.2022:

- No objection in principle.
- Wholesale use of Timber Sash Windows & avoidance of metal framed windows, including extension
- Removal or shortening of door conversion facing Spinney Road.
- Need to include pre-commencement condition requiring historic building recording, the submission of material samples and joinery details.

## **6. Relevant Planning Policies and Considerations**

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### 6.1 Statutory Duty

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### 6.2 National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

National Design Guide (NDG) (2019)

### 6.3 North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) (2016)

Policy 1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 2 - Historic Environment

Policy 3 - Landscape Character

Policy 4 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy 5 - Water Environment, Resources and Flood Risk Management

Policy 6 - Development on Brownfield Land and Land Affected by Contamination

Policy 8 - North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles

Policy 9 - Sustainable Buildings and Allowable Solutions

Policy 11 - The Network of Urban and Rural Areas

Policy 28 - Housing Requirements and Strategic Opportunities

Policy 29 - Distribution of New homes

Policy 30 - Housing Mix and Tenure

6.4 Emerging East Northamptonshire Local Plan (LPP2) (2021)

EN1 - Spatial development strategy

EN3 - Settlement boundary criteria – freestanding villages

EN13 - Design of Buildings/ Extensions

EN14 - Designated Heritage Assets

EN15 - Non-Designated Heritage Assets

IR1-A - Provision for Housing in Irthlingborough

6.5 Other Relevant Documents

Northamptonshire County Council - Local Highway Authority Standing Advice for Local Planning Authorities (2016)

Northamptonshire County Council - Local Highway Authority Parking Standards (2016)

East Northamptonshire Council - Domestic Waste Storage and Collection Supplementary Planning Document (2012)

East Northamptonshire Council - Trees and Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (2013)

East Northamptonshire Council - Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document (2016)

## **7. Evaluation**

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The key issues for consideration are:

- Principle of Development
- Character, Layout and Historic Environment
- Impact on Neighbouring Amenity
- Highway Matters

### **7.1 Principle of Development**

7.1.1 The proposed development is for the change of use of the ground floor from retail to residential, extensions and subdivision of the property into 4 flats. From the submission, it appears that the 1st floor of the property is also ancillary to this retail space, being labelled as 'store' or 'store room'. Policy 11 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2016 (JCS) identifies Irthlingborough as a 'Market Town' where residential development is broadly supported. Policy 29 of the JCS also echoes Policy 11 whilst also encouraging the re-use of previously developed land. This is also reflected by Paragraph 120 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF).

7.1.2 There is no made Neighbourhood Plan for Irthlingborough. The first stage occurred in December 2014 when an area was designated, but there is no draft or submitted version of a plan. There has been no examination of a plan and given the limited progress, no weight can be attributed to such.

7.1.3 Emerging planning policy in the Local Plan Part 2 for the East Northamptonshire Area shows the property to be located within the designated Town Centre of Irthlingborough but not within the designated

Primary Shopping Frontages. Policy EN21 of the emerging Local Plan Part 2 sets the requirements for development within Town Centre boundaries and there is potential for this policy to change as the examination of the Local Plan, which is ongoing, progresses.

- 7.1.4 As such, it is not considered that the location of the proposed development requires the applicant to demonstrate commercial viability. As such, the principle of residential development on the site is considered to be acceptable subject to compliance with the below policy considerations.

## 7.2 **Character, Layout and Historic Environment**

- 7.2.1 Policies 2, 8(d) and 30 of the JCS seek for developments to not cause adverse harm to the historic environment and the character of the local area and to provide adequate external and internal amenity space in accordance with the National Space Standards as minimum.
- 7.2.2 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Planning Authority to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting. Section 72(1) of the same act imposes a requirement that special attention should be paid to the desirability that the character or appearance of the conservation area should be preserved or enhanced.
- 7.2.3 The dwelling is not itself a listed building, but is opposite both No. 62 and 64 High Street both of which are Grade II listed. The proposed development is within the Conservation Area. It is considered a reasonable position to take that the existing area presently used for storage and informal parking does not contribute positively to Spencer Road or the Conservation Area.
- 7.2.4 The proposed schedule of changes to the existing building, including the insertion of new timber sash windows and partial blocking of an existing doorway, are considered to result in a balanced architectural appearance that would read in a visually congruent manner with that which exists. The retention of the 'shop front' window and the sole use of timber sash windows would result in an appearance not unlike that which presently exists. The partial blocking or conversion to a window of the existing entrance is not considered to negatively harm the appearance of the building, nor that of special character of the Conservation Area or setting of the nearby listed buildings.
- 7.2.5 The proposed extension of the building is located to the south of the existing building and its 70s extension, along Spinney Road. Spinney Road is itself a mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century focused development featuring a number of red-brick dwellings and community buildings (namely the Salvation Army building) of single storey and two storey heights.
- 7.2.6 The proposed extension would be subservient to the host building, being both set back and lower in ridge height. It would be constructed of materials to match the existing, including stone and slate tiles. Windows would be expected to match the existing timber sash windows. Details of materials and joinery would be conditioned as part of any granted permission.



- 7.2.7 Whilst Dormer Windows are not readily present within this part of the CA, it is considered that they would be an appropriate means of ensuring the extension is subservient to the host building. They are to be lead clad, an appropriate response within the Conservation Area. On balance they are considered an appropriate elevational treatment. The rear elevation includes 'Conservation Style Rooflights' which would again be an acceptable approach. All of these windows would be expected to be fully detailed through a planning conditioned attached to any granted permission.
- 7.2.8 Owing to the scale of the proposed development and visual separation, it is not considered that it would have any impact on the setting or special character of No. 62 and 64 High Street nor that of Grade I listed building St Peters Parish Church.
- 7.2.9 Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would not harm the architectural and historical merits of the Conservation Area and that of the local character. The proposed design of the converted dwelling is considerate of its existing character and would not give rise to any harm to the special character of the Conservation Area. As such, the proposed development complies with Policy 2 and 8(d) of the JCS and Paragraph 202 of the NPPF.

### 7.3 **Impact on Neighbouring Amenity**

- 7.3.1 The proposed development would introduce residential living to the ground floor of both the existing building and the proposed extension. As previously noted, the site is not within a protected commercial location and is also in immediate proximity to a great number of residential properties that include street facing windows. It is not considered reasonable therefore to resist the proposed development for this reason alone.
- 7.3.2 In terms of impact neighbour amenity, the proposed development would have no significant impact on the amenity of dwellings across Spinney Road or that of the High Street owing to the existing highway creating adequate front to front separation.
- 7.3.3 The proposed rooflight windows serving the first floor of the extension would be 1.8 metres above the floorplate of Unit 4. They would not therefore afford the property any overlooking of neighbouring properties nor adversely impact their privacy.
- 7.3.4 The south-east elevation of the extension features a pair of windows on the ground floor and first floor. Both of these windows serve a bedroom and both of these bedrooms are served by an additional window facing onto Spinney Road. No. 4 Spinney Road has first floor windows serving habitable rooms that would sit approximately 10 metres and 13 metres away at between a 30 and 45 degree angle. Given this, it is considered reasonable that these windows be conditioned as part of any granted permission to be obscure glazed and fixed shut. As the bedrooms that feature in the extension are both served by an additional window it is not considered that this will have any undue impact on the internal amenity of future residents in terms of light or air circulation. The proximity of the proposed extension is not considered

to give rise to any unacceptable impacts in terms of overbearing development or loss of light.

7.3.5 The proposed dwellings would all provide adequate internal amenity space in line with National Space Standards and Policy 30 of the JCS.

7.3.6 The proposed flats do not have private external amenity space except for that which is provided for bin and cycle storage. However, given the town centre location, proximity to public open space and dwelling type this would not be considered inappropriate.

7.3.7 Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would not cause any adverse harm to the residential amenity of any neighbouring property and thus is compliant with Policy 8(e) of the JCS.

#### 7.4 **Highway Matters**

7.4.1 The existing use of the site is that of commercial usage and would under NCC Local Highway Authority Parking Standards (2016) result in the expectation of the provision of 5.3 parking spaces. The proposed development that would result in 4 one-bedroom flats would require a single parking space per flat and 1 total visitor space, resulting in parking expectation of 5 parking spaces. At present, prior to any development, the site can accommodate 2 parking spaces measured in accordance with the LHA standard dimensions.

7.4.2 The LHA have expressed that they would not object to the proposed development as it does not result in any intensification of the use of the site. Additionally, the 'parking spaces' are not formally allocated parking provision under any approved plan and would not be required for retention as such with or without planning permission.

7.4.3 The applicant has also submitted a Parking Beat Survey with snapshots undertaken between 00:30-05:30hrs on a Wednesday and Thursday and 00:30-05:30hrs on a Sunday, all in July. The degree of parking 'Stress' was shown to be within reasonable parameters. The LHA have expressed that the undertaking of the assessment within July may have underrepresented the 'Stress' as July is a 'down time' for parking surveys. However, it is the opinion of this Officer that the demonstrated stress and availability of parking observed during a site visit is such that the LPA cannot reasonably dispute the findings of this Parking Beat Survey.

7.4.4 Additionally, per the comments of the LHA, the PBS is not strictly required as the parking expectation intensity of the proposed development is less than that which presently exists. Additionally, the existing area that may or may not be used for parking is not a formally required space under any existing permission and cannot be assumed to be retained were planning permission to be refused.

7.4.5 4 cycling store spaces are provided within the enclosed area, 1 per flat.

7.4.6 Therefore, when considering the lowered intensity of parking requirement, the existing informal conditional spaces that do exist and the LHA not

sustaining an objection, it would not be considered reasonable to refuse the proposal on highways grounds alone.

## **7.5 Ecology**

7.5.1 The application site is located within 3km of the Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area. The associated Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) requires that applications for residential development make appropriate mitigation for the impact of bird populations on this area. The relevant amount has been requested and paid and as such the proposal is acceptable in this respect.

7.5.2 The building appears to exhibit no features that would provide obvious habitats or features of ecological significance. There is no reason to indicate the development would affect any protected species, and the proposal is considered acceptable in ecological terms.

## **8. Other Matters**

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8.1 Equality Act 2010: It is not considered that the proposal raises any concerns in relation to the Equality Act (2010). The flats are accessed via stairs only with no lift access. This would likely mean the accommodation would not be accessible to persons requiring wheelchair access or who have other mobility needs requiring a lift.

8.2 Neighbour comments: Are addressed in the above assessment.

8.3 Flood Risk and Drainage: As the development would not introduce any new impermeable surface, the development is not considered to cause any drainage issues.

8.4 Waste: The submission includes adequate bin storage facilities, accessed via the gate off of Spencer Road. The Council Waste Management Team have commented that the provision and arrangement are acceptable.

8.5 Amenity for future occupiers: All of the four flats exceed the minimum space requirements set in the National Space Standards. All of the habitable rooms are served by windows and would receive natural daylight. In respect of amenity, the accommodation is considered acceptable.

8.6 Housing mix: Policy 30 of the JCS expresses a preference for developments to include smaller dwellings of 1-3 bedrooms. The development is exclusively 1-bedroom units and therefore contributes to meeting this need and policy required. This weighs in favour of the development.

## **9. Conclusion / Planning Balance**

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9.1 The proposed development is in accordance with the adopted policies in relation to residential development. It would provide four residential units in a sustainable location near to services and facilities. The existing commercial use, presently vacant, is not in a location identified as a protected use. The design of the development is considered to be

sympathetic to the setting within the Irthlingborough Conservation Area and within the setting of the nearby Listed Buildings.

- 9.2 The lack of parking provision is of detriment to the proposal. However, the submitted Parking Beat Survey, whilst not of the parameters the LHA would usually seek does demonstrate that parking in the immediate vicinity is not over stressed. Regardless, the existing use would generate a higher parking requirement than that which is proposed and would not therefore be resisted on the lack of parking alone. The proposal is otherwise considered acceptable in terms of ecology, private amenity impact and access.

## **10. Recommendation**

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- 10.1 That planning permission is GRANTED subject to conditions.

## **11. Conditions**

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1. The development permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the application form dated 08/08/2023 and the following approved plans:

EXISTING PLANS, ELEVATIONS, SECTION & LOCATION PLAN – Dwg. No. 0122 S 01 Rev A (As Location Plan only)  
PROPOSED PLANS, ELEVATIONS & SECTIONS – Dwg. No. 0122 SK 01 Rev D

Reason: To define the terms of the planning permission and to ensure that the development is carried out as permitted.

3. Prior to the development above the slab level, full details of the external materials, joinery details and window, doors and rainwater goods for the development hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained in perpetuity. Samples of materials and product details must be provided to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policies 2 and 8 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2016.

4. There shall be no burning of any material during construction, demolition or site preparation works.

Reason: To minimise the threat of pollution and disturbance to local amenity.

5. No construction work (including deliveries to or from the site) that causes noise to be audible outside the site boundary shall take place on the site outside the hours of 0800 and 1800 Mondays to Fridays and 0800 and 1300 on Saturdays, and at no times on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the protection of the local amenity throughout construction works

6. The proposed windows shown on the south-east elevation serving Unit 4 and Unit 2 seen on approved plan 'PROPOSED PLANS, ELEVATIONS & SECTIONS – Dwg. No. 0122 SK 01 Rev D' marked on the drawing with '\*\*' shall be obscure glazed, fixed shut and retained as such in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interest of neighbouring amenity.