

PLANS BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Plans Board held on Wednesday, 19th November, 2008 at 6.00 p.m. in the Civic Offices, Telford

PRESENT: Councillors I.T.W. Fletcher (Chairman), R.G. Chaplin, J.A. Francis, G.M. Green, A.A. Meredith (Vice-Chairman), F.R. Picken, H. Rhodes and M.J. Smith

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor K.T. Blundell (planning application W2008/1038) and Councillors V. Tonks and H. Williams (planning application W2007/1254)

PB-53 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Plans Board held on 29th October, 2008 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

PB-54 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

PB-55 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor I.T.W. Fletcher declared a personal and prejudicial interest in planning application W2008/1006 and indicated his intention to leave the room during discussion thereon.

Councillor F.R. Picken declared a personal interest in planning application W2008/1006 and indicated his intention to leave the room during discussion thereon.

PB-56 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION

- (a) W2007/1254 – Plot E, Pool Hill/Doseley Road, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire

This was an outline application by English Partnerships (EP) for residential development on a plot of land, approximately 1.21 ha in size, to the east of Doseley Road and north of Pool Hill, Dawley. It was irregular in shape and the steeply sloping nature of the highest parts to the north and east would require substantial earthworks to provide suitable development platforms. The site had the benefit of an extant S7(i) approval under the New Towns Act but EP had now agreed to submit new planning applications for all of their undeveloped sites in order to take account of recent changes in legislation and government guidance. The site is also shown as a housing site in the Wrekin Local Plan.

Members were informed that a revised Urban Design Concept Plan had now been received, as tabled. This was still based upon the amended plans as sent out with the agenda but clarified the proposals. The revised Plan demonstrated that the site could accommodate thirty-five dwellings if one apartment block at the northern end of the site was only two storeys in height. Should the block be three storeys in height or differently configured in terms of the size of the dwellings, then the total number could increase; the applicant was now suggesting a range of development of between thirty-three and thirty-seven dwellings. The remainder of the development would be a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings with the development areas being linked by a footpath running north to south.

A desk top study had been carried out to consider the potential issues of land contamination, shallow mining, existing mineshafts and land stability. There were four mineshafts within the site and two close by, which would restrict the area available for development. These shafts had been plugged but not capped and it would be necessary to provide an appropriate stand-off. As this was an area of shallow mine workings and the former site of a gasworks, there could be some associated land contamination and further investigation would be necessary. Radon gas was present on the site, which would be dealt with through an appropriate condition, as shown on the tabled update report.

The Highways Officer had no objections in principle to the development, subject to the provision of two suitable access points of Doseley Road and the provision of a two metre wide footpath along Doseley Road to link the development to the existing footpath network to Dawley Centre. A contribution of £12,000 had been agreed for improvements to the footpaths to the nearby primary and secondary schools.

In terms of drainage the site was likely to be unsuitable for the use of soakaways and alternative methods to reduce surface water flows would be required before it entered the sewers in Duckett Drive. The flood risk assessment had suggested that some form of intervention might be required to limit surface water from outside the site, particularly to the north, and therefore, surface water drainage issues would need to be carefully considered at the reserved matters stage.

In order to accord with Policies LR4 and LR6 of the Wrekin Local Plan the applicants had agreed to pay a contribution of £600 per dwelling to be used to improve/upgrade nearby play provision at Dawley Park. The Council's Housing Section had suggested that provision be made for affordable housing on the site and, given the difficult ground conditions and the cost of remediation, 22.5% affordable housing had been agreed, which would provide eight affordable houses. This would be split on the basis of 10% shared ownership and 12.5% social rented. As the potential number of dwellings on the site had now been reduced by the applicants, the Council had reconsidered the contribution required to offset the development of primary education and this had now been agreed at £1,250 per dwelling excluding any one-bedroom dwellings.

Great Dawley Parish Council had expressed concerns over the proposed number of new dwellings given that the site was on a dangerous road sited on a steep hill with no traffic calming measures. Eight letters of objection had been received from households close to the site and a petition with eleven names objecting to the development. The main points of concern were set out in the report.

On balance officers were of the view that the site was suitable for residential development provided that appropriate account was taken of the levels, mineshafts, potential contamination, highway requirements and drainage. These issues could be covered by appropriate planning conditions. The suggested layout would provide an appropriate and acceptable response to the constraints of the site and to the opportunities provided.

Councillor Helen Williams, one of the Ward Members for Dawley Magna, was invited to speak to the Board and outlined her concerns. Pool Hill was an unlined, single track road, with a blind bend at one point, which was used by children on their way to and from local schools and other local facilities. The Parish Council was currently seeking to have it designated a Safe Route to School with access restricted to residents. Therefore, the additional traffic resulting from this application would increase the existing road safety issues. In addition, there were existing drainage problems in the in the Duckett Road area, which would also be exacerbated by additional dwellings. In view of these comments, Members agreed that a Site Visit be made before the application was determined.

RESOLVED – that planning application W2007/1254 be deferred to the next meeting of the Board to give Members the opportunity to make a site visit.

(Councillors I.T.W. Fletcher and F.R. Picken left the room prior to discussion of the following application in accordance with their previously declared interests. The Chair was taken by Councillor A.A. Meredith, Vice-Chairman of the Board.)

(b) W2008/1006 – Former Windsor Flats, Arleston Lane, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

This application was in respect of the demolition of the existing Windsor Flats and the redevelopment of the site with a combination of eleven two bedroom flats, three three-bedroom houses and a four-bedroom house to provide a total of twenty units.

Subsequent to the despatch of the agenda, an objection had been received from the owner of the adjacent BT site, who had produced documentary evidence to show that they had a permanent right of access across the site. Their objection was on the grounds that the proposed scheme would prejudice their right to cross and re-cross the site to access their land. In response the architects had slightly revised the layout of the site to allow

direct access into the neighbouring land and it was now considered that the revised layout resulted in a satisfactory layout whilst facilitating appropriate access onto the adjacent land.

Additional information had also been submitted in respect of the ground stability of the site but the Council's Geotechnical Officer was now satisfied that, subject to conditions in respect of the design of the foundations of the property and the retaining wall to the car park together with a condition on the nature of material infilling the site, the development could proceed.

It was recommended that additional conditions, as tabled, be attached to the planning permission to take account of the additional information submitted relating to site access, ground stability together with the proximity of the proposed dwellings to the Holyhead Road, which would require noise alleviation measures.

It was considered that the proposed development was in accordance with national and local planning policies being a previously developed site. The existing structure on the site was a three storey building with a flat roof with little or no architectural features other than the window themselves and a brick course in between the first and second floors. The proposed elevation to Bennetts Bank would present an asymmetrically designed property rising to four storeys on the eastern end and down to a three-storey structure on the western side. There would be infill panels between the windows and the central service would be in set slightly to help to break up the massive brickwork at the front. The walls would be a combination of light buff brick, off-white render and cedar panels and there was to be a sedum roof. This combination was felt to provide visual character to the building so complementing that of the surrounding area. The proposed layout optimised the number of apartments that could be provided on the site whilst at the same time minimising the impact to the neighbouring properties on the western boundary. In this respect it was considered that the proposal complemented Policy UD6 and the corridor designation fronting the site. In respect of the other elevations fronting the public domain, given the boundary treatments to the east and west, the site was relatively independent from its neighbours on either side and would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area.

As part of the development proposal, the parking arrangements had been amended to include additional parking spaces to the eastern side of the site, which would necessitate cutting into the adjacent bank and the removal of some of the trees above. The Council's Arboricultural Officer considered that these trees did not have any particular value but that a landscaping scheme to plant replacements would be appropriate.

The Council's Highways Engineer had raised concerns on a number of matters, as set out in the report but, following amendments to the scheme by the applicants, these concerns had now been addressed. The Council's Outdoor Recreation Officer had raised concerns regarding the loss of the provisional play space detailed on-site in the original drawing, which was to be

removed to facilitate additional parking. The update report tabled at the meeting informed the Board that a Section 106 Agreement for a contribution of £12,000 (£600 per dwelling) had now been agreed in lieu of the provision of on-site play space.

Members welcomed the proposal for a development which would be of benefit to the site and its surrounding area.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application W2008/1006 the Head of Planning & Environment be granted delegated authority to grant planning permission subject to the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement to provide a financial contribution of £12,000 towards outdoor recreation provision and to the amended conditions set out in the report update tabled at the meeting.

(c) W2008/1033 – Pear Tree Bridge Inn, Holyhead Road, Oakengates, Telford, Shropshire

This application was in respect of the change of use of the former public house into six one-bedroom flats and the erection of two semi-detached houses on land to the rear and a new block containing four two-bedroom flats on land to the side together with associated external works. The site, which lay on the corner of Holyhead Road and Dukes Hill, was bounded by a dance school to the east and existing residential development to the south.

The conversion of the public house would mainly entail internal alterations with the only major external change being the introduction of a pitched roof over an existing flat roof together with the addition of two small porches. The two semi-detached houses facing Dukes Hill would fill an existing gap in the street frontage and had been designed to reflect the type and style of the adjoining terraced houses along this road. No vehicular access would be provided along Dukes Hill.

The three storey apartment block would contain four garages on the ground floor and two two-bedroom flats on both the first and second floors. Each of the one-bedroom flats would have a small amenity and bin storage area with the two houses and the four two-bedroom flats having their own private rear garden areas.

Eleven parking spaces would be provided at the front of the site which, together with the four garages, would accommodate the parking requirements of the whole development, all of which would use one point of access onto Holyhead Road. A pedestrian path would link the two new houses with the parking area. Low brick walls would be provided along the back edge of the pavements to both Holyhead Road and Dukes Hill to give a sense of enclosure and privacy and, where possible, shrub planting would be included to soften the edges of the hard paving and parking areas at the front of the site.

One letter of objection had been received from a local resident on the grounds

of loss of light, increased noise and disturbance, more traffic, parking problems, increased drainage problems, and anti-social behaviour problems. Oakengates Town Council had objected on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site, inadequate parking provision, and encroachment onto the pavement at the Holyhead Road/Dukes Hill junction.

The Council's Highways Engineer had no objections to the proposed development subject to an agreement which secured a contribution of £5,000 from the applicant to implement a Traffic Regulation Order and associated double yellow lining across the site frontage, if it was deemed necessary in the interests of highway safety. He also recommended the imposing of a condition relating to the surfacing of the access, parking spaces and turning areas in a bound material. The provision of a total of fifteen parking spaces on the site was felt to be acceptable for twelve units, six of which would be one-bedroom flats, considering the type of accommodation to be provided and the relative proximity of Oakengates Centre.

The application site lay within a predominantly residential area and was shown as 'white land' on the Wrekin Local Plan. The public house had been closed for over six months due to it not being viable and the brewery had, subsequently, placed the empty building for sale on the open market. There were several other public houses within walking distance of the application site and Oakengates District Centre was only 600 metres away. Therefore, the loss of this community facility was not an issue. The application site had become untidy over the last few months and it was considered that the proposed development would substantially enhance its appearance and greatly improve the street scene.

It was considered that the proposed residential development of conversion and new build, with the provision of a mix of flats and houses, related positively to its context by respecting and responding to both the characteristics of the site and the prevailing townscape of the immediate area around it. The development would not have an adverse effect on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties by virtue of any undue overlooking, loss of light, or any overbearing effect.

Whilst Members agreed that the condition of the site needed addressing, concern was expressed regarding the proposed parking provision and the potential for increasing the existing problems with on-street parking on Dukes Hill and Wesley Drive. They asked if the yellow lines could be installed as soon as the development was completed rather than waiting for any parking problems to be identified as was the current intention. The Highways Engineer had proposed that yellow lines be installed across the site frontage but the Manager, Design & Development informed the Board that he could be requested to extend these to Dukes Hill and Wesley Drive, given their concerns for these areas.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application W2008/1033::

- a) **planning permission be granted subject to the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement relating to a financial contribution of £5,000 towards the implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order and associated parking restrictions and to the conditions as set out in the report;**
- b) **the Council's Highway's Engineer be requested to consider implementing the Traffic Regulation Order at the earliest opportunity and extending it to include Dukes Hill and Wesley Drive.**
- (d) W2008/1038 – Land adjacent to Princess Royal Hospital, Apley Castle, Leegomery, Telford, Shropshire

This application sought planning permission for the erection of a temporary, demountable and modular single storey building as a GP surgery facility with three consulting rooms, treatment rooms, offices and ancillary facilities. The timber framed building, 38.5 metres long, 9.75 metres wide and 3 metres high, would be clad with 9mm plywood and painted to give a rendered finish. The site was a fairly flat grassed area to the north west of the hospital and would be screened from the surrounding area by a mature hedge along Whitchurch Drive and by mature trees to the south.

Following submission of the original application, it had subsequently been clarified that the facility would be an independent GP surgery with no association or connection to the Princess Royal Hospital, although access to the surgery would be through the hospital grounds with thirty new car parking spaces being provided next to the building. It was intended that the surgery would have a patient list of approximately 5,000-6,000 patients and would provide full primary care services. The applicant, the Telford & Wrekin Primary Care NHS Trust, had identified key areas, such as Hadley & Leegomery, which currently had an under provision of medical centres. It was envisaged that the temporary surgery would be required for a maximum of six years during which period the PCT would be reviewing the local North Telford area to identify an alternative and permanent site for the practice. It had been confirmed that, at the end of the six year period, the building would be demolished and the land reinstated to its present condition.

Although the application site was designated as Green Network, Policy OL4 of the Wrekin Local Plan stated that the Council might permit development subject to the proposal meeting the relevant criteria, as set out in the report. Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council had objected to the proposal on the grounds that it did not contain significant community benefits to justify location within the Green Network and the pressure which would be placed on the already stretched parking facilities at the hospital. The Council's Leisure Services had stated that, although there might be a community gain associated with the proposed development, there would be no environmental benefits. Therefore, it had suggested that, to compensate for this loss of open space, consideration should be given to requesting a financial contribution from the applicants to be used to enhance the adjacent Silkin Way and Apley

Castle Park. The fundamental integrity of the Green Network would be preserved as the existing grassed area around the application site would be retained.

Although the application site lay on the periphery of residential areas, it was considered that this was an acceptable location for a temporary surgery. The site lay relatively near to a regular bus route, adequate parking could be provided, and it would have only a limited impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It was, therefore, considered that the application did comply with Policy OL4 of the Wrekin Local Plan and Policy CS10 of the LDF Core Strategy by virtue of providing essential community services and benefits to the people of Apley/Leegomery.

Councillor Karen Blundell, the Ward Member, was invited to address the Board. She agreed with the provision of a GP surgery for the area but said that the proposed site would not serve the best interests of the public given its location on the periphery of Apley/Leegomery. An alternative site closer to the centre of Leegomery would be more accessible and would have the added benefit of protecting an area designated Green Network. She asked the Board to defer making a decision on the application so that the applicant could further investigate alternative sites.

Other Members of the Board supported her concerns and said that the applicant should be encouraged to seek an alternative site closer to the centre of Leegomery.

RESOLVED – that planning application W2008/1038 be deferred and the applicant requested to identify an alternative site.

(e) W2008/1147 – Sutherland School, Gibbons Road, Trench, Telford, Shropshire

This application by Telford & Wrekin Council requested planning permission to site a demountable building to provide accommodation for an exclusion unit on the car-park adjoining the school. The building would be single storey, timber framed and clad in cedar wood. The appearance would be acceptable, and the proposed site for the building would have little significant impact on the amenities of the adjoining residential area.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application W2008/1147 planning permission be granted for a temporary period of five years subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

PB-45 SITE VISIT

RESOLVED – that a Site Visit be made in respect of planning application W2007/1254 at 3.30 p.m. on the 10th December, 2008.

PB-46 PLANNING APPLICATIONS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

The Board received for information details of planning applications that had been determined under delegated powers.

The meeting ended at 6.45 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: