

Recommendation: Conditional approval	
20171563	25 EDGEHILL ROAD
Proposal:	CONSTRUCTION OF 1ST AND 2ND FLOOR EXTENSION TO PROVIDE ANCILLARY OFFICE; KITCHEN AND DINING FACILITIES TO PLACE OF WORSHIP AND COMMUNITY HALL (CLASS D1); ALTERATION TO GROUND FLOOR (AMENDED PLANS REC'D 14/11/17)
Applicant:	RCCG, COVENANT OF GRACE PARISH
View application and responses	http://rcweb.leicester.gov.uk/planning/onlinequery/Details.aspx?AppNo=20171563
Expiry Date:	12 January 2018
SSB	WARD: Troon



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Summary

- The application is for a first and second floor extension to a single storey building in community use.
- There is no provision for off street parking.
- The site has unrestricted use with no conditions.

- The application is before committed because there have been more than six objections.
- The recommendation is for approval subject to conditions.

Introduction

The application relates to a single storey detached building located within a primarily residential area. The building is currently used as a place of worship and a community centre. There is a rear garden with a large detached shed used for storage. The property is surrounded by residential properties to all sides and has been extended to the front. There is no provision for off street parking.

Background

The premises have been used as a community hall and more recently a prayer hall for many years. A small extension has been added to the front some time ago. There are no hours of use restrictions, nor any other existing planning conditions.

The Proposal

The proposal is for demolition of the front extension and construction of a two-story extension over the existing single storey structure. It would measure approximately 13.5m deep at first floor level and 11.5m at second floor and would be 7.3m wide at its widest point. The front of the building would have a pitched roof and the bulk of the rear would have a flat roof. Windows are proposed to the front and rear elevations.

The materials proposed are facing red bricks, concrete tiles, UPVC windows and doors and timber fencing to the side and rear. There would be an increase in floor space of approximately 85sq.m. The proposed hours of use are indicated as 0900 to 1800 daily with 1300 closing on Sundays.

The proposal has been amended by the removal of the single storey hall extension to the rear and a reduction in the depth of the upper floors of the proposal from 14.5m to 13.5m. It has also been moved away from the neighbouring house at No 23. Plans suggest that the “storage” building to the rear will be used as a second hall.

Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012:

- The presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Paragraph 11: Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- Paragraph 12: further provides that proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

- Paragraph 14: contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking.
- Paragraph 17: Secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- Paragraph 32: Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
- Paragraph 56: describes good design as a key aspect of sustainable development and
- Paragraph 58: states that planning policies and decisions should use streetscapes and buildings to create attractive places and respond to local character and history reflecting the identity of local surroundings and materials.

Paragraph 14 further provides that for decision taking this means proposals should be approved unless:-

- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or
- specific policies in the NPPF or the local plan indicate development should be restricted.

Vehicle Parking Standards & 6C Design Guide.

Residential Amenity – Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Development plan policies relevant to this application are listed at the end of this report.

Consultations

Pollution and Noise Control - No comments.

Representations

- There have been two objection and two petitions with 27 signatures (some repeated) objecting to the proposal. The concerns expressed are:-
 - This is a residential area;
 - There is no dropping off point for users;
 - The mosque (39 Edgehill Road) has resulted in increased traffic;
 - This is a one-way street which means parking is limited;
 - New houses being built in the street will increase traffic;
 - Lack of parking provision means people stop in the middle of the street and
 - Disturbance because of noise especially on Sundays

Consideration

I consider that the main issues in this case are: the principle of the development; impact upon the character & appearance of the area; amenity of neighbouring occupiers; access and parking.

Principle of Development

Policy CS08 of the Leicester Core Strategy (2014) states that the provision of new facilities will be supported where they meet the identified needs of local communities, and seeks to retain existing places of worship in order to ensure provision for a wide variety of religious groups active in the City.

It goes on to say that the Council will seek to retain existing places of worship in order to ensure provision for the wide variety of religious groups active in the City. In considering proposals for new places of worship the Council will take account of the demand for it within the local neighbourhood, the scale of activities for which it is likely to be used and the nature of the area around it.

The building is currently occupied by Redeemed Christian Church of God, Covenant of Grace. They say that the intention is not to cater for additional members but to provide better facilities for the existing congregation in the form of office space (second floor) and a kitchen and dining facilities (first floor). It will increase the number of employees from two to four. The prayer hall would not be increased in size and the increase in employees is negligible. Following the amendments I consider that the proposal is acceptable.

Character and Appearance

The current building is single storey structure and adds little to the character and appearance of the area being constructed of pre-fabricated concrete with a brick extension to the front. This would be replaced by a three story structure, of similar materials and similar in height to the adjoining houses with a pitched roof. It would have an appearance appropriate to a residential area.

I consider that the proposal is acceptable in terms of design, character and appearance.

Amenity

The original proposal was a much larger extension, and would have covered the much of the rear garden area. It would also have had a detrimental impact upon the outlook of the neighbouring properties. This has been amended to an acceptable size and the outlook of the neighbouring properties is no longer significantly affected. The rear part of the two-storey extension is set in line with the rear wall of the property at No 27 and therefore it has no significant impact upon their outlook or privacy. On the southern side (No 23) the proposal is deliberately set away from the neighbour so as to avoid breaching the 45° guidance. There are no side windows to the proposal it therefore has no significant implications for loss of privacy.

No issues regarding noise have been evident however with an increase in activities it may result in an increase in the level to the detriment of nearby residential properties. Therefore as a precaution I recommend an appropriate condition to keep any future noise levels to an acceptable level.

Access and Parking

The existing site has no off-street parking. The proposal includes the alteration of the existing access to provide 3 car parking spaces (1 disabled) on the frontage and cycle spaces could be provided to the rear of the site (conditioned). The highway authority has no concerns as long as there is no increase in additional worshippers or additional persons on site at any one time.

The church may not require parking provision late in the evening when the need for parking by residents is at its greatest. The proposal also allows for some form of a travel plan to be agreed with the organisation once implemented this would improve the existing situation for the benefit of all users. I therefore recommend a condition that a Travel Plan be agreed with the authority and implemented as such.

The property is close to public transport on Gipsy Lane and Barkby Road which facilitates the use of alternative modes of transport. NPPF Paragraph 32 states *...."Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe"*.

I therefore do not consider that a refusal on highway grounds can be sustained.

Hours of Use

The existing premises have no restriction in hours of use. The applicant is prepared to accept limited hours of use which are from 0800 to 2000 hours daily, thus allowing an element of control over the use of the premises.

Conclusion

The proposal is for an extension to an existing community facility and place of worship which does not increase the size of the prayer hall. The proposal has been reduced in size so as to minimise the impact upon the neighbouring properties. The extension has the benefit of improving the appearance and character of the street.

Most of the traffic problems are existing and the provision of three parking spaces improves the current situation. It allows for a Travel Plan to be introduced in order to improve upon the current situation. The impact of the proposal can be mitigated by appropriate conditions. The proposal complies with the NPPF and local policies CS08 and PS10 and is therefore acceptable.

I recommend APPROVAL subject the following conditions:-

CONDITIONS

1. The development shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission. (To comply with Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.)
2. The use of the 1st and 2nd floor and the detached building to the rear of the premises shall be restricted to an ancillary use to the main use of the ground floor of the premises as a community and prayer hall. (In the interests of the amenities of nearby occupiers, and in accordance with policy PS10 of the City of Leicester Local Plan.)
3. The new walls and roof shall be constructed in materials to match those existing. (In the interests of visual amenity, and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS3.)
4. The use of the site shall not be carried on outside the hours of 0800 to 2100 hours daily. (In the interests of the amenities of nearby occupiers, and in accordance with policy PS10 of the City of Leicester Local Plan.)
5. Before the occupation of any part of the development, all parking areas shall be surfaced and marked out in accordance with the approved plans submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority, and shall be retained for parking and not used for any other purpose. (To ensure that parking can take place in a satisfactory manner, and in accordance with policy(ies) AM11 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)
6. No part of the development shall be occupied until a Travel Plan for the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority and shall be carried out in accordance with a timetable to be contained within the Travel Plan, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council. The Plan shall: (a) assess the site in terms of transport choice for staff, users of services, visitors and deliveries; (b) consider pre-trip mode choice, measures to promote more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling, car share and public transport (including providing a personal journey planner, information for bus routes, bus discounts available, cycling routes, cycle discounts available and retailers, health benefits of walking, car sharing information, information on sustainable journey plans, notice boards) over choosing to drive to and from the site as single occupancy vehicle users, so that all users have awareness of sustainable travel options; (c) identify marketing, promotion and reward schemes to promote sustainable travel and look at a parking management scheme to discourage off-site parking; (d) include provision for monitoring travel modes (including travel surveys) of all users and patterns at regular intervals, for a minimum of 5 years from the first occupation of the development brought into use. The plan shall be maintained and operated thereafter. (To promote sustainable transport and in accordance with policies AM01, AM02, and AM11 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and policies CS14 and CS15 of the Core Strategy).

7. No part of the development shall be occupied until the following works have been carried out in accordance with the written details approved in advance by the City Council as local planning authority: (a) alterations to footway crossing have been carried out to the satisfaction of the local highway authority. (To ensure a satisfactory means of access to the highway, and in accordance with policy AM01 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)
8. No part of the development shall be occupied until secure and covered cycle parking has been provided and retained thereafter, in accordance with written details approved by City Council as local planning authority. (In the interests of the satisfactory development of the site and in accordance with policy AM02 of the City of Leicester Local Plan).
9. There shall be no live or amplified music or voice played which would be detrimental to the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties. (In the interests of the amenities of nearby occupiers, and in accordance with policy PS10 of the City of Leicester Local Plan.)
10. This consent shall relate solely to the amended plans received by the City Council as local planning authority on 14/11/17, unless otherwise submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority. (For the avoidance of doubt.)

Policies relating to this recommendation

- 2014_CS08 Neighbourhoods should be sustainable places that people choose to live and work in and where everyday facilities are available to local people. The policy sets out requirements for various neighbourhood areas in the City.
- 2006_AM02 Planning permission will only be granted where the needs of cyclists have been incorporated into the design and new or improved cycling routes should link directly and safely to key destinations.
- 2006_AM11 Proposals for parking provision for non-residential development should not exceed the maximum standards specified in Appendix 01.
- 2006_PS10 Criteria will be used to assess planning applications which concern the amenity of existing or proposed residents.
- 2014_CS03 The Council will require high quality, well designed developments that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the local natural and built environment. The policy sets out design objectives for urban form, connections and access, public spaces, the historic environment, and 'Building for Life'.