

PLANS BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Plans Board held on Wednesday, 22 July, 2009 at 6.00 p.m. in the Civic Offices, Telford, Shropshire

PRESENT: Councillors I.T.W. Fletcher (Chairman), J.A. Francis, R.G. Chaplin, V.A. Fletcher (substitute for Councillor N.A. Dugmore), G.M. Green, F.R. Picken, H. Rhodes and M.J. Smith

PB-17 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Plans Board held on 1 July, 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman subject to minute number PB-8 being amended to read PB-16.

PB-18 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

Councillor N.A. Dugmore

PB-19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

PB-20 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION

(a) W2009/0337 – The Stores, Shop Lane, High Ercall, Shropshire

This application sought permission for the erection of an extension to the rear of the first floor flat above the existing shop which, together with the surrounding buildings, had been rebuilt recently (W2007/9651). A similar application (W2008/1365) had been refused, as detailed in the report. Ercall Magna Parish Council had requested that the current application be considered by the Plans Board as it was of the opinion that there was no issue of overlooking and that the design was acceptable. The Plans Board at its meeting on 1 July, 2009 had deferred determination of the application to enable a Site Visit to be undertaken.

The report drew Members' attention to the relevant planning policies. Policy UD2 expected development proposals to be of an appropriate design quality which related positively to its context and respected and related to any adjacent buildings and Policy CS15 required development to positively influence the appearance of the local environment. In addition, guidance contained in PPS1 stated that good design should contribute positively to making places better for people; design which was inappropriate in its context should not be accepted.

This proposal was for a first floor rear extension to provide extended bedrooms. It differed from the application refused in February 2009 by showing an amended roofline and an obscured window at the rear. The extension would result in the first floor rear elevation of the building being 2.1m closer to the rear elevation of no.4 Park Lane. This was similar to the

situation which had been considered unacceptable in the previously withdrawn application (W2007/0024) which the Local Planning Authority had not supported. The resultant separation distance from the first floor habitable room windows of 16.9m was considered inadequate, failed to respect or relate positively to the neighbouring dwelling and, as such, would have a detrimental impact upon mutual privacy. Since submission of the application the rear window had been amended to be obscurely glazed, so as to overcome the issues of overlooking. However, as it would be an escape window under building regulations, it was required to be opened which would not, therefore, mitigate against the detrimental effects of overlooking. In addition, as this room was a large double bedroom, the need for an outlook was considered necessary for the amenity of the occupant. Accordingly, the proposal was deemed contrary to Policy UD2 of the Wrekin Local Plan and guidance contained in PPS1.

The proposed rear extension itself was also considered unacceptable. It would introduce a hipped roof onto a building which was characterised by gable and parapet walls between each unit and the width of the extension at 9.1m, would be 0.3m wider than the existing gables. As the existing roof was finished with a parapet wall, the proposal would not respect this and would be an uncharacteristic addition and, therefore, of an inappropriate design. In addition, the brick to void ratio was considered unacceptable. Although, this had been broken up by some brick detailing since the previous application, it would not significantly alter the design to break up the brick to void ratio.

Furthermore, the proposal immediately backed on to the rear elevation of no. 4 Park Lane and would have an impact on the residential amenities by virtue of their outlook. Therefore, the proposal failed to relate positively to its context or positively influence the appearance of the locality. Accordingly, the proposal was deemed contrary to Policy UD2 of the Wrekin Local Plan, CS15 of the Local Development Framework and guidance contained in PPS1.

It was also recognised that the proposal abutted the extended Conservation Area and, as such, should not only respect and reinforce this setting, but preserve and enhance it; thus providing a greater emphasis on the need for high quality developments than previously required. Consequently, as the quality of proposals must be increased to address this, it was considered that the proposal failed to meet Policy HE3 which sought to respect and reinforce the context of the adjacent Conservation Area.

The Council's ecologist had raised no objections to the proposal but had requested an informative be attached to any approval with regards to the potential for bats. Three letters of objection had been received from two of the neighbouring properties to the rear, as outlined in the report.

Councillors V.A. Fletcher, J.A. Francis and R.G. Chaplin having visited the site were of the view that the application should be approved. Councillor V.A. Fletcher said that the impact of the proposed extension on numbers 4 and 4a Park Lane would not be any greater than the existing properties opposite to them and that they were already overlooked by an existing window. In

response the Planning Officer clarified that this was a bathroom window and, thus, not deemed to be a habitable room, whilst the proposed extension to the bedrooms would be habitable. In addition, Councillor V.A. Fletcher said that she was of the view that an extension to the rear of the shop would not have an adverse effect upon the Conservation Area to the front.

On being put to the vote the officer recommendation to refuse the application was not approved and on being put to a second vote it was:

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application W2009/0337 delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning & Environment to approve the application subject to appropriate conditions being negotiated with the applicant.

(Councillor G.M. Green abstained from both votes as she had not been able to attend the Site Visit.)

Reason for Approval

The proposed extension would have no adverse effects upon the amenities of the adjacent residents and the design was considered to be compatible with that of adjacent properties.

(b) W2009/0435 – Trench Lock Interchange, Trench Lock, Trench, Telford, Shropshire

This application by Telford & Wrekin Council sought advertisement consent to display seven non-illuminated advertisement signs to replace those currently displayed at various locations on the three islands at Trench Lock Interchange. The proposed signs would be 1200mm across and with an overall height of 900mm when displayed on their metal posts. This size had been agreed with the Council's Highways Officer as being an acceptable size which would not detract from highway safety or result in an unacceptable amount of visual clutter. The proposed signs were, therefore, considered acceptable in this urban location and would not detract from the amenity and character of the surrounding area. Similar sized signs to promote local businesses were already a feature on many roundabouts in Telford as part of the Telford & Wrekin Community Sponsorship scheme.

The Planning Officer reported at the meeting that the Council's Highways Engineer had expressed concern no details of the content of signs had been received and that the letters and numbers on the proposed signs could be too small. It was, therefore, agreed that he be requested to advise of a suitable condition that could deal with the size of text and that could be added to any approval. In addition, it was requested that the Council's Policy, Performance & Partnership Unit be notified of these concerns about the text when submitting any future applications for sponsored signs.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application W2009/0435 delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning & Environment

to grant advertisement consent following the end of the consultation period subject to:

- (i) The Council's Highways Engineer advising of a condition to deal with the size of letters and numbers for this and any future advertisement signs on roundabouts;**
 - (ii) The conditions set out in the report with the addition of an extra condition relating to the size of letters and numbers for signs as advised by the Council's Highways Engineer.**
- (c) W2009/0457 – St. Lawrence C of E School, Preston, Shropshire

This application by Telford & Wrekin Council requested permission to extend the existing demountable classroom situated on the school site. The existing timber demountable classroom building was an established structure on the school site and, although quite a large building, the nearest boundary with the adjoining dwelling was well-screened and the demountable, with a low-pitched roof, would not be visually intrusive. It was, therefore, considered that the proposal to extend 5.5 metres on the rear of the demountable was acceptable. The resultant extended classroom would have little additional effect on the amenities of the surrounding area and would match the external appearance of the existing demountable building.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application W2009/0457 planning permission be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

- (d) W2009/0488 – John Randall Primary School, Queen Street, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire

This detailed application by Telford & Wrekin Council requested permission for the erection of a timber shelter to provide a cover for the existing outdoor classroom located adjacent to the existing demountable classrooms. As set out in the report, the Early Years Foundation Strategy curriculum required schools to be able to teach indoor activities outdoors, a requirement which was met by the provision of an outside designated learning area. However, weather constraints meant that the School was not able to take full advantage of this amenity and, therefore, submitted this proposal for covered area.

The proposed timber materials would be sympathetic to the adjacent classroom and would have a tanalised finish. Furthermore, the structure would not be visible within the streetscene or the wider landscape and would not result in any loss of play area or parking. In addition, there were no nearby neighbours. As the number of pupils at the school would not be increased as a result of this development, a Travel Plan was not required. Accordingly, it was considered that the proposed development was compliant with both local and national guidance.

The Council's Engineer had recommended an informative in relation to land stability due to the previous mining operations in the locality.

RESOLVED –that with respect to planning application W2009/0488 planning permission be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

- (e) W2009/0517 – Burton Borough School. Audley Avenue, Newport, Shropshire

This application sought planning permission for an extension of the existing car park to add a further 24 spaces at the front of the School together with a new exit point onto Audley Avenue to enable vehicles to use a one-way system through the car parking area. The application was part-retrospective with an aggregate track running through the centre of the site.

There were no Parking Standards for Schools in PPG13 (Transport) but those identified in the Wrekin Local Plan had been used as a guide to parking provision in this instance. There were currently 104 full-time members of staff with on-site parking provision of 89 spaces, a shortfall of 23 spaces. The proposed extension would provide an additional 24 spaces for staff and visitors thereby formalising an area that was already used as informal parking space.

The report originally submitted in respect of this application was amended by an update tabled at the meeting following submission by the Agent of an amended plan and revised Design & Access Statement. The original proposal had comprised the use of grasscrete for the car parking and turning area because of the high water table at the site; however it had since been established that the grasscrete cells would move due to the high groundwater. It was, therefore, now proposed to use tarmac with a French drain system (gravel filled trench) adjacent to the track to allow percolation of surface water. The turning area had been reduced, minimising any impact on the existing landscaping. The amended plan was principally the same as the original submission apart from the use of tarmac and the reduced turning area. The proposed materials were in keeping with existing development at the School and surrounding area and the amendment was, therefore, considered acceptable. In the DAS, Sport England had confirmed that the grassed area did not serve any sporting purpose and, as detailed in the report, the development would maintain the existing amenity provided by the trees and boundary hedge.

The proposed one-way system and access point for exit of vehicles was considered acceptable, as the junction is located close to the blocked off point of Audley Avenue, and would not create new access on to the main road. The development would continue the existing track through to the junction and utilise an existing gated entrance, thus not significantly altering the character of the site or the area.

The Council's Highways Engineer had confirmed that he had no objection to the scheme but, after speaking to the Council's School Travel Plan Co-ordinator, had requested that a condition be imposed on any consent to read:

'Within 6 months of the date of this permission, details shall be submitted of an updated School Travel Plan for the approval of the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Council's School Travel Plan Co-ordinator.'

The Highways Engineer's comments had been noted and the case officer reiterated that the conditions already proposed that a School Travel Plan should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The suggested wording above was considered suitable and it would not be necessary to impose a pre-commencement condition as in the original report. The officer recommendation, therefore, remained one of approval, with the addition of a further condition that the development should be carried out in accordance with the amended plans received on 21st July 2009.

Councillor V.A. Fletcher expressed concern at the adequacy of the French drain system proposed as part of the amended plans. The Planning Officer confirmed that no such concerns had been raised by the Council's Drainage Engineers but agreed that further investigation of the drainage arrangements could be requested prior to approval of the application.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application W2009/0517 delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning & Environment to approve the application subject to an additional condition stating 'C120 Development to be carried out in accordance with amended plan', the amendment of condition 2 to read 'Within 6 months of date of permission, submission of updated School Travel Plan', and to further satisfactory investigations being undertaken of the proposed French drain system.

(f) W2009/0528 – Priorslee Primary School Priorslee Avenue, Priorslee, Telford, Shropshire

The Chairman informed Members that, since the consultation period for this application did not end until 28 July 2009, he wished to propose that the application be deferred until the next meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED – that determination of planning application W2009/0528 be deferred to the meeting of the Plans Board on 12 August 2009.

PB-21 **SITE VISITS**

None.

PB-22 **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 6.30 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: