
TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

PLANS BOARD – 15TH OCTOBER 2009

Schedule 1 : Planning Applications for determination by Board

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Agenda Type : A

W2006/0608 Erection of 18 dwellings
Land off, Church Walk, Donnington, Telford, Shropshire.
Recommendation Code: FG
Ward: Donnington

APPLICANT:
Dordale

RECEIVED ON:
22/05/06

PARISH
Lilleshall & Donnington

WARD
Donnington

CASE OFFICER:
Kate Stephens

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to ask members to agree to a variation of an existing Section 106 agreement on an existing planning permission to allow fewer affordable houses to be built on the site, in light of the current recession and down turn of the economy.

BACKGROUND

Planning permission W2006/0608 was granted by members at Plans Board on 9th August 2006 for 18 dwellings. The design of the dwellings, at the suggestion of the Council officers, are contemporary with mono pitched roofs, timber cladding and render to reflect the highly planned and designed form of the flat roofed dwellings and their geometric orientation that surrounds this "island" site. The new development takes the form of an echelon arrangement with terraced blocks of two and three storey dwellings.

A S106 agreement was signed that required 1) not less than 38% affordable housing, 2) £500 per dwelling for leisure, 3) £28,101 towards primary education and 4) £10,000 towards bus shelters in the vicinity.

Construction has commenced and is well advanced on site with the majority of dwellings nearing completion. However, with the downturn in the economy, the reduction in land values, a reduction in both open market and affordable housing values since the development was started, the higher build costs of a modern high spec design development and unforeseen groundwork problems, the developer advises that the scheme is no longer viable and work on the site came to a halt earlier in the year.

The developer is asking for assistance in these difficult times to help complete the site. This assistance would take the form of reducing the number of affordable housing units in order for the development to break even. The S106 required 38% affordable, which equates to 6.8 affordable units (the Council would round this up to 7 - the developer has rounded down to 6). The developer is now requesting that this be reduced to 4 affordable units, which would be 22%. The developer has provided cost sheets to show costing and profits that would result from reducing affordable units to 4, 5 or 6. The developer's bank has been in contact with the Council to establish what matters remain outstanding on the site.

Whilst the developer has nearly completed the development, he has not paid any of the S106 monies owing to the Council. The developer advises that he will pay all the S106 monies upfront, with indexation. The Council can pursue these monies through legal means in any event.

PLANNING HISTORY:

During the life of the application the developer has sought 2 separate amendments that have resulted in the creation of additional units on site, but which are not the subject of the S106.

W2007/0968 – Erection of 4 dwellings (amendment to W2006/0608) Granted 6/9/07. This effectively sought a substitution of house types by horizontally subdividing two of the 4bed houses into four 2bed flats, with no new buildings on site. This took the overall number of units on site to 20, but there was no change to the S106, which still applied to the 18 units.

W2007/1441 – Erection of 6no. 1 bed flats (amendment to W2006/0608) Granted 18/12/07. This effectively sought another substitution house types by horizontally sub-dividing 2 of the three storey houses in to 6 flats, with no physical change or increase to the buildings. This took the overall number of units on site to 24, but there was no change to the S106, which still applied to the 18 units.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

Members will be aware of the difficulties facing developers in this current down turn in the economy, with some develops stopping building on site all together, whilst on some new sites affordable housing provision being negotiated at lower levels to reflect these poor economic times. Yet the Council must still try and deliver houses including affordable housing.

This site was fairly well advanced before the economy down turned – construction on this site came to halt in May this year. Officers concur with the aspirations of the developer that to finish off this site would help secure the deliverability of 24 units including affordable housing. In addition, local residents and the local area would benefit from a finished development rather than looking at a boarded up unfinished site.

It could appear that the developer has benefited from having an additional 6 units on site which are not subject to affordable housing requirements, and no having paid any of the S106 monies. However the developer advises that whilst the larger units would have commanded more money, their subdivision, the increased costs of fitting out (for example more kitchens, more bathrooms) and the down turn in the market means that profits will not be realised and the scheme is at risk of making a loss. Wrekin Housing Trust has verbally agreed to take the affordable units on site.

Officers consider that in these exceptional circumstances that a reduction in the number of affordable units to be provided on site would not be unreasonable. This would enable the development to continue to completion (that would benefit the local area and residents surrounding the site), the scheme would still deliver housing and affordable housing, and the S106 financial contributions for leisure (£500 per dwelling), education (£28,101) and Highways (£10,000) would still be provided.

Therefore officers agree to a reduction in the number of affordable units to 4 units instead of 6 or 7, equating to 22% of the original 18 units.

However, officers are keen to ensure that this particular situation is restricted, that the S106 monies are paid without further delay and that the reduction in the affordable housing provision is time limited and only applies at the current time (to reflect the current circumstances) and that if the economy improves before the develop is finished that the affordable provision is reviewed. To this effect the S106 should require the development to be completed by a certain time.

The developer has advised that Wrekin Housing Trust are interested in taking the affordable units. The developer has also advised that practically completion of the site is likely to b the end of April.

RECOMMENDATION: to amend the S106 to allow the % of affordable housing to be reduced to 22%, but that if the development is not completed by 30th April 2010, then affordable housing provision reverts back to 38%.

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2007/1732 Erection of 350 dwellings (Outline application)
Capewell Works, Sommerfeld Road, Trench Lock, Telford, Shropshire.
Recommendation Code: OLG
Ward: Ketley & Oakengates

APPLICANT:
Harrow Estates plc

RECEIVED ON:
20/12/07

PARISH
Oakengates

WARD
Ketley & Oakengates

CASE OFFICER:
Kate Stephens

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes

MAIN ISSUES: Suitability of the site for residential development, loss of employment land, highways and public transport, Green Network, affordable housing

THE PROPOSAL

This is an outline planning application for residential development for 350 dwellings to include access (with layout, scale, appearance and landscaping as matters reserved for later consideration). The 9.4ha (23 acres) site would propose a mix of detached, semi detached and terraced houses and some blocks of flats across approx 7.45ha of the site with 0.75ha being for open space and approx 1.45ha of existing woodland retained. The buildings would be predominantly two storeys with some three storey units. An indicative layout in the Design & Access suggests blocks of housing linked with estate roads and all accessed from a single access point off Sommerfeld Road that uses the existing site access. The D&A statement also indicates that the three storey blocks of apartments along the site boundary with the A442 will be single aspect to serve as an acoustic barrier. The residential density across the site (excluding the woodland area) would be approx 43 dwellings/ha.

Since the application was submitted, the applicant has recently requested that the application be for "up to 350" dwellings due to a change in the housing market and that flats have been hit harder than other sectors. The applicant considers that flexibility in the application description would support the attractiveness of the site to house builders and encourage early implementation. But in recognising officer concerns about a lower density development, the applicant would accept the imposition of a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare. Officers are prepared to accept this.

THE SITE

The site is vacant industrial land with offices and buildings belonging to the former Capewell Works and over the years have been used for various manufacturing and warehousing, and most latterly by Hutchinson UK. Since the application was submitted in December 2007 the site has been cleared of buildings.

The site is brownfield unallocated employment land and represents a large "windfall" housing development over 1 hectare. The site has no local plan designations and is

effectively “white land”, although part of the site that is currently woodland is designated as Green Network on the Wrekin Local Plan proposals map, but this is to remain as woodland and will not be built over.

The nearest corner of this 9ha site is located approx 400m metres from the mini roundabout junction with Trench Lock. The site lies adjacent to the A442 Queensway, but is not accessible from it, and adjacent to Middle Pool, which is an attractive local informal recreational/amenity facility with links to a network of footpath/cycle links including to the footbridge across the A442 giving pedestrian and cyclist access to Teague’s Bridge primary school and the Sustrans national cycle route 81.

Hadley District Centre is some 1300m away from the site entrance (taking a likely realistic walking route) and there is a Lidl supermarket on Castle Street over 900m away and the 24 hours off-licence/shop at the petrol station on Trench Lock will also offer some limited convenience top-up shopping nearby. A regular bus service No. 55 bus runs along Trench Lock every 30mins, although no buses travel along Sommerfeld Road or past the site itself.

The area around Sommerfeld Road is undergoing a gradual transformation from predominantly industrial to more residential. Although the Blockley’s brick works, Hadley Quarry and two small industrial estates still remain, the site at Trench Lock 1 near the junction with Trench Road is currently under construction for some 100 dwellings and the former Blockley’s site is now an established residential estate (Etura village). There are also impending plans to redevelop Hadley Quarry for housing in a phased manner as extraction winds up. There is an existing small industrial estate between the site and the Trench Lock 1 housing site currently under construction.

The site is heavily contaminated from previous industrial uses, which will require considerable remediation. There are also some unique drainage issues on site due to the maze of pipes and chambers beneath the site for the abstraction of mine water and to feed Middle Pool, including a serpentine chamber that removes iron ochre from the water.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Environment Agency:

Site is in Flood Risk Zone 1 which is at lower risk of flooding. Originally objected as the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) did not adequately consider flood risk nor demonstrate that risks could be safely managed, that run-off was no greater than on the existing site, that adequate attenuation could be provided, flood flow routes should Middle Pool overtop, no space shown for on-site storage. Flood flow routes should be considered, but can be conditioned.

Following additional FRA work and an Addendum Version 2, including work in response to the Council’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment work undertaken by Halcrow which also considered the Crow Brook, flood risk objection eventually removed on condition that development proceeds in accordance with the FRA and a drainage strategy to be approved by the Council’s drainage engineers.

With regards contamination, it is widespread across the site and there is a complicated surface water regime with peripheral discharge of mine water from Blockley's Quarry (an aeration ditch for the oxidation of iron compounds between the factory and Middle Pool).

With regards water flow, low attenuation, limiting contamination of surface run-off and protection of groundwater needs a careful sustainable drainage (SUD's) solution. Foul water disposal should be via foul sewer. Site requires soil and groundwater remediation and hence recommend various contamination and remediation conditions.

The site is opposite the New Acres Inert landfill site which has a PPC permit to dispose of inert wastes and the operators are required to monitor methane. As it is some distance from the site unlikely to pose any risk.

Biodiversity holding objection for nature conservation reports. However on receipt of additional information comments that support most of the Mitigation and Enhancement recommendations in the PCA Ecological Survey and Assessment Report (Dec 2007). However the recommendations do not address the existing water features on site and potential interactions with adjacent water features. The existing system that carries/treats the mine and ochre stained water plays an important role in filtering and improving this water – simply culverting/piping the water and bypassing the system would have impacts downstream. Always recommend that culverts are opened up where possible. Also loss of reed bed elements is a habitat concern as this is valuable biological treatment process and a national Biodiversity Action Plan. Also there may be impact on for Trench Pool which contains the protected White –claw Crayfish. Before any changes are proposed to the system, there needs to be a full evaluation to ensure the system at least provide improvement to water quality. Water sampling should be undertaken to establish degree of water pollution. If the pollution is just a matter of discolouration, then it should remain to support the existing wetland feature. However, toxicity will require appropriate remediation.

Severn Trent Water:

No objection subject to drainage condition for details of foul and surface water disposal.

British Waterways:

Maze of pipes and chambers beneath site relating to abstraction of mine water and feeding water to Middle Pool, and including the "serpentine" channel that removes iron ochre from the water. Need to safeguard water supply and its quality and proposals to remove the serpentine channel may put this at risk with iron ochre contamination. Developer should discuss with BW.

Council's Drainage Engineers:

Share Environment Agency's concerns about the FRA and that it is revisited particularly with regards possible flooding from the Crow Brook (following additional work done by consultants for the Council for Strategic Flood Risk Assessment work). PPS25 suggests that sequentially sites with less flood risk should be developed prior

to this site. Mines water drainage can be transferred in an alternative route through the wooded area but with a mechanism for treating pollutants. The Crow Brook should be kept open rather than culverted.

For surface water and sustainable drainage there needs to be attenuation on site to cater for 1 in 30 year storm events. Through the Council's draft strategic drainage SPD, the Council suggests a 50% reduction in surface water flows across the site from the existing situation (which exceeds standards set out in PPS25 and those used by the EA). The applicant suggested 12%, but the Council has accepted 30% and the applicant is prepared for this figure to be a condition. Flows in excess of this will require attenuation on site to a 1 in 100 year event (+30% for climate change). Also a flow routing exercise should be undertaken to show surface water flows paths crossing the site and that any SUD's features are appropriately located.

The Council would advise that the serpentine chamber should not be culverted and the Council is unlikely to grant Flood Defence consent for its culverting (as the land Drainage Authority).

Highways:

Initial concerns that the trip distribution onto the exiting highway network was inaccurate and that assumptions needed to be reviewed. Also need for junction improvements and a second point of access. Off-site improvements should also include improvement cycle/footpath links to the Silkin Way, enhanced Safe Routes to School, a Residential Travel Plan and enhanced public transport. Initial S106 contributions asked for were £80,500 for improvements to Trench Lock mini roundabout (equates to £230 per dwelling), signalised junction at Wombridge Way and £30,000 for footpath/cycle path improvements to link site to Teague's Bridge Primary School and Wrockwardine Wood secondary school.

Following further traffic assessment and modelling work and discussions between the Council's highway engineers and the applicant's highway consultant, it has been agreed that a signalised junction at Wombridge Way will no longer be required. The revised S106 requirements therefore agreed are:-

- £80,500 for improvements to the mini roundabout at Trench Lock,
- £30,000 towards improvements and./or provision of cycleway in vicinity of the site,
- £30,000 for improvement of pedestrian routes to school.

Geotechnical engineers:

The mining report shows there to be a mineshaft within the site boundary – a minimum development standoff of 20m must be observed from the shaft. If the shaft is due to be within land that is to be adopted by the council or in public open space the shaft should be treated to a standard agreed in writing with us. Impose untreated mineshaft condition. Mine workings should not be a problem on the site, however a mining informative should be included on any consent.

Leisure/Recreation:

Initially requested £600 per dwelling for improvements to off-site children's play at Wombridge (as a compromise for on-site NEAP and to allow the applicant more developable space), together with suggestions for improved disabled access to

Middle Pool, improved drainage of Oakengates sports pitches, modernisation of Oakengates Leisure Centre and upgrading or nearby Hartshill Park.

Following further discussions the applicant has now agreed to provide an on-site LEAP together with a financial contribution of £100,000 towards improvements of the existing off-site play facilities at Wombridge.

Environmental Health (contamination):

Site is on former foundry, gas works and rubber work. Suggest contamination conditions for ground investigation and remediation.

Environmental Health (pollution control):

- The majority of the site falls within Noise Exposure Category (NEC) C during the day whereas the majority falls within NEC B during the night but with the section along side the A442 still falling within NEC C.
- Advice in PPG24 advises that planning permission should not normally be granted for sites falling within NEC C, but where no quieter sites are available, conditions should be imposed to protect against noise.
- If minded to grant planning permission then the standards that the applicant proposes in the noise assessment are the minimum and should be improved upon, by using the “good” and “moderate annoyance” standards.
- The design of the blocks of flats will have to achieve the “good” and “moderate” standards.
- With regards Dust Monitoring and Air Quality, the Blockey’s Brickworks have to keep the highway clean with a mechanical road sweeper, but there are intermittent dust problems from the highway. Whilst concur with the consultants that dust will not be a problem, cannot rule out that there will be intermittent dust problems from the highway that may affect this site at times.

Housing Manager:

Requested 30% affordable housing, of which 20% be social rented and 10% shared ownership.

Education:

Initial request was for £2.33 million contribution for new primary school, as the proposed 350 dwellings would generate some 98 primary pupils that would almost half fill a 210 place primary school, so there are no surplus places in the area in 5 years and with the possible Hadley Quarry site (circa 1300 dwellings) there would be a need of a new school to accommodate the increased proposed population in the area for the future.

Following review of school expansion programme this was revised to £1.6million for an extension to the Teague’s Bridge Primary School (equates to £4,500 per dwelling).

In light of the down turn in the economy and the change in the market, and that the final numbers of dwellings on the site may end up being less than 350, the applicant has further agreed with the Council’s Education department to a S106 contribution of £4,500 per dwelling, rather than a fixed total sum, as the final number of houses is not known.

Natural environment officer:

- Would like to see woodland retained preferably as wet woodland and access to Middle Pool could be achieved with board walks.
- Majority of site does not provide significant habitat value.
- Sustainable Code Level 3 is not onerous, so would like to see minimum requirements of buildings regulations by 2010 - Level 4 would be more sustainable and suitable.

Oakengates Town Council:

No objection to principle, but

- Want the woodland/wetland to remain;
- Keen to avoid another set of traffic lights at Sommerfeld Rd/Trench Lock junction;
- LDF requires public transport;
- Site lies at level lower than Middle Pool so need assurance site won't be endangered if pool's banks fail.

Neighbour consultations:

2 letters of objection summarised below:-

- Concerned about volume of traffic on Hadley Road.
- Since Eturia Village built Sommerfeld Road/Hadley Road become a rat-run for traffic from Oakengates to join to EP instead of using Trench Lock Interchange.
- Traffic travels fast on Sommerfeld Road

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT:

National Policy:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS3: Housing

PPG13: Transport

PPS25: Development and Flood Risk

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy

CF1 – Housing within the Major Urban Areas

SR3 – Sustainable Design and Construction

Wrekin Local Plan 1995 – 2006)

H7 - Large Scale Regeneration Exceptions in Telford & Newport

H23 - Affordable Housing

H22 – Community Facilities

T4 - Development Principles

UD2 - Design Criteria

OL3 - Green Network

OL4 - Development in the Green Network

LR6 - Developers Contributions to Outdoor Recreational Open Space Provision within New Residential Developments

LDF Core Strategy (adopted Dec 2007)

CS1 - Homes
CS3 - Telford
CS5 – District and Local Centres in Telford
CS9 – Accessibility and Social Inclusion
CS11 – Open Space
CS13 – Environmental Resources
CS15 – Urban Design

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

a) Suitability of the location of the site

Telford is identified in the RSS as one of five towns which are to be sub-regional foci for longer term strategic housing development (policy CF2) and this is reflected in Core Strategy policy CS3, which identifies Telford as accommodating the majority of new homes. The Council's Spatial Strategy also seeks to develop brownfield land in preference to greenfield. In line with national and regional guidance the Council seeks to encourage sustainable development and has various policies that seek to locate new development in locations that are easily accessible to local services, facilities and public transport.

Policy CS5 seeks to concentrate new development and facilities in or close to District Centres, such as Hadley, where there is a range of services and facilities that are highly accessible, and which in turn helps to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of district centres. However, policy CS5 does not define "highly accessible" locations or distances.

Wrekin Local Plan Policy H7 relates to residential development on employment sites greater than 1ha. It should be shown that residential development is the most appropriate use for the site (discussed in section b below) and that the development satisfies the four criterion, namely that the site and proposal a) can be adequately remediated against contamination and ground instability, b) accords with Policy H23 on affordable housing, c) can be adequately accessed and d) can be adequately drained. Affordable housing is an issue discussed below in section c) of the report below.

Whilst policy H7 does not state distances that developments should be from District Centres or public transport, Local Plan Policy T4 expects housing developments on sites over 0.4ha, such as this site, to be located "close to" an existing public transport route with a regular service (unless the site is less than 800m from a District Centre, in which case the proximity of a regular bus route is less crucial). Policy T4 defines "close to" as being within 400m of a bus route. This distance is similar to the advice in Local Plan policy H6 for "windfall" sites between 0.4ha-1ha, which expects sites to be located less than 800m (approx 10 minute walk) from a District Centre or within 400m (approx 5 minute walk) of a regular bus service (every 30 minutes). The reasoning behind all of these policies is to ensure that new housing development is sustainably located close to existing facilities and accessible by public transport.

For this site the edge of Hadley District Centre is located approx 1.3kms from the site entrance (taken as an average measuring point for the 9ha site as those living

on the far side of the site will have further to walk) and approx 980m to the LIDL supermarket on Castle Street. As the site is further than the recommended 800m to a District Centre, the proximity of the regular bus route becomes more significant. The regular bus service No.55 to Telford town centre that runs along Trench Lock is approx 530m from the site entrance, which is also further than the recommended 400m (although the most westerly corner of the site is approx 360m from Trench Lock). The site is not a close to these facilities as policy would expect.

With regards accessibility to public transport, there is no bus that goes directly past the site or along Sommerfeld Road. In recognising that the development would be placing some 350 dwellings (possibly 1000 people) in a location without public transport passing the site, officers considered it appropriate that the developer contributed to the provision or diversion of a bus service to serve the new site. Officers calculated the cost of diverting the 2 hourly rural bus No. 822 from Church Street/Hadley Road along Sommerfeld Road and upgrading it to an hourly urban service would be in the order of £1 million for 5 years.

The applicant is not prepared to pay for any bus diversion as they consider the site to be close enough to the frequent (every 30mins) bus service (No.55) that runs along Trench Lock. Whilst this is disappointing, officers accept that there may be scope in the future for bus services to be extended if and when the Hadley Quarry site is developed for residential development.

Whilst the site does not lie within the suggested distances of either a regular bus route or District Centre, the site is within easy walking distance of Teague's Bridge Primary School (across the foot bridge over the A422), and is well located to a cycle network of routes that affords access to Oakengates railway station, Telford town centre and other parts of Telford. In addition, a small supermarket (LIDL) on Castle Street, but outside Hadley District Centre, is approx 980m from the site entrance and would provide new residents with nearby convenience shopping as would the 24-hour petrol station with shop at the Trench Lock mini roundabout and help mitigate against the site's location.

Officers consider that refusal on the grounds of the majority of the site being more than 400m from a regular bus route and the whole site being more than 800m from a District Centre could not be substantiated at any subsequent appeal, when policy T4 acknowledges that these distances from District Centres and public transport can be relaxed in exceptional circumstances, outlined in policy H7.

With regards relaxation of circumstances, policy H7 makes reference to the fact that the degree of site contamination and remediation should be taken into consideration in negotiating an appropriate level of affordable housing. In addition to these exceptions, officers consider that the current down turn in the global and national economy is also an "exceptional circumstance" that also should be taken into account when assessing developer S106 contributions including affordable housing provision and bringing forward housing delivery in the Borough, which is currently suffering.

Furthermore, the applicant has indicated their intention to have remediated with site within a year and to have commenced development within a further year. They have

a potential house-builder (Redrow) interested in building the site out. In this current struggling economy, delivering houses in the Borough is necessary and developer assurance that this will occur is of consideration in assessing the application.

b) Loss of employment land

The proposed development of this site for residential would result in the loss of employment land and reduce the ability of the site to contribute to the range of available employment sites within the Borough, which is one of the Core Strategy's spatial development objectives. Telford is identified in the RSS as a sub-regional foci for the growth of employment.

However, the site is not allocated for employment nor is it protected by any specific designation in the development plan. In addition, the site had lain vacant prior to the submission of the planning application. The last industrial user Hutchinson, who specialised in the manufacture of synthetic rubber components for the car industry, made a decision in 2005 to transfer its operations to Poland and subsequently the site closed.

The site was marketed as an employment site complete with buildings from January 2007 for a nine month period prior to the submission of the application in December 2007. Advertising included a sign board at the site, sales particulars in the local and national press (Shropshire Star and the nationally circulated Estates Gazette) and on Transforming Telford's website, as well as mail shots.

The applicant's marketing and surveyor's report identifies the buildings on site as lacking flexibility for adaptation and that purpose-built modern premises elsewhere in Telford have proven more attractive to companies seeking premises in Telford and concluded that they consider there is currently no demand for a range of buildings of this age, type and scale (as found on the site) within Telford. In addition, the surveyor advises that due to site contamination and ground conditions major remediation works are required which would make "redevelopment for employment use uneconomic". The applicant's surveyor advises that between January and October 2007 whilst there were expressions of interest in the site, none of the enquiries about the site were for industrial use classes B1, B2 or B8. The buildings have since been demolished and cleared from the site for which planning permission was not required.

Whilst the Council seeks to ensure that Telford is a focus for both residential and employment development, Telford does not have an identified shortage of employment land and as such its loss would be difficult to defend as a reason for refusal at this present time.

In addition, officers would agree with the applicant that the area around Sommerfeld Road is undergoing a gradual transformation from predominantly industrial to more residential. Although the Blockley's brick works and the Hadley Quarry still remain, the site at Trench Lock 1 near the junction with Trench Road is currently under construction for some 100 dwellings and the former Blockley's site is now an established residential estate. There are also impending plans to redevelop part of the Hadley Quarry as extraction gradually nears completion.

c) Affordable Housing

In PPS3 the government seeks to ensure that mixed communities are provided for and expects new residential developments over 15 dwellings to provide a proportion of affordable housing, where it is viable to do so. Wrekin Local Plan policy H23 advises that a proportion of affordable housing will be sought on non-allocated sites that come forward for residential development, with the actual level of provision reflected by the circumstances of the site including relevant factors such as reclamation of derelict land.

The applicant originally proposed provision of affordable housing and the Council's housing manager advised that there should be 30% affordable housing on site, of which 20% would be social rented and 10% shared ownership. However, during the processing of the application the economy has gone into recession and the applicant has now advised that it is no longer economically viable for the site to provide any affordable housing. At one stage the applicant advised they would not be able to pay any S106 contributions, but has now agreed to provide financial contributions for education, highways and leisure as they consider that the new development will bring new people and cars into the area which will have a direct impact on these facilities. Affordable housing is more costly to provide and with a down-turn in the economy and land having been bought at a higher value than it is worth currently, the developer can no longer viably develop the site with affordable housing.

As Local Planning Authorities have to take into account economic viability, officers requested the applicant to provide a financial appraisal to demonstrate their claim that affordable housing could not be provided. The applicant's case has been assessed by an independent consultant commissioned by the Council. The Council's consultant disputed some of the applicant's claims, assumptions and figures particularly with regards buildings costs and interests rates and the appraisal model tool-kit used and considered that with some modest adjustments to some of the parameters used that positive residual site values could be achieved.

In response the applicant submitted additional justification as to why it is not financially viable to now provide affordable housing and that just having a positive land residential site value is not in itself sufficient, as there needs to be a reasonable return on the development (at least 15% profit) to stimulate a land transaction and hence implementation of the development, which has been accepted in part by the Council's consultant. The applicant also drew attention to advice in Circular 05/2005 on Planning Obligations that the "level of contributions should be based on negotiation with developers over the level of contribution that can be demonstrated as reasonable to be made whilst still allowing the development to take place".

The non-provision of any affordable housing is disappointing especially on such a big site that could provide up to 350 dwellings in a mix of houses and flats. However, in this current economic downturn housing delivery appears to be suffering, such that housing construction on some sites with planning permission has slowed down and even stopped completely until developers consider the market picks up. Local Authorities are being advised to consider measures that would not deter new development and look at flexible approaches to delivery. Advice earlier this year from the Department for Communities and Local Government outlined measures the government was taking and considering taking to "help planning

authorities respond to the downturn and, in particular, to ensure that planning is in a position to deliver when an upturn in the economy happens". In addition, the Homes and Communities Agency has published advice on how to deal flexibly with the downturn, supporting lower levels of viable developer contributions and a flexible approach to managing obligations for affordable housing, as well as securing ways to ensure developer commitment to delivery and that developers do not just "bank" land for implementation later when the market has recovered.

Such measures include extending the standard 3-year permission period to 5 years to help bring forward development, deferring, staggering or setting triggers for S106 payments, and requiring financial viability assessments to be reviewed if development is not commenced within a certain time frame. Officers consider this current down-turn in the economic climate as an exceptional circumstance against which to re-assess affordable housing provision and the location of development in this instance. Therefore in light of these unusual times and assessment of the applicant's financial situation regarding this site, officers are prepared to accept the applicant's stance that no affordable housing can be provided on this site at this current time.

However, officers are keen to avoid the applicant/developer from benefitting from a "flexed" planning permission without affordable housing and that the site is not sat upon until the market improves. To this end officers would want the 0% affordable housing situation to be time limited such that after a certain period of time if the development has not commenced the affordable housing requirement for the site would revert back to 30% and financial viabilities would have to be reassessed for any further relaxation. Following discussions the applicant agreed to a shorter permission and that they commence on site within 2 years - in doing so they would remediate the site within the first year of getting planning permission and then submit reserved matters, to then commence development within a further year of that. If after 4 years from commencement (i.e. 6 years from getting outline planning permission) the site has not been completed, then a revised financial appraisal would be submitted and the affordable housing position reassessed.

d) Drainage/Flooding

The site is within Flood Risk Zone 1 which is an area of low risk of flooding. Both the Council's drainage engineers and the Environment Agency considered the applicant's initial Flood Risk Assessment to be inadequate. However, following additional investigations, meetings and work done by the Council's consultants who are working on a Strategic drainage and flood risk assessment for Telford, both the Council's engineers and the EA are satisfied that the site can be managed from flood risk.

With regards surface water, PPS25 expects water run-off rates across the site to be less than existing rates and the Council's 50% rates are in advance of PPS25 and the EA's suggested rates of 30%. However, the Council and applicant have agreed to 30% reduction rates and this can be conditioned.

With regards the serpentine chamber on the site that takes mine water from the Blockleys, the applicant's wish to culvert this water course rather than leave the channel with its orange iron coloured water snaking through the woodland to Middle

Pool. Both the EA and Council would wish the channel to remain open and the Council as land Drainage Authority would likely refuse any application to culvert it. In addition, British Waterways are concerned that any works to the serpentine chamber will affect water quality to Middle Pool which in turn feeds Trench Pool (that they own). This appears to be separate land owner and rights issue rather than directly impacting on the proposed development. Conditions will be imposed to require a scheme for the management of this water area and serpentine channel and that if any changes are made, then details should be submitted for assessment.

e) Highways

A new single access point is proposed off Sommerfeld Road to serve the new housing estate. Highway engineers have no objection in principle to the development.

Following further discussions and assessment of traffic figures and projections between Council's highways engineer and the applicant's highway consultant, it has been agreed that a signalised junction at Wombridge Way will no longer be required. However, improvements to the mini roundabout at Trench Lock will still be required and a pro rata contribution, based on other residential development contributions, would be £230 per dwelling. In addition, the applicant has agreed to pay £30,000 towards improvements of footpaths and cycle ways in the vicinity of the site that would link to the national cycle route 81 and improve links between the Teague's Bridge Primary School and Wrockwardine Wood Secondary School, as well as onto and along Sommerfeld Road.

f) Leisure/Recreation/Green Network

Wrekin Local Plan policy LR6 expects developers to provide a local equipped area for play (LEAP) on sites providing between 75-200 new child bed spaces, which this site would do. Initially the Council's Leisure officer was prepared to accept financial contributions for off-site play provision amounting to some £200,000 plus contributions for other facility improvements. However, after further consideration in light of the overall reduced S106 contributions and officer concerns that a site of this size (up to 350 dwellings) should have on-site provision rather than all children having to walk/cycle to other play facilities in the neighbourhood, the applicant has now agreed to provide a LEAP on site, which will require any housing to be sited 30m away from the perimeter of the play area, together with a financial contribution of £100,000 towards improvements of off-site existing play facilities at Wombridge.

The far eastern part of the site is currently wetland woodland and also designated "Green Network" on the Local Plan Proposals Map. The Design & Access Statement shows this area of Green Network and woodland retained for recreational purposes and will not be built over. The applicant has confirmed that the woodland, open space and LEAP on site will be maintained by a management company. This will allow increased and improved access and enjoyment of this existing woodland. In addition links from the housing development to Middle Pool and beyond will bring more areas into active recreational use, and benefit residents and enhance the local amenity and recreational/leisure opportunities. Officers endorse the retention and enhancement of this woodland with its improved links, and consider this to be a

material benefit of the proposed residential development that accords with the Council's Green Network aims.

CONCLUSION

Development of this site will bring a currently vacant and derelict industrial site into active use in an area of Telford that is undergoing change. Whilst the proposal will result in the loss of employment land and reduce the ability of the site to contribute to the range of available employment sites within the Borough, the site not is allocated, it has lain vacant and been marketed for employment with no takers, extensive remediation is required and there is no shortage of employment land within Telford at the present time and hence refusal on the grounds of loss of employment land would be difficult to substantiate.

Whilst the nearest corner of the site is within 400m from a regular bus route, the majority of the site and its entrance are more than 400m from the bus route and more than 800m from a District Centre (the suggested distances for the location of development to be more accessible and sustainable and to encourage walking and cycling modes of transport). However a (LIDL) supermarket lies closer than the District Centre to provide some convenience shopping opportunities, Teague's Bridge Primary School is within easy walking distance of the site, and a regular bus route lies less than 1km (12 minutes' walk) from the majority of the site. In light of the exceptional economic condition and the applicant's commitment to get the site built out soon, officers consider that the whilst the site's location is not ideal, there are other material considerations that would make a refusal less tenable.

The scheme will also retain woodland Green Network and create new open spaces on site and provide new footpath links through to the adjacent amenity area around the nearby Middle Pool and other footpath/cycle way links, so the development will enhance and improve recreational and amenity opportunities and facilities, as well as increasing their accessibility to a wider range of people, which the Council strives to do.

The lack of affordable housing is regretted as it reduces the scope for mixed communities which both the government and the Council encourage. But in light of the current down-turn in economy and assessment of the applicant's financial appraisal, the wide spread contamination across the site and the cost of remediation, officers consider that on balance these are exceptional times and recommend that the applicant's S106 package of contributions to education, highways and leisure be supported, but with clauses to ensure development is commenced within a certain time period and that if not the affordable provision reverts back to 30% and financial viability is reassessed if affordable provision is revised.

RECOMMENDATION: to delegate to the Head of Planning to GRANT OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the signing of a S106 agreement for a) £4,500 per dwelling for extensions to Teague's Bridge Primary School; b) £100,000 for improvements to nearby Wombridge play facility; c) £230 per dwelling for improvements to Trench Lock mini roundabout, d) £30,000 for improvements to the local cycleway network in the vicinity of the site, e) £30,000 for improvement of pedestrian routes to school, but with clauses in the S106 to ensure development is

commenced within a certain time period and that if not the affordable provision reverts back to 30% and financial viability is reassessed if affordable provision is revised, and subject to the following conditions and any others that officers consider relevant:-

1. A8 - Commence within 2 years
2. A2 – Submit all reserved matters within 1 year
3. B11 – General details to be included in Matters Reserved
4. C120 - Accordance with plans
5. Submit details of remediation including contamination
6. B2 - Materials
7. B50 - Drainage and surface water details
8. C70 windows set back min 55mm
9. Joinery details
10. B23 - Landscaping and boundary scheme
11. Management scheme for wetland/woodland
12. B25 Landscape management plan for open spaces/LEAP
13. No dwellings of gardens sites within 20 metres of boundary of LEAP
14. LEAP completed before any dwellings within 30m of boundary are sold or occupied
15. Details of access and visibility
16. C85 –access to base core level during construction
17. C87 - Car parking, turning, footpaths and servicing areas all surfaced, drained and laid out.
18. B30 - Formation of roads
19. B54 – Design and layout take account of Noise Assessment but improve Acoustic standards to at least “good” and “moderate annoyance” standards.
20. C92 - Mud on road even for remediation
21. D129 – garages not converted into residential accommodation
22. D125 remove permitted development for fences/walls/gates

REASON FOR APPROVAL

Whilst the proposal will result in the loss of employment land, the site not is allocated, it has lain vacant and been marketed for employment with no takers and there is no shortage of employment land within Telford at the present time

Whilst the site is not located within the 400m and 800m suggested distances of public transport and a district centre, the site lies relatively close to a supermarket, within easy walking distance of Teague’s Bridge Primary School, and a regular bus route lies less than 1km (12 minutes’ walk) from the majority of the site.

The development will also retain woodland Green Network and create new open spaces on site with new footpaths links through to the adjacent amenity area around the nearby Middle Pool and other footpath/cycle ways, and so will enhance and improve recreational and amenity facilities in the area as well as increasing their accessibility to a wider range of people to accord with the Council’s Green Network and recreational aims.

Whilst the lack of affordable housing is regretted, economic viability has to be taken into account and in light of the current down-turn in economy and assessment of the applicant's financial appraisal, and the abnormal costs of remediating a heavily contaminated site, it is considered that on balance these are exceptional times and that development is acceptable with the S106 package of contributions to education, highways and leisure.

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2009/0009 Demolition of former agricultural buildings and erection of extensions to existing clubhouse to accommodate overnight accommodation and ancillary leisure facilities with associated parking

The Shropshire Golf Centre, Muxton Lane, Muxton, Telford, Shropshire.

Recommendation Code: FG

Ward: Muxton

APPLICANT:
Burhill Golf and Leisure Limited

RECEIVED ON:
06/01/09

PARISH
Lilleshall & Donnington

WARD
Muxton

CASE OFFICER:
Phil Baker

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes

MAIN ISSUES: Increase in traffic along Muxton Lane, Design, Appearance, Development in the Rural Area

THE SITE AND THE PROPOSAL

The Shropshire Golf Centre (SGC), which has been operating at its site on the north eastern edge of Telford since 1992, lies just outside the urban boundary of Telford in the Borough's Rural Area.

The Centre comprises a 27-hole golf course; 30-bay driving range; golf shop; clubhouse; lounge; bar; dining area; and meeting rooms. The club has in excess of 600 members. In addition, conferences, events, and weddings are also held at the Centre.

This planning application relates to the demolition of former agricultural buildings which are now dilapidated and redundant, (the largest of which was irreparably damaged by fire), and the erection of extensions that comprise:-

(a) 50 bedrooms of overnight accommodation, in a two storey wing, with the third floor in the roofspace. This proposed block measures approximately 44 metres long and 16 metres wide, and is located on the west side of the complex, parallel to Muxton Lane, necessitating the demolition of the old farm buildings. A lift tower protrudes above the roofline and its hipped clay-tiled roof matches that of the remainder of the new wing

(b) Health and fitness suite, in a two storey wing, with a gymnasium on the first floor and changing rooms on the ground floor. The proposed block measures approximately 26 metres long by 11 metres wide, and is located on the east side of the complex, replacing a building demolished several years ago

(c) 15-metre long swimming pool, in a single storey building measuring 30 metres long and 10 metres wide, adjoining the health and fitness suite, and replacing an existing garage

(d) Extended restaurant, accommodating 110 seats, in a single storey building measuring 14 metres square, in the middle of the complex of buildings

The applicants state that their golfing, conference, and wedding businesses are now well developed and they are seeking the opportunity of enhancing the services offered to club members, users of the golf course, and conference delegates by offering a modest amount of overnight accommodation and health and fitness facilities.

The applicants state that the bedroom accommodation will mainly cater for visiting golfers and by wedding guests at the weekend, and users of the conference facilities during the week. They consider the accommodation may also be attractive to tourists to the area, as well as during periods when the Telford International Centre is very busy and the Town Centre hotels are full. Members of the golf club will be able to use any of the proposed facilities, and associate membership will be required to use the health and fitness suite and the swimming pool. No membership will be required to use the restaurant and bar.

The design of the new extensions will reflect the appearance of the existing buildings, some of which are former farm buildings and the remainder which are modern additions. External materials are predominantly red/brown bricks and plain clay roof tiles that match in type and colour the materials used on the existing buildings. Fenestration, eaves, lintel and cill details will also replicate those found on the existing buildings on the site

Vehicular access to the site is gained from Muxton Lane to the north and from Granville Road to the south. A total of 243 car parking spaces will be available for the whole complex. There are currently 223 spaces but it has been recognised by the Council's Highways Engineer that there has been an over-provision of spaces for many years on this site.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

23 letters have been received from local residents, summarised below as follows:-

- Increase in traffic along Muxton Lane, which will exacerbate road safety problems
- Muxton Lane is narrow in places and full of sharp bends. There are also places where cars cannot pass without one giving way to the other. This is not helped by overhanging branches along the road.
- Motorists already use Muxton Lane as a race track. This will increase in future
- It will increase the probability of a serious accident
- Muxton Lane is used for recreational purposes such as walking, cycling, jogging, horse riding, and dog walking by Muxton residents
- It is important that Muxton Lane retains its character as a 'country lane' for the benefit of everyone to use
- Access from Muxton Lane should be on foot only
- Muxton Lane has recently been subject to a 30mph restriction
- In winter cars often skid on Muxton Lane

- Vehicular access should be along Granville Road only. This road should be upgraded to encourage more people to use it. All service vehicles, coaches, and construction traffic should use this access
- If the application is allowed all advertising literature should state that vehicular access is from Granville Road, and a maximum vehicle weight limit imposed on Muxton Lane
- The site is not in a sustainable location. It is not close to a public transport route. The nearest bus stop is a mile away
- Increase in noise from the venue
- The hotel will want more bedrooms in the future
- There are sufficient alternative hotel and leisure facilities in the Telford area
- The present and quiet location of properties in Muxton Lane should not be compromised by the financial gain of others

The Parish Council has concerns regarding the possible increased disruption to local residents by more vehicles using Muxton Lane to access the new facilities.

Transforming Telford is in favour of the proposed development, believing that it will create jobs; enhance visitor and business tourism facilities; and encourage visitors to stay overnight, thereby increasing visitor spending in the area.

The Council's Highways Engineer has no objections subject to the applicants making a financial contribution of £30,000 towards highway improvements in Granville Road.

The Council's Geotechnical Engineer has no objections to the application.

The Council's Drainage Engineer has no objections subject to a condition relating to the need to carry out a soakaway test.

The Council's Arboricultural Officer has no objections, stating that although some trees are affected by the development these are not of any great importance, and therefore not worthy of retention.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has no objections to the application.

The Council's Planning Ecologist has no objections subject to a condition relating to the implementation of the mitigation measures recommended in the Protected Species Survey.

PLANNING HISTORY

In 1989 planning permission (ref: W89/0979) was granted to change the use of agricultural land to a 27-hole golf course, with club house and driving range, and conversion of farm buildings to hotel accommodation. The hotel element was not implemented.

In 1991 planning permission (ref: W91/0055) was given to erect a new building to accommodate golf facilities and associated shop, bar, restaurant, and staff flat.

In 1999 planning permission (ref: W99/1027) was given to convert existing buildings and erect a two storey extension to provide a 40-bedroom hotel. This permission was not implemented.

In 2003 planning permission (ref: W2003/0384) was granted to demolish an existing barn and erect a two storey extension to provide changing rooms, golf shop, offices, and new entrance lobby.

PLANNING POLICY

The following statutory policies are relevant in the determination of this application:-

Wrekin Local Plan
UD2 – Design criteria

LDF Core Strategy
CS2 – Jobs
CS12 – Natural environment
CS15 – Urban design

PPS1 – Delivering sustainable development
PPS6 – Planning for Town Centres
PPG13 - Transport

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Although the application site lies in the Rural Area it abuts the built up area of Telford as shown on the Wrekin Local Plan. The principle of providing overnight accommodation on this site has already been established by the 1989 and 1999 planning permissions, albeit that the hotel elements of the permissions were never implemented.

The new development will be confined to previously developed land that directly adjoins the existing buildings on the site. The overnight accommodation block will replace old redundant farm buildings which have been irreparably damaged and are unsuitable for conversion. The health and fitness suite will be built on cleared land which formerly contained farm buildings. Therefore, no development takes place on 'greenfield' land and none of it will extend the complex out into the open countryside.

Because the site lies outside the urban area, a District Centre or an identified settlement, and is not allocated for development on the Wrekin Local Plan, the applicants were required to undertake a sequential test of alternative hotel sites in order to comply with PPS6. The sequential assessment concluded that there was an identified demand for the hotel development on this site; it was of an appropriate scale; there were no suitable sites available in any other centre, including Telford Town Centre; and that it would not have an unacceptable impact on existing hotels elsewhere in the Telford area.

The Council's Development Plans Officer has concurred with the results of this sequential assessment. He is satisfied that the applicants have proved that the

proposed overnight accommodation will support existing facilities, and will not have a detrimental impact on Telford Town Centre and other existing centres. He is also satisfied that the overnight accommodation will be ancillary to the golf club and not be in direct competition with the Town Centre conference/corporate markets.

The proposed development is likely to increase the volume of traffic along Muxton Lane and this is of most concern to local residents. Muxton Lane stretches for 1.2 kms between the Golf Centre and Wellington Road. For the first half of its length from Wellington Road it comprises a 5.5 to 6 metre wide urban street-lit road that serves a considerable number of residential properties.

For the second half, approximately from Halcyon Court onwards, it takes on the character of an unlit rural country lane, with twists and turns, and its width comes down to around 4 metres. Passing places are provided by localised widening.

Muxton Lane is well used by local residents for walking, cycling, horse-riding and other recreational activities, and is one of the main accesses to the Granville Country Park. Therefore, it is considered that any excessive increase in traffic flows along its length would have a detrimental impact on the day-to-day leisure activities of a large number of people.

The applicants commissioned a Transport Assessment which concluded that there would be a 34.4% increase in the number of visitors to the Centre once the whole development was completed and in use – increasing from 62,500 to 83,988 visits per annum. However, this would not equate to a 34.4% increase in car usage because it is anticipated that there will be a significant proportion of combined trips. For example, a member will play a round of golf, then have a swim, and finish off with a drink or meal in the restaurant. Furthermore, the Transport Assessment predicted that over 85% of the health and fitness club members would live within 5 kms of the site, and many of them could either walk or cycle to the Centre.

The applicants have stated that at present 30% of visitors arrive at the Centre by way of Muxton Lane and 70% travel along Granville Road (on-site surveys carried out by the Council have confirmed this ratio). It has been estimated that on a worse case scenario there would be, on average, an additional 46 two-way vehicle trips on Muxton Lane daily. This is assuming one person in a car travelling to use one facility. As many trips will involve more than one person in a car, and more than one facility being used, the Transport Assessment considers that this figure could be significantly lower. This assertion is backed up by the Council's Highways Engineer. Such a relatively small increase in vehicle trips along Muxton Lane is considered to be acceptable by the Council's Highways Engineer, such that he is not able to raise a highway objection.

However, the Highways Engineer is keen to encourage more vehicular journeys to the Centre to take place along Granville Road rather than Muxton Lane. Not only does Granville Road not pass through an established residential area but it links into the regional and national highway network at the ASDA (Granville) Roundabout, where it also provides excellent access to the remainder of Telford.

Unfortunately, at present, parts of Granville Road are in a poor condition, with many pot-holes and drainage problems. This acts as a deterrent to some drivers to use this access to the Centre. In order to make the road more attractive for motorists it needs to be upgraded and improved. A schedule of works has been drawn up and the applicants have agreed to contribute £30,000 to fund them. These works will be undertaken before any of the new facilities are first brought into use. Once these improvements have been carried out it is considered that more drivers will be encouraged to use Granville Road, thereby further alleviating traffic flows on Muxton Lane.

As a result of the potential overlap of uses, and possible increased duration of stay at the site as a result of the new facilities, it is proposed to increase the parking provision by a modest 20 spaces to give a total capacity of 243 spaces, which the applicant believes accords with the parking requirements contained in PPG13. The Council's Highways Engineer is satisfied with this number of spaces.

The design of the new extensions respects and relates to the appearance of the existing buildings on the site. This will be reinforced by the use of matching external materials. The overall layout and design of the scheme is considered to safeguard and even enhance the character and appearance of the existing site, and the immediate surrounding area. Indeed, the removal of the dilapidated farm buildings will substantially improve the visual amenities of the locality.

Several over-mature and ornamental trees will need to be felled but these are not considered to be of any great importance. A landscaping scheme would be requested that would provide compensatory planting around the site.

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed development at the Shropshire Golf Centre to provide overnight accommodation and leisure facilities is acceptable. Planning permissions have been previously given to provide hotel accommodation on this site, although these were never implemented. The design and appearance of the new extensions respect the existing buildings on the site. The development uses previously developed land and does not encroach out into the open countryside.

The development will support the existing facilities at the Centre and will not have a detrimental impact on other hotels and leisure facilities in the Telford area. It is anticipated that the proposed development will create jobs; provide tourist and business facilities; and increase visitor spending in the area. Transport predictions have shown only a likely small increase in vehicles that would use Muxton Lane, and highway improvements will be carried out along Granville Road to encourage drivers to use this access to the Centre.

RECOMMENDATION: Subject to the applicants entering into a Section 106 Agreement relating to a financial contribution of £30,000 towards highway improvements in Granville Road, then delegate to the Head of Planning to GRANT PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:-

1. A3 – Full permission
2. C120 – Amended plans
3. B15 – External materials

4. B65 – Soakaway test
5. C86 – Car parking
6. B33 – Materials storage/personnel parking
7. B34 – Mud on road
8. Protected species mitigation measures
9. B23 – Landscape design
10. C80 – Landscape implementation
11. Cycle provision
12. Lighting and security lighting

REASONS FOR APPROVAL

Planning permissions have been previously given to provide hotel accommodation on this site, although these were never implemented. The design and appearance of the new extensions respect the existing buildings on the site. The development uses previously developed land and does not encroach out into the open countryside.

The development will support the existing facilities at the Centre and will not have a detrimental impact on other hotels and leisure facilities in the Telford area. The proposed development will create jobs; provide tourist and business facilities; and increase visitor spending in the area. Transport predictions have shown only a likely small increase in vehicles that would use Muxton Lane, and highway improvements will be carried out along Granville Road to encourage drivers to use this access to the Centre.

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2009/0115 Demolition of existing teaching blocks and erection of 3 and 4 storey new teaching block, 2 storey replacement fire station, modifications to existing E, F and W blocks, erection of single storey horticultural building and installation of new all weather pitch to include floodlights and relocation of 2no. sports pitches together with associated car parking.

Telford College of Art & Technology, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire.

Recommendation Code: FG

Ward: College

APPLICANT:

Telford College of Art & Technology

RECEIVED ON:

09/02/09

PARISH

Wellington

WARD

College

CASE OFFICER:

Gareth W Thomas

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes

MAIN ISSUES: Community facilities, Design, Residential amenity, Highway safety

PROPOSAL

This application is for a significant redevelopment of the Telford College of Arts & Technology (TCAT) involving the demolition of buildings to provide new teaching blocks, social and administrative space and outdoor recreation facilities. The existing Wellington Fire Station is situated on this campus and it is also intended to replace this with a new station, to include also, an area comprising fire practice facilities. The planning application is for full planning permission; as a significant development proposal, the application is accompanied by several technical reports. This documentation comprises:

- Design & Access Statement
- Transport Assessment
- Flood Consequence Assessment
- Drainage Mapping Report
- Ecological Report
- Tree/Arboricultural report
- Ground Investigation Synopsis Report
- Lighting Report

The TCAT is located some 1 mile southeast of Wellington town centre and comprises a campus extending to 10.39 hectares dating back to the 1950's. The site borders three local roads – Bennetts Bank/Watling Street to the south; A5223 Whitchurch Drive to the east; and, Haybridge Road to the west. To the north of the site is the main Wolverhampton-Shrewsbury railway line. Access into the site is from Haybridge Road. The existing campus is overlooked by residential properties fronting both Watling Street/Bennett's Bank and along Haybridge Road.

The proposal in summary comprises the following elements:

1. The demolition of existing teaching blocks that “front” both Haybridge Road and Bennett’s Bank and the existing fire station;
2. Creation of new site access to the north of the present access and car parks;
3. Modification to existing teaching blocks, Blocks E & F
4. Erection of new 4 storey teaching block, engineering workshops, social and dining facilities and administration accommodation;
5. Replacement fire station – to be incorporated into the new teaching block and separate training tower and hardstanding
6. Cycle parking racks and spaces, covered motor-cycle parking, compound for mini-coaches
7. Two replacement football/sports pitches and a 3rd Generation all weather pitch with spectator terracing (providing informal seating) with capacity for 150 spectators
8. Single storey horticultural building and gardens
9. Boundary Fencing and landscaping

The proposed new building work has been designed to enable minimal disruption to the working activities of the college, to provide a new access and to create a central heart space to the campus. The development will involve the demolition of Blocks A,B and C together with the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and the existing refectory. This will remove the older buildings that are in poor repair or which are expensive to operate/maintain or which spread over the site and/or over different levels. The total demolition amounts to 10,000 sq m of floorspace.

It may helpful to the understanding of the scale of this proposal to describe the phasing for the development, which is as follows:

Stage 1: Enabling Works

- Temporary relocation of Fire Station off-site (the original ambition was to house this facility on the existing “car-lot” on Haybridge Road;
- Create new entrance to Haybridge Road, north of the existing access that will serve the main staff/student/visitor car park;
- Creation of new car parking areas to the north of the site and to the south of the existing Sports Block
- Relocate the main college campus entrance to the south of E Block
- Demolish the existing Fire Station
- Reduce site levels as necessary to facilitate development

Stage 2 Main Build Work

- Undertake main building works
- Undertake the grass pitch work and all weather pitch
- Refurbish W Block to provide computer server room

Stage 3: New Build Handover

- Handover new building
- Decant staff and students from existing Blocks A, B & C
- Decant staff and students from the LRC and Refectory

- Provide improved access to Sports Dome and Sports Block
- Complete the link to E Block and connect at 1st and 2nd floors

Stage 4 Demolish and Landscape

- Demolish C Block, Refectory and LRC
- Complete the new Foundation disabled drop-off
- Demolish Block A and Block C
- Complete landscaping works on the south side
- Demolish the Bennett's Bank building

A total of 510 car parking spaces in total is proposed.

The building design is generally of four storeys in height with the main element comprising three interlinking Blocks clad with modern materials including reconstituted terracotta reconstituted stone, reconstituted stone/concrete panel in cream colour and polyester coated aluminium panelling. Substantial elements of the buildings will be glazed. The principal building will comprise a full height central atrium providing the link between the two wing buildings and existing Block E that will be retained. The new fire station is integrated into the new wing building fronting Haybridge Road. The Council's existing SEC building currently located in the heart of the complex will be retained with proposals for parking/ambulance/servicing being provided thus ensuring that this centre is not inconvenienced.

The Fire Service requires a training facility comprising a "drill tower" and hardstanding. This will be located off Watling Street/Bennett's Bank adjoining one of the football pitches and accessed from an existing access road leading from Bennett's Bank.

The application also proposes to develop significant areas of playing field including:

- Creation of a new football pitch on the site of the college which is to be demolished at the south-west corner of the campus;
- Undertake ground works to provide a rugby/football pitch on existing sloping land on the east side of the campus (on the Whitchurch Road side).
- Creation of a new 3-Generation artificial grass pitch on an area comprising partly playing field and partly car parking. This potentially will have wider community benefit and will incorporate floodlights and some rudimentary spectators seating on the one side formed from three rows of terracing and providing capacity for 150 spectators.

A number of technical reports have accompanied the application and a summary of issues raised is summarised as follows:

Transport Assessment:

Accessibility – the college is served by a number of existing bus services that run within walking distance of the college; bus priority measures are present on Haybridge Road; train services from Wellington, 1.6km away. National Cycling Route 81 links Hadley residential area and Wellington. The layout and design of the development introduces measures to promote the use of public transport and by

pedestrians and cyclists. Bus stopping facilities within the campus, segregated pedestrian and cycle access, disabled parking and car sharing only parking provision are proposed. A Travel Plan is proposed. 583 car parking spaces are proposed. Members will know that many students use the Bucks Head facilities and this overflow parking arrangement will continue.

Flood Risk Assessment

The site is located within Environment Agency Flood Zone 1 Flood Map. The historic assessment indicates that there has been no history of flooding on or in close proximity of the site or from other potential flooding sources (rivers, watercourse, culverts etc). It is not therefore a 'Functional Floodplain' as defined in PPS25. The most likely risk if any is therefore from on-site drainage and appropriate design mitigation is incorporated within the scheme. The development of this 'Brownfield' land will involve a marginal reduction in impermeable area; however the volume generated can be managed through design. SUDS features are incorporated in the design and therefore water attenuation will be managed.

Ecological Report

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey was undertaken followed up by a Bat survey. Due to the site's limited ecological value, BREEAM Further Education Standards 2006 credits criteria was applied. The credit system seek to introduce pro-active measures to enhance the site's ecological value and ensure that development occurring on land having low ecological value protects all existing features of ecological value. Credits are given in three areas – protection measures, mitigation measures ecology and biodiversity enhancement measures. The proposals make provision for such measures to be included.

PLANNING HISTORY:

W2008/0306	Temporary Classrooms	Full grant
W2004/01181	Lift Shaft	Full grant
W2004/0456	Sports Academy and pitch	Full grant
W2003/0248	Teaching Block	Full grant
W2003/1519	Teaching Block	Full grant
W2003/0615	Relocation of Dismountables	Full grant

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The proposal has been assessed under the following policies:

National Policies:

PPS 1 Paragraphs 34-39 (Design)
 PPS 1 Sustainable Development
 PPG13 Transport
 PPS9 Ecology/Biodiversity

Wrekin Local Plan Policies:

UD2 (Design)
 UD4 (Landscaping)
 T22 Planning Obligations

Core Strategy:

CS 10: Community Facilities
CS 15 Urban Design

CONSULTATION RESPONSE:

Town Council confirmed that they have no objections to this application.

Highway Authority – discussions have been held between the Highway Authority and applicants over many months and the lack of progress in dealing with highway issues has been the principal reason for the delay in determining this proposal. Trip rates indicated in the submission did not take account of the significant trip rates generated by visitors using the nearby Bucks Head car park and therefore significantly underestimated the trip rate and car park demand arising from the proposal. Applicants advised to re-assess the impact of more realistic trip rates on the operation of the adjacent highway network. At time of writing this report, this work was being assessed again by Council consultants.

Environment Agency – Recommend condition relating to surface water run-off and contamination risk mitigation

Adult and Consumer Care (manage and operate SEC on site) – Following meeting with applicants, agreement has been reached that the applicants will provide and fund internal changes to the building together with provision of vehicular access, circulation and parking that will be necessary following implementation of new parking/servicing arrangements forming part of the application. On this basis the Department withdraws their previous objection.

Neighbour Consultations:

Following public consultation, just one individual letter received from a local resident on the basis that the proposal seen in isolation does not provide opportunities for wider regeneration and improvement to highway safety:

- Haybridge Road is not suitable to be used as the proposed main new access; the road has a strange restriction system leading to Buck's Head and the fire station access is hazardous; the railway bridge presents considerable difficulties and if demolished at any future date will result in the college being 'stranded'.
- The Transport assessment is erroneous and misleading. The cycle and pedestrian routes via the unsatisfactory Haybridge Road do not provide convenient/safe routes. The proposal indicates that a perimeter fence will be erected thus shutting off potential other connections and prevents proper use of the Bennett's Bank bus stop..
- The priority should be to provide a new connection from the A5223 which would provide further opportunities for pedestrian and cycleway routing and improve hazardous conditions along Haybridge Road.
- Fire Station should be relocated, preferably to the scrap yard adjoining Bucks Head.

The particular individual has presented a series of ideas on how to regenerate this area of Wellington to the TCAT and Council which would necessitate a complete re-think of the current proposal. The ideas based on connection to the A5223 and a joined-up approach between the various landowners would undoubtedly provide

wider opportunities and possibly benefits. However as local planning authority, we are charged with dealing with the application as presented.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The application contains a high level of detail on technical aspects and must be viewed as a well presented proposal. The proposal would represent an investment of £57.5 million and provide facilities that would be of the highest quality for this sector of education. That said, members will be aware of present funding difficulties at the national level and that Government expenditure cuts has hit this particular sector of higher/continuing education severely. The applicants are keen to proceed with their planning application as other avenues of financial support are explored. A valid planning permission would enable the College to react quickly to changing funding priorities at the national level.

The design of the building complex has been designed to allow a single phase solution which can be constructed to minimise (as far as possible) disruption to education provision. The new building has a four storey central section which will link to existing block and the new three storey wings and incorporate a central atrium that will become the heart of the college complex. Materials have been selected to reflect the character and materials used in the local context. But importantly, the design has been assessed under the Building Research Establishment's (BRE) BREEAM criteria to achieve the college's ambition for achieving BREEAM "Excellent". The design therefore seeks to:

- Minimise building energy consumption – through high levels of insulation, solar gains, maximum daylight penetration and other mechanical and passive measures;
- Creating a comfortable internal environment – through external solar shading and high glazing specifications to reduce summer overheating notwithstanding the natural lighting provision;
- Reducing the carbon footprint – through ground source heating and cooling and natural ventilation strategies.
- Incorporation of an Energy Strategy

Highway Impact and Transportation – it is regrettable that at the time of writing this report your officers have not yet resolved this issue sufficient to warrant a recommendation to grant permission unconditionally. The proposed new access junction onto Haybridge Road provides visibility that meets the highway requirement – this is crucial as the railway bridge constitutes a major constraint. The existing fire station will be re-accommodated on site with access off Haybridge Road, with a discreet training area for the service located off Bennetts Bank through an existing access. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the Transport Assessment has been challenged by the Council's highway consultants with regard to trip rates and the use of the Buck's Head car park as overflow capacity. These figures have been revised and further discussions have taken place with the applicants in relation to Travel Plan measures designed to influence travel modes going forward. The applicants have agreed that a section 106 will be necessary as the measures will require financial contributions to be set aside on the basis of "Travel Plan penalties")to influence behaviour that in turn will reduce the use of the motor car. As the matter can be negotiated further, your officers are now satisfied that provided the local

planning authority secures a section 106 obligation, the issue of highway impact and transportation can be satisfactorily dealt with.

Your officers are satisfied in respect of ecology, flood risk, land stability and on-site drainage including SUDS provision.

RECOMMENDATION: Subject to the applicant entering into a section 106 Agreement requiring financial contribution to be set aside to meet the requirements within the Travel Plan as may be agreed by the LPA in consultation with the Highway Authority, then delegate to the Head of Planning & Transportation to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, subject to the following conditions:

1. A3 Time Limit – Full permission
2. B15 Samples of Materials
3. C80 Landscaping Scheme implementation
4. B29 Access
5. B32 Parking
6. Landfill gas
7. C75 Tree protection
8. Flood Risk Assessment implementation
9. Land Contamination, risk assessment and remediation/mitigation strategy implementation
10. Piling details to avoid ground controlled water penetration
11. Travel Plan and implementation of plan proposals
12. Highway conditions following further assessment

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2009/0326 Demolition and re-construction of existing local centre to comprise a community centre, 3 retail units, 72 bed care home and 15no. 2 bed apartments and 3no. 1 bed apartments, relocation of ball court and associated engineering works including blocking up of underpass

Randlay Centre, Randlay Community Centre, Randlay, Telford, Shropshire.

Recommendation Code: FG

Ward: The Nedge

APPLICANT:
J Ross Developments Limited

RECEIVED ON:
21/04/09

PARISH
Hollinswood & Randlay

WARD
The Nedge

CASE OFFICER:
Kate Stephens

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes

MAIN ISSUES: New and relocated community facilities, affect on residential amenity, highways and parking, loss of Green Network, relocation of ball court

PROPOSAL:

This is a full application resulting from a Council initiative to redevelop the existing Randlay Centre and the row of shops that is in need to repair. The proposal includes demolition of the existing parade of shops and community centre and the erection of a new repositioned parade of three shop units with 6 flats above, the erection of a 72-bed nursing home, erection of a three storey block of 12 flats (all 2 bed) and the erection of a new community centre. The existing communal car park and vehicular access off Randlay Avenue are to remain, but with parking areas designated for use by staff and visitors to the Nursing Home and changes to vehicle servicing areas. As a consequence of the proposal the existing ball court will need to be relocated to a new position in the centre of the "village green" in order to ensure the new residential development is beyond the suggested 30m buffer zone of play equipment. The application does not involve any work to The Farmhouse public house.

The scheme also involves various associated highway works (to be undertaken by the Council not the developer) that include blocking up the underpass that goes from the Randlay Centre to Whitworth Avenue under Randlay Avenue, installation of a new signalised pedestrian crossing to replace the underpass, and footpath widening along Randlay Avenue.

Following discussions with officers amended plans have been submitted that now show the relocated ball court within the red line of the site and amendments made to the community hall at the request of the Parish Council and other alterations to the general site layout to better facilitate refuse vehicles and cycle parking. The application has been readvertised as a departure from the development plan and residents reconsulted on the amendments.

THE SITE

Randlay Centre is located approx 1½ kms from Telford town centre off Randlay Avenue and comprises Randlay Primary School, The Farmhouse public house, community centre in converted farm buildings, a shared car park and a small parade of shops comprising a small supermarket, a hot food takeaway and a hairdresser which is in need of repair and is looking tired. There is vehicular and pedestrian accesses off Randlay Avenue into the car park, which are to remain, and various pedestrian access approaches across the “village green” from Boulton Grange. There are several regular bus services along Randlay Avenue (No.s 11, 22 and 33) all operating about 5 buses an hour with bus stops located in close proximity to the site. The site is located adjacent to residential development, which also surrounds the “village green” with a predominantly bungalow development at Dodmoor Grange, mix of dwellings and three storey flats at Boulton Grange.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Outdoor Recreation Officer – with the new proposed residential flats there will need to be a buffer zone between the ball court facility and the new residential and a new location for the ball court should be included in the application.

Drainage engineers – as development is on a brownfield site, details must be submitted that show how surface water runoff from the site will be reduced by a minimum of 20% in line with recommendation of level 2 of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Hard standing areas should be permeable paving and source control used on all buildings.

Geotechnical engineers – the ground investigation report submitted with the application does not include interpretation of the contamination results – need interpretive results and whether remediation is required. On receipt of the additional information the officer advises that there are no past potentially contaminative uses identified and despite the omissions in the report, satisfied that the site will be suitable for the proposed use. Provided measures for importing soils are carried out as per the report, no further issues.

Highway engineers – various comments on layout and design including further assessment of delivery/refuse vehicle movements, need to improve visibility and widen footpath along Randlay Avenue from existing pedestrian crossing. Infilling the underpass will require alternative pedestrian crossing point on Randlay Avenue.

Environmental Planning – From the bat and owl survey, no evidence of barn owls were found and satisfied with this result. Whilst an infrequently used summer roost for a low population of brown-long eared bats was found in community building 1. No evidence of bats was found in the other two buildings but their absence cannot be proven. Care must be taken in removing tiles, beams, battens, barge boards and soffits, checking for any bats which might be roosting there. Provided the recommendations and mitigation set out in the submitted Bat and Owl Survey report are followed no objection to this development.

Parish Council – In response to original consultation, fully support the scheme and has committed £75,000 to the provision of a new community centre. However the

scheme did not include all the features required by the Parish Council (hence amended plans). Look at more parking, replacing fence at back of shops with a wall, remove extra fence to residential home, reduce width of wide pedestrian gap from Randlay Avenue to reduce skateboarding incidents, flat roof on takeaway should be as attractive as possible, and be included in discussion on street lighting and CCTV.

2 letters of objection from local residents summarised below:-

- The new flats will overlook property and reduce light.
- Entrance to own flats is already dark and will be made even darker by the new flats – the developer should pay for new lighting.
- Scheme generally good and will benefit community
- Flat roof to the new takeaway unit will encourage vandals to climb onto it.
- Install new bus lay-by just down from shops

1 letter of objection from Farmhouse Public House summarised below:-

- Nursing home is not a viable use.
- pub opens until 1am on certain weekends and being so close to the Nursing home and new flats don't want opening hours and business compromised

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT:

Wrekin Local Plan 1995-2006:

UD2 Design Criteria - Requires Council to consider if proposals are of appropriate design quality and relates positively to its context by assessing scale, massing, layout etc and in determining it consider whether (amongst other things) it respects its context visually and functionally and enhances the local environment, respects and integrates with the wider landscape setting and topography.

UD3 Urban Design Assessments - Developers are required to demonstrate how they have taken into account urban design principles.

H6 Windfall sites in Telford & Newport – housing on sites less than 0.4ha will be allowed where site can be adequately accessed, drained, that adequate remedial action can be taken to deal with contamination and proposals will not have adverse impact on local environment.

S1 Service Centre Hierarchy – maintain the hierarchy of Telford town centre, District Centres and other local centres by directing development to these existing centres.

OL3 Green Network – seek to protect Green Network to achieve the aims of the Green Network which are i) maintain extensive green areas that cumulatively create high quality environment a ii) retain and enhance individual identity and sense of local community through separation of built areas with green wedges, iii) provide easily accessible 'green lungs' especially in more densely built up areas, iv) provide appropriate supply of open land for range of recreational needs and wider landscaped area for informal recreation, v) protect and maintain ecological and geological habitat and vi) provide open space linkages through footpaths, cycle ways and ecological corridors.

OL4 Development in the Green Network – development may be permitted in the Green Network if there are exceptional circumstances, it contributes or is complementary to aims of the Green Network, or environmental and community benefits are integral to the proposal.

Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted Dec 2007)

CS5 District and Local Centres – Local centres will be the focus for more accessible local services and small scale community facilities to meet people's day-to-day needs, and the mix of uses in Local Centres will be carefully managed and development within them should help create vibrant, safe and attractive places.

CS9 Accessibility and Social Inclusion – Includes locating development in existing centres.

CS10 Community Facilities – Supports the provision of new community facilities and the improvements to existing community facilities to meet needs of local residents and encourages them to be located in District and Local centres and key rural settlements to help create sustainable development and promote social inclusion.

CS11 Open Space – seeks to protect such spaces from unnecessary development as they can underpin quality of life in the Borough, but allows development where it will have a significant community and environmental benefit. It recognises that not all open space is of equal social, economic or environmental value

CS15 Urban Design – urban design can help create and sustain safe places, strengthen local identity, project a positive image and positively influence the appearance and use of the local environment.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposal involves several separate elements, which are discussed below, that combine to produce an overall redevelopment scheme.

The new community facilities

a) Retail block with flats above

The existing 1980's single storey building of a small row of shops comprising a small supermarket, a hairdressers and a hot food takeaway is in need of repair. According to the applicant's consultation, the traders want greater visual prominence for the shops, yet at the same time want to avoid features such as canopies that would encourage anti-social behaviour.

In order to allow the existing units to continue trading while the redevelopment proceeds, and to accommodate the nursing home, the new retail complex is to be built adjacent to the existing shops taking them closer to the road. This will necessitate blocking up the underpass and building up the land that slopes down to the underpass. The blocking up of the pedestrian underpass will be compensated for by the installation of a new signalised pedestrian crossing on Randlay Avenue, approximately above the underpass. Officers consider that this will provide a more

attractive and less intimidating crossing point for pedestrians. Service vehicles and parking for both the 6 flats above and shop staff (12 spaces in total) will be accessed to the rear off the existing service road at the back of the existing shops. This area will also then lead to the gated servicing area to the rear of the proposed nursing home that will be adjacent.

The design of the new 2 storey retail building is traditional brick and tile construction, but with front gable features and areas of render to add variety. At ground floor there will be 2 retail units (Class A1) and a hot food takeaway (Class A5). Above the shops, but accessed from the rear via a communal entrance lobby, are 6 flats (four 2 bed and two 1bed), with two of the flats having a small balcony over the rear flat roof.

The repositioning of the shops will make them more visible and prominent to both the road and on entering car park, and removes them from behind a dwarf wall screen. This relocation and a more attractive design, together with introducing residential flats above the shops will enhance the visual appearance of the centre as well as bring more life and natural surveillance to the area particularly after the shops have shut, which could help lessen opportunities for anti-social behaviour. The two retail units will be conditioned to be retail Class A1, so that they would require planning permission to change to other uses in order to help retain the retail facilities of this local centre and avoid a proliferation of hot food takeaways, which can encourage people to hang around outside and anti-social behaviour.

b) Community Centre

The proposed new community centre will replace the existing centre which occupies the converted farm buildings behind the Farmhouse PH. The existing converted community centre buildings are not of significant architectural or historic interest and are not protected so could be demolished at any time without recourse to planning.

The new centre will be repositioned to the front of the site prominently located alongside Randlay Avenue. This new location will necessitate the loss of a grassed and treed landscaped verge Green Network (see below), the relocation of the loss of the footpath that runs from the existing pedestrian crossing to the Randlay Centre car park and loss of some car parking within the grounds of the primary school immediately adjacent. However, this relocation to a more prominent location has been done in consultation with the Parish Council and school, and will hopefully increase its usage by both the community and the school. And by being closer to the school buildings, avoids the children negotiating the car park to get to it.

Amended design plans were submitted to further include the requirements of the parish council and include the building has been turned around. The building is contemporary in design, but there is no definitive design context to replicate and whilst much of the residential development in the area is set back from the road, officers consider that increasing the prominence of this local centre and its community facilities is to be encouraged. There are some difficult levels on site that give the building different heights at ground level, but the main entrance will face Randlay Avenue. The facilities include 3 halls, two of which each have a kitchen off them, an external play area, toilets, stores and ancillary office accommodation.

There is still a footpath that links the footpath on Randlay Avenue to the car park that will run along the front of the building.

Officers consider that the decision to redevelop Randlay Centre and provide new and improved shops and community centre accords with Council policies to focus development and investment on a local centre, enhances facilities for the benefit of the wider community, as well as aiding social inclusion and accessibility to facilities. In addition the design of the new buildings will improve the overall appearance of the centre, strengthen local identity and positively influence the appearance and use of the local environment.

The nursing home

This is a large 'U' shaped, three storey, 72-bed nursing home that will be built on the site of the existing shops once they have been repositioned and on the adjacent Green Network that meets the "village green". The nursing home will also have communal lounges, dining room, treatment and therapy rooms, manager's office, staff rest room, kitchen and laundry. The size and configuration of the building is dictated by operational requirements of the nursing home and various standards dictating room sizes. The elevations have some vertical alignment and gables to try and break up the scale and massing of the building, and the hipped roofs serve to reduce the bulk.

The building will be set back from the path that runs between the shops and the rear of the Randlay Farmhouse PH and there will be a residents' garden area to the front and rear. This will give the area by the shops and pub some visual relief from the hard built form and enhance the visual interest along this walkway that leads to the "village green" and adjoining residential areas. Along the nursing home garden boundary with the "village green" there will be a dwarf wall with railings – a secondary 1.8m high screen fence inside the site has been removed at officer request as it provided a harsh and detrimental visual feature. Most of the mature trees along the boundary of the nursing home with the "village green" will be retained and these will serve to provide a landscaped setting to the building and reduce the visual impact on the character, appearance and setting of the "village green", which provides an attractive and important visual and recreational facility to existing local residents.

The nursing home will employ approx 70 staff, the majority of which will be full-time. During the day there will be on average 15-18 staff at any one time, and during the night between 6-8 staff. There will also be doctors, chiropodists and other carers who will visit mainly during the week. The developer advises that from experience most residents' visitors are likely to visit at weekends, particularly on Sunday afternoons. The plans show 12 staff parking spaces and a covered cycle parking shed at the rear of the building and 10 designated visitor parking spaces within the main car park area, on what is currently the existing community centre. The applicant envisages that most staff will live locally and will cycle or walk to work, or they can take advantage of the company mini bus that will operate to collect/drop-off staff. There is also a regular bus service along Randlay Avenue, with bus stops conveniently located on Randlay Avenue close to the site.

The existing public house in the centre of Randlay Centre and immediately adjacent to the proposed nursing home have objected as they are concerned that the use of the pub and its late-night opening hours during parts of the week will be threatened by the new elderly residents living close by who may be disturbed by any noise and disturbance. Officers would comment that the public house is an important part of this local centre and helps bring life and vitality to the area especially in the evenings when other uses close (school and shops) and hence it complements the range of facilities one would expect to see in a local centre that serves a wide community. The design of the nursing home is 'U' shaped with most of the building set well back from the pub and walkway. The applicant has chosen to locate its nursing home in close proximity to the existing public house and will have been aware of the issues when designing the building and its layout. In turn, introducing a residential facility close by will bring life and natural surveillance to the area particularly after the shops have shut, which could help lessen opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

A nursing home such as this would have a Class C2 use (residential institutions). This use class can allow a variety of such residential institutions, and therefore it not necessary to know how the nursing home will operate or who will be eligible to live there – these are matters dealt with by other organisations and the Council's own social services departments.

Block of 12 flats

A three storey block of 12 x 2bed flats is proposed to the rear of the Farmhouse public house and on the site of the existing converted community centre. Two of the ground floor flats will have their own access, while all other flats will be accessed via a central lobby. The design is relatively traditional with brick and render and a tiled ridged roof. A small amenity area for the ground floor flats will open onto the "village green" and be surrounded by dwarf wall and railings, but the other flats will have the benefit of being sited within immediate access of the communal "village green".

Loss of Green Network

The repositioning of the new retail block and the community centre closer to Randlay Avenue will necessitate the loss of mature landscaping and roadside trees, and the nursing home will remove some of the grassed area behind the avenue of trees at the top of the "village green". The Green Network extends around and beyond the site as a whole and parts of the school and communal car park are already located within the Green Network.

Wrekin Local Plan Policy OL4 expects new development for the Green Network to be open land uses, even if they are "exceptional" and the proposed development would appear to be in some conflict with this policy. However the more recent Core Strategy Policy CS11 seeks to protect open spaces from "unnecessary" development and hence allows development where it will have a "significant" community and environmental benefit.

The repositioning and replacement of the shops with a new building of better design will help improve trade as well as providing greater visual interest and improve the overall appearance and setting of this local centre that focuses around the communal parking area. Also the community centre will have more roadside

prominence which in turn may well serve to increase its usage. The nursing home will encroach on Green Network near the top of the "village green", but the nursing home is effectively part of the enabling development for the new and improved community centre and shops. The relocated ball court will also encroach into the Green Network of the village green, but this is a replacement facility and its use accords with the aims of the Green Network as it will provide community recreational benefit.

Whilst any loss of Green Network is regrettable, officers consider that the overall integrity of the function and appearance of the Green Network in the area will not be compromised in this instance. These new and improved community facilities will bring overall wider community benefits to the Randlay Centre and improve its appearance and profile. Officers consider that the provision of new and improved community facilities is considered to be of "significant" merit and value to off-set the loss of the trees and these relatively small areas of Green Network and as such will be in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS11.

Highways and car parking

The shops, primary school, public house and community centre at the Randlay Centre all currently share a communal car park in the centre of the complex accessed off Randlay Avenue. The existing access and serve access will be retained with some visibility.

With regards parking provision, highway engineers consider that there is no need for each use to have its own parking quota, as with the different uses (shops, school, pub, community centre, nursing home and residential) there is a range of demand for parking at different times of the day and days of the week. The proposal does provide for some small new areas of parking, but there is effectively no net increase in provision due to the loss of some school staff parking and the introduction of a nursing home and flats. The only main overuse and congestion of the car park already occurs at school time (or school events) particularly at the end of the school day when parents park to wait for children (in the mornings parents tend to drop-off more quickly and don't wait). With school staff having to use more of the communal parking spaces this congestion could worsen, but not to an unacceptable degree due to the relatively short-term nature of the occurrence throughout any one day. The school is closed at the weekends when the nursing home is likely to have most of its visitors and also in the evenings when the community centre and public house would have more usage. In addition increased cycle parking facilities are proposed for the shops and community centre that should encourage people to cycle. Therefore officers consider that there will be sufficient staggered usage/demand for the car park throughout any day or week, such that on balance the existing parking provision is adequate for this redevelopment.

Highway engineers do, however, have concerns about the ease and practicality of refuse and service vehicles accessing the servicing areas and in particular refuse vehicles getting to the block of flats where there is insufficient space for a 11.5m vehicle to reverse. This concern was heightened because refuse vehicles would now have to pass in front of the school to get to the new block of flats and there could be conflict with pedestrians. Whilst the Council does have smaller refuse vehicles, these are generally used in the Gorge and other narrow places, and ideally

all other development should be able to accommodate the larger refuse vehicles to avoid special arrangements having to be made. Engineers have been in discussion with the applicant and revisions are expected. Members will be updated.

Affect on residential amenity and relocating ball court

The bungalows at the rear of the nursing home in Dodmoor Grange will not be significantly overlooked from the bedrooms at the rear of the nursing home due to there being over 25m distance to the bungalows (and approx 20m to the boundary of their rear gardens) separated by the nursing home garden and 1.8m high screen fencing along the rear site boundary.

Whilst there will be a likely increase in the number of service vehicles in the general vicinity of the rear of the bungalows, due to the introduction of the nursing home, any disturbance is moved further away from the rears of the bungalows. The service area that currently serves the shops will become garden for the nursing home and the service area for both the shops, nursing home and flat parking will be sited closer to Randlay Avenue off the existing service access.

Some of the residents of the flats in Boulton Grange are concerned that the new block of flats will reduce light to their flats and entrance areas. Officers consider that the new flats, which are located over 20m from the nearest block of existing flats, are of sufficient distance away as to not cause significant overlooking or loss of light to the existing flats.

The erection of the new block of flats necessitates the relocation of the existing ball court to ensure it is beyond the recommended distance from residential properties so as not to cause undue noise and disturbance to new residents. The Council would be responsible for relocating the ball court and its high fencing and the leisure officer has already advised on an acceptable new location for the ball court towards the centre of the "village green" and the location of the existing ball court would be made good and landscaped. The relocated ball court will actually take this facility further for all residential properties and out it in a more visible location. The existing ball court will then be made good and grassed over. So as not to delay development of the overall scheme, conditions would be imposed that allow phasing of the development so that the ball court would only need to be relocated when work on the block of flats started.

Conclusion

The overall plans to redevelop the Local Centre at Randlay, with new shops and a purpose-built new and modern community centre, accords Local Plan policy S1 and Core Strategy policies CS5, CS9 and CS10 as the proposal focuses development and investment on a local centre, enhances facilities for the benefit of the wider community, as well as aiding social inclusion and accessibility to facilities.

The relocated shops and community centre will be more prominent and accessible, as with their design will enhance the overall visual appearance of the local centre and enhancing its local identity. In addition, introducing residential uses within the complex with flats and the nursing home will strengthen the mix of community, and bring more life, activity and natural surveillance to the local centre as a whole. This can in turn help reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour and improve social

cohesion. Therefore the location and design of the buildings, including the nursing home whose design is somewhat compromised by operational requirements, accords with the Council's urban design policies UD2, UD3 and CS15. There is adequate parking to serve the development around the car park due to the different uses and staggered usage at different times of the day and week.

The relocated shops, new community centre and nursing home necessitate the loss of Green Network. Whilst Wrekin Local Plan policy OL4 is more restrictive as it expects new development for the Green Network to be open land uses and the proposals would appear to be in some conflict with this policy, the more recent Core Strategy policy CS11 seeks to protect open spaces from "unnecessary" development and hence allows development where it will have a "significant" community and environmental benefit. Officers consider the provision of new and improved community facilities to be of "significant" community benefit to ensure that the proposal is in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS11. Whilst any loss of Green Network is regrettable, officers consider that the overall integrity of the function and appearance of the Green Network in the area is not compromised in this instance and there will be no loss of recreational space. It is therefore considered that there are material considerations of significant community benefit in this instance that serve to justify the development including on parts of the Green Network, notwithstanding that there is some conflict with Policy OL4.

RECOMMENDATION: to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions and any others officers consider necessary:

1. A2 - Commence in 3 years
2. C120 - Accordance with plans
3. B2 - Materials
4. B50 - Drainage and surface water details
5. B23 - Landscaping and boundary scheme
6. Details of access and visibility improvements
7. Provision of new signalised pedestrian crossing
8. Footpath widening and dropped crossings
9. Car parking, turning, footpaths and servicing areas all surfaced, drained and laid out.
10. Cycle parking details
11. Retail units 1 and 2 only Class A1
12. Relocate ball court before block of flats commenced
13. Make good area of existing ball court after its relocation.
14. Protect trees to remain
15. Odour extraction details for the takeaway unit.
16. Carry out bat recommendations as per bat survey report

REASON FOR APPROVAL

The redevelopment of the Local Centre at Randlay, with new shops and purpose-built community centre as well as residential, accords with policies S1, CS5, CS9 and CS10 as the proposal focuses development and investment on a local centre and enhances community facilities for the benefit of the wider community, as well as aiding social inclusion and accessibility to facilities.

The location and design of the buildings accords with the Council's urban design policies UD2, UD3 and CS15. The new community facilities will be more prominent and accessible, as well enhancing the overall visual appearance of the local centre and enhancing its local identity. In addition, introducing residential uses will strengthen the mix of community, and bring more life, activity and natural surveillance to the local centre as a whole, which can in turn improve social cohesion and help reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

There will be some loss of Green Network to accommodate the relocated shops, community centre and nursing home. It is considered that the provision of new and improved community facilities to be of "significant" community benefit to ensure that the proposal is in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS11. Whilst any loss of Green Network is regrettable, it is considered that the overall integrity of the function and appearance of the Green Network in the area is not compromised in this instance and there will be no net loss of recreational space. It is therefore considered that there are material considerations of significant community benefit in this instance that serve to justify the development including on parts of the Green Network, notwithstanding that there is some conflict with Policy OL4.

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2009/0610 Installation of new retail floorspace at mezzanine level
MFI Unit 3, Telford Bridge Retail Park, Colliers Way, Old Park, Telford, Shropshire.
Recommendation Code: FG
Ward: Lawley & Overdale

APPLICANT:
Aberdeen Property Investors UK Ltd

RECEIVED ON:
23/07/09

PARISH
Lawley & Overdale

WARD
Lawley & Overdale

CASE OFFICER:
Gareth W Thomas

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: No

MAIN ISSUES: Retail Impact on town centre, Access and parking

THE SITE AND PROPOSAL:

Members are advised that this report has been prepared without finalising the highway section of the report and an update will be provided at this evening's meeting in relation to potential planning obligations contribution for off-site highway improvements in line with the Central Telford Area Action Plan (CTAAP). The recommendation at the end of the report therefore includes provision for a section 106 contribution but the precise level of contribution is still under discussion.

The application proposes to install a new retail floorspace at mezzanine level within unit 3 at the Telford Bridge Retail Park. This unit was vacated by MFI following that firm's demise. There are no changes to the external envelope of the building. Access is from Colliers Way and shared retail park access road. Car parking is shared with other units on the retail park.

The proposal would provide an additional 1,236 sq m gross floorspace. Up to 200 sq m would be allowed to be added without planning permission due to permitted development rights. The customer entrance to the unit will not change and complies with current Building Regulations in terms of gradients of entrance ramps. The mezzanine floor will be reached via stairways with lifts for customers who have difficulty negotiating stairs.

The proposed occupier is HomeSense who specialise predominantly in household goods and homewares, including furniture, kitchenware and soft furnishings.

The Telford Bridge Retail Park comprises fourteen retail units and one restaurant totalling 17,871 sq m of gross internal floorspace. Occupiers include Halfords, B&Q, Comet, Argos, Carpetright, Dreams and Maplin. The Park is an edge of centre location outside the designated Town Centre in the Council latest Draft Central Telford Area Action Plan (TCAAP). Looking at the HomeSense web site, the stores are spread across the country and in all cases are located on retail parks outside town centre locations.

The applicants have submitted a retail impact assessment although technically according to PPS6 one is not necessary for developments under 2,500 sq m. In addition a Transport Assessment has also been lodged.

HISTORY

No relevant history.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Saved Wrekin Local Plan Policies :
S1 Service Centre Hierarchy

Core Strategy 2007:

CS4 Telford Town Centre

CS5 District and Local Centres

Central Telford Area Action Plan

Policy CT21 Developer Contributions for Delivering Infrastructure

Regional Planning Policies

Policy PA11: Strategic Town Centres

National Planning Policies:

PPS6 Retailing

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Parish Council: No Objections

Engineering Services: No Objection

Planning Policy Team: Further analysis necessary in terms of sequential analysis as the Retail Statement does not fully consider alternative sites within the town centre and relies on assumptions in relation to vacant premises availability.

PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

Telford is identified as a Strategic Town Centre under the adopted Revised RSS 2008 and a Town Centre in the Core Strategy. Policy PA11 of RSS states that the Strategic Town Centres will be the focus for major retail developments and PA13 states that it is not envisaged that “any further large-scale (10,000 sq m plus) out of centre retail developments or extensions to existing developments will be required” during the period to 2021. The policy goes on to say that “Smaller-scale out of centre retail proposals should be considered in the light of policies and proposals in development plans and take full account of Government guidance including the requirement to demonstrate ‘need’ and the sequential test. No out-of-centre developments should be redefined as town centres”.

Policy CS4 in the adopted Core Strategy states that “Central Telford Area will be the focus for major....retail....development serving the needs of the Borough and the sub-region...”

Draft Policy CT2 in the CTAAP June 2009 states that new retail development will be permitted to meet the need in the Town Centre and that no more than an additional 70,000 sq m (gross) comparison retail development will be provided in the Town

centre Core over the period to 2016. Supporting text emphasises that when determining applications for out of centre retail applications, the principles of PPS6, in particular its sequential approach to site selection, will be applied. PPS6 is presently under review but the original and extant guidance requires out-of-centre retail developments to be assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

- The need for the development;
- That the development is appropriate in scale;
- That there are no more central sites that can accommodate the development;
- That there are no unacceptable impacts on existing centres; and,
- That the location is accessible.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The application raises issues relating to planning policy and the need to protect the town centre as the primary focus for retail development and whether the development can be adequately serviced by existing highway infrastructure and its impact on that infrastructure adequately mitigated. Despite the fact that PPS6 is under review and irrespective that the CTAAP is in its initial draft form, the above policy background and particularly the tests for assessment is an appropriate methodology against which support or otherwise can be given to this proposal.

Quantitative Need

In terms of need, PPS6 currently requires a quantitative need assessment of the additional floorspace generated to be undertaken. The evidence prepared in support of the Council's CTAAP (the White Young Green Borough-wide Retail Study – WYG) has been used by the applicants to determine whether the additional floorspace would prejudice the Council's objective of securing the future health of the town centre as the primary shopping destination for Telford. WYG suggests that Telford will generate a growth in spending/turnover at edge and out-of-centre stores of £13.7m between 2009-2014, based on the minimum population increase scenario used in the Study. The proposed mezzanine floorspace would be likely to generate additional turnover of £2.98m at its optimum, but this is more likely to be up to half this turnover if experience of mezzanine floorspace turnover elsewhere is taken as being more realistic. In absolute terms, the turnover would equate to 21.8% of growth in expenditure apportioned to edge/out-of-centre non-food retail floorspace over the Plan period; however this can reasonably be reduced by up to 50% given that the proposal is for a mezzanine rather than a bespoke separate unit. Given the way the data has been prepared by WYG it is also notable that the absolute maximum % expenditure will not be expenditure that will be diverted from the Town Centre or other (District) centres. In addition the % figures do not take account of inflow of expenditure from outside the Borough (from Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth). Thus the turnover of the proposal drawn from the Borough would be smaller and, together with the reduced % turnover likely to be generated from a typical mezzanine, means that the turnover would equate to 8.8% (maximum population growth scenario) or 6.9% (minimum population growth scenario) over the Plan period.

A sensitivity analysis of these figures has been undertaken to take account of current market conditions and likely reduced population growth. However whichever figures are taken to assess this application, it is reasonable to conclude that there is

a quantitative need for this development. Put in other words, the proposal will absorb only relatively minimal the retail expenditure that will be available in edge or out-of-centre shopping centres taking account of population growth during the CTAAP plan period.

Qualitative Need

There is an argument to suggest that there continues to be leakage of expenditure on non-food retailing to other competing centres such as Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton. Moreover leakage of expenditure necessitates trips, usually by car. This retailer is not currently represented in Telford – the closest store is in Birmingham. There is an argument to suggest that the introduction of this national retailer into Telford will result in a modest diversion of trade currently being leaked to other centres. What is difficult to assess is just how much.

Scale

Given the data analysed, it has to be concluded that the increase in floorspace represents a relatively minor and insignificant increase in the total floorspace of this retail park and the role of the Telford Bridge Retail Park will not be materially altered by the proposal. Wider shopping patterns will also not be materially altered. The scale represents an acceptable increase at this park which in turn provides a complementary role to the town centre.

Sequential Approach

The purpose of undertaking a sequential test is to consider the suitability, availability and viability of more central locations for the retail proposal comprising in total of 2,630 sq m floorspace (gross). HomeSense offer the following business model reasons for this particular site selection, including the fact that mezzanine floors are not 'rentalised', the need for adjacent surface level car parking (for customers transporting heavy items conveniently), and the need to locate adjoining other large format stores occupied by national retailers to guarantee footfall. For the purpose of this part of the study, the town centre/Primary Shopping Area identified in TCAAP is used. A number of vacant premises within the shopping centre have been considered but discounted due to size (offering a maximum floorspace in the range of 250 sq m). Despite the opportunity to house the store by combining the former Woolworth with the adjoining store, rental values within the shopping centre are circa 4-6 times those at the Bridge Retail Park. Southwater Core has been discounted as there are currently no proposals to accommodate large store formats at this prestigious office-leisure led development opportunity. Other locations have been considered including the former Focus building and the Spencers In-Store Mall building. However these stores are being offered on short-term rental basis – probably due to the owner's ambitions to redevelop that part of Southwater.

Edge-of-centre locations have also been considered including 8 sites such as Odeon Cinema, Cherry Car Park etc. However only one existing edge of centre site at the Odeon Cinema is genuinely available but this is discounted as being far too small.

Overall, it is concluded reasonably that there are no sites that can be described as readily available for this proposal that would be sequentially preferable. The use could take up the former MFI unit without the need for planning permission.

Economic Effects and Impact

A health check has been carried out of the existing town centre shopping centre which concludes that Telford remains a vital and viable town centre notwithstanding the current economic climate. The Bridge Retail Park as well as The Forge provides a complementary role and function to the town centre in providing large format store opportunities (including “bulky” goods). Given shopping expenditure leakage to other centres, it is reasonable to allow a certain level of additional floorspace at these locations where they represent opportunities to enhance the retail offer thereby enhancing the attractiveness of the town overall as a shopping destination. It is important to avoid trade diversion from the town centre; however the Council’s own evidence suggests that the turnover of the new mezzanine floor can be accommodated simply by growth in spending between 2009-2014.

Accordingly it is the view of your officers that the proposal is consistent with national, regional and local planning policy and will not result in harm to the town centre or undermine the principal strategy of TCAAP. It will not either undermine the functioning of this particular Retail Park.

Turning to transport issues, the Transport Assessment (TA) demonstrates that the store is located within a convenient walking distance of the town centre and which is accessible by a choice of transport modes. There is some debate concerning the amount of traffic movements that would be associated with this proposal and whether the increase in trip rates will have a bearing on the local network. Our highway officers have asked for additional survey work to be undertaken and for this information to feed into the requirement for a section 106 contribution to mitigate off-site highways and transportation infrastructure identified in CTAAP. Under CTAAP highway infrastructure falls under two headings – the requirements that are site specific and those which are more strategic. The Council intends to fund strategic infrastructure improvements and facilities through a mixture of private and public sector contributions, the former for the time being gained through the use of planning obligations under the Planning Act. In time this may be replaced or supplemented by the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy and set out in a future Developer Contributions SPD. For now, the Council will negotiate on a case by case basis.

As stated above, the TA and additional survey work will inevitably draw out the requirement for a contribution to strategic infrastructure in line with Policy CT21 of the CTAAP. The exact contribution is under discussion and the outcome of these discussions will be presented at the Plans Board meeting. It is for this reason that the following recommendation seeks to support the planning application in principle, subject to a prior section 106 Obligation that will require a financial contribution, the details of which are still to be clarified and agreed. Delegated authority is sought that in the event of agreement being reached between the developer and the Council on the level of contribution, that permission be then granted subject to concluding the planning obligation.

RECOMMENDATION: Subject to the applicants entering into a Section 106 Agreement relating to financial contributions necessary to secure compliance with Policy CT21 of CTAAP - level of financial contribution towards strategic highway and transportation infrastructure to be delegated to the Head of Planning & Transportation to GRANT FULL PERMISSION subject to the following condition:

A3 – Time Limit

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2009/0618 Erection of a single dwelling
Land adjacent to, 81, Coronation Crescent, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire.
Recommendation Code: FR
Ward: Madeley

APPLICANT:
Mrs J Williams

RECEIVED ON:
23/07/09

PARISH
Madeley

WARD
Madeley

CASE OFFICER:
Elizabeth Attwood

CLLR DAVE WRIGHT HAS REQUESTED THAT THIS APPLICATION IS DETERMINED BY MEMBERS AT PLANS BOARD.

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes

MAIN ISSUES: The impact upon the character and appearance of the area, highway safety and residential amenity.

PROPOSAL:

This is a full application for the erection of a single dwelling in the side garden of 81 Coronation Crescent, Madeley.

HISTORY:

An informal enquiry was made to the Council in 2008 in respect of residential development on the site; the Council's response was that the proposed development was unacceptable and that any subsequent planning application was unlikely to be viewed favourably.

POLICIES:

The following policies are considered relevant in determining this application;

Wrekin Local Plan:

UD2 Design Criteria.

H6 Windfall Sites in Telford and Newport.

Core Strategy:

CS1 Homes,

CS5 District and Local Centres in Telford,

CS15 Urban Design.

National guidance:

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development.

PPS3 Housing

PPS25 Development and Flood Risk.

SITE AND LOCATION

Coronation Crescent is an ex-local authority housing estate comprising of two storey semi detached dwellings with hipped roofs; the application site is the side garden and parking area of no.81.

Court Street runs to the west of the site. The dwellings on Court Street are older traditional style cottages. A light controlled crossroads of Court Street and Parkway is located to the south of the site and Court Street has double yellow lines. Madeley Town Centre is 200m to the south of the application site.

CONSULTATIONS

A site notice and 21 direct neighbour letters have publicised the application; 6 letters of objection have been received. The issues raised are:

- Parking, Access, Shared driveway, increased traffic,
- Road safety, Congestion, Proximity to traffic lights, existing double yellow lines,
- Loss of privacy, loss of view,
- Out of keeping,
- Ground level differences,
- Vehicle and light pollution,
- Nuisance during construction.

The Council's Highway Engineer has objected to the proposal due to increased traffic generation and restricted visibility.

The Council's Engineers: have advised that details of foul and surface water drainage are required and run-off should be in line with PPS25. In addition, due to the historic use of the site, care should be taken during excavation and building in respect of land stability and contamination.

The Parish Council have objected to the proposal, the points raised are; the adverse effect on residential amenity, undesirable back land development, loss of amenity, highway danger, visibility, surface water problems.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Policy UD2 provides guidance to assess whether or not proposals are of an appropriate design quality and relate positively their context. It advises the Council to assess proposed development in relation to its scale, massing, form, density, orientation and layout, proportions, materials, landscape elements, access, parking and spatial quality.

Policy H6 states *inter alia*, that housing development will be permitted on land under 0.4 hectares when the site can be adequately accessed, drained and where the proposal does not have an adverse impact on the local environment, especially in its relationship with adjacent land uses.

Policy CS1 asserts that housing development will seek to provide every household in the borough with an affordable, decent and appropriate home. A maximum of 2850 dwellings will be brought forward with the plan period. Telford will be the location for the majority of new homes. The type size and tenure of new homes will meet local

need, and be delivered in a way that creates locally inclusive and sustainable communities.

Policy CS5 requires all new residential development to be situated in highly accessible locations creating vibrant, safe and attractive places, with designs which respect and respond to the locality.

Moreover, policy CS15, amongst other issues, states that development will assist in creating and sustaining safe places, positively influencing the appearance of the local environment.

In addition, national guidance contained in PPS1, asserts that development should be of high quality design, respond to the local context and should reinforce local distinctiveness. High quality design should add to the overall character and quality of an area, not just for a short time but over the lifetime of the development. Where proposals are inappropriate in their context or they fail to improve the character and quality of an area, the proposal should not be accepted.

Furthermore, PPS3 gives Government advice on new housing developments, amongst other issues it states that development should;

- maintain and improve local character,
- be easily accessible and safe,
- be well integrated with, and complement, the neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally in terms of scale, density, layout and access,
- create, or enhance, a distinctive character that relates well to the surroundings.

PPS25 sets out Government policy on development and flood risk. It aims to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk.

The proposed dwelling is located within a highly sustainable location and has a similar appearance to the existing dwellings and two parking spaces are provided for the proposed dwelling and two parking spaces are provided for the existing dwelling. The parking for the existing dwelling is accessed via the proposed dwelling and at the bottom of the rear garden belonging to the proposed dwelling.

Nevertheless, it is considered that due to the size of the plot, the proposal fails to respect and relate positively to its context and would result in overdevelopment of the site, creating intensification of its use, both in built form, and the nature of parking facilities for both residents of the proposed dwelling and the existing dwelling.

The proposed detached dwelling would appear as an intrusive building due both the detached nature and to the forward positioning and angle to the established building line creating a cramped form of development out of character with the spacious semi-detached built form of Coronation Crescent. This would ultimately create an incongruous form of development and as such would have an adverse impact upon

the street scene. Moreover, given the level difference on the site the LPA is concerned that the proposed dwelling would appear unduly prominent in the locality.

The amount of rear private amenity space for the proposed dwelling is deemed unacceptable when considering the close proximity of the access and parking for the existing dwelling which would essentially be in the rear garden of the proposed dwelling.

The Council's Highway Engineer has raised objections to the proposal; the traffic generated by the proposed development would likely to result in an increase in highway danger owing to the intensification in use of vehicle access location which affords restricted visibility splays for drivers existing onto the highway approaching a main highways junction.

It is acknowledged that the proposed improvement to the southern visibility splay but the northern visibility splay falls across 3rd party land and therefore cannot be improved or secured by the imposition of a condition.

The Design & Access statement makes reference to a similar successful application in Ironbridge Road (W2007/1545). However the LPA does not agree that a direct comparison can be made; the plot was at the end of a row of semi detached former Local Authority houses and was driveway and garaging, the site was level and the proposed access was an improvement to the existing situation. Interestingly, the Design & Access statement does not make reference to the neighbouring site at 78 Coronation Crescent (W2008/0354) for the erection of a two storey dwelling in the side garden

which was refused in May 2008 for the following reasons:

1. The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposed development is unacceptable by reason of its overdevelopment of the plot; creating an incongruous and cramped form of development within the street scene, out of character with the spacious semi-detached built form of Coronation Crescent. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to policies UD2 and H6 of the Wrekin Local Plan 1995-2006 and national planning guidance in PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development and PPS3: Housing.
2. The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposed dwelling by virtue of its scale and orientation would have a detrimental impact on the privacy and amenity of 78 Coronation Crescent. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to policy UD2 of the Wrekin Local Plan 1995-2006 and national planning guidance in PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development.

The decision was appealed but later dismissed by the Inspector.

Issues relating to drainage, land stability and land contamination could be addressed by the imposition of conditions and informatives if Members are minded to approve this application.

In conclusion, for the reasons outlined above, your Officers consider that the proposed development is unacceptable as it is deemed contrary to 'saved' policies

UD2 and H6 of the Wrekin Local Plan 1995 – 2006, policies CS1, CS5 and CS15 of the Core Strategy 2007 and national guidance in PPS1 and PPS3 and therefore recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE PERMISSION

Reasons:

1. The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposed development is unacceptable and is an overdevelopment of the site which fails to respect and respond positively to its context. The addition of a new detached dwelling on the plot would create an incongruous and cramped form of development within the street scene, out of character with the spacious semi-detached built form of Coronation Crescent. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to 'saved' policies UD2 and H6 of the Wrekin Local Plan 1995-2006, policies CS5 and CS15 of the Core Strategy 2007 and national planning guidance in PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development and PPS3: Housing.

2. The Local Planning Authority considers that the traffic generated by the proposed development is likely to result in an increase in highway danger owing to the intensification in use of a vehicle access location which affords restricted visibility splays for drivers existing onto the highway. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to 'saved' policies UD2 and H6 of the Wrekin Local Plan 1995-2006, policies CS5 and CS15 of the Core Strategy 2007 and national planning guidance in PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development and PPS3: Housing.

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2009/0683 Change of use of land from public open space to private garden land and erection of a fence

Land adjacent to, 280, Wombridge Road, Trench, Telford, Shropshire.

Recommendation Code: FG

Ward: Wrockwardine Wood & Trench

APPLICANT:

Mr Darren Beddoes

RECEIVED ON:

07/08/09

PARISH

Wrockwardine Wood

WARD

Wrockwardine Wood &
Trench

CASE OFFICER:

Phil Baker

COUNCILLOR CHARLES SMITH HAS REQUESTED THAT THIS APPLICATION BE CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL'S PLANS BOARD

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes

MAIN ISSUES: Enclosure of open space, Loss of vegetation

THE SITE AND THE PROPOSAL

This planning application relates to the change of use of a piece of public open space to private garden land on the corner of Wombridge Road and Trench Road in Trench.

This land at present comprises a number of semi-mature silver birch trees and a dense collection of shrubs. It measures 19 metres long by an average of 3 metres wide.

To the east and south of the site are existing residential curtilages, to the north is Trench Road, and to the west is a gas governor station and more open space/trees/shrubs. The adjoining houses – 280 Wombridge Road and 100 Trench Road – have boundary features that comprise brick walls and railings which extend up to the back of the pavements.

The applicant, who lives to the south of the site, wishes to take this piece of land into his garden. Besides increasing the size of his garden the other reason for acquiring it is because he has suffered from a number of serious anti-social problems that have occurred there over the past few years.

Although the applicant would be removing the shrubs on the site, he wishes to retain all the silver birch trees. The first five metres of the site south of trench Road would remain unenclosed, and the remainder will be enclosed by a 1.5 metre high close boarded fence. This fence would be set back 5 metres from the back of the Trench Road pavement.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Councillor Charles Smith has made the following comments:-

- He has concerns about the visibility for road users at this very busy junction if the land is fenced off
- There is the question of the gas governor station in the middle of the site
- He has queried the exact ownership of the piece of land (It has been confirmed that it is currently owned by the Telford and Wrekin Council)

The Parish Council has objected to the application for the following reasons:-

- The proposed fencing will obstruct the visibility of traffic at the Trench Road/Wombridge Road mini-island, which is a concern as this is a very busy junction
- When selling this land off the Borough Council should impose a strict covenant stating that road visibility will be maintained and the shrubs cut back

The Council's Highways Engineer has no highway objections to the application. Measurements indicate that any effect this application would have on the visibility splay at the mini-roundabout would be insignificant and would certainly not compromise highway safety. He adds that this land is not 'highway' land and therefore not a 'dedicated visibility splay under the control of the authority'.

PLANNING HISTORY

In 2003 outline planning permission (ref: W2003/0999) was granted for a detached dwelling on the adjoining site. In 2005 the approval of reserved matters was given (ref: W2005/1267).

PLANNING POLICY

The following statutory policies are relevant in the determination of this application:-

Wrekin Local Plan
OL6 – Open Land

LDF Core Strategy
CS11 – Open Space

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The Council's Highways Engineer has confirmed that the proposed enclosure of this piece of land will not obstruct any visibility at the Wombridge Road/Trench Road junction. Therefore highway safety will not be jeopardised or prejudiced.

It is considered that the enclosure of this land will not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the surrounding area. The site lies behind another area of open space that contains trees, shrubs, and grass, which will all remain undisturbed. Therefore, the enclosure of the application site with a 1.5 metre high close boarded

fence, set back from the street, will not substantially affect the prevailing character and appearance of the locality. A condition will be imposed to ensure the retention of the existing trees within the boundaries of the application site.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:-

1. A3 – Full permission
2. C118 – Submitted plans
3. Retention of existing trees
4. Details of type, height, and colour of fence

REASONS FOR APPROVAL

The change of use and enclosure of this piece of land will not obstruct highway visibility or jeopardise highway safety. The enclosure of this land will not have an adverse impact on the visual amenities of the locality or on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2009/0703 Realignment and new section of road and the provision of public open space and parking area

Land to south of Park Lane Centre, Park Lane, Woodside, Telford, Shropshire.

Recommendation Code: FG

Ward: Woodside

APPLICANT:

Telford and Wrekin Council

RECEIVED ON:

20/08/09

PARISH

Madeley

WARD

Woodside

CASE OFFICER:

Gareth W Thomas

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: No

MAIN ISSUES: Community and economic regeneration; Design issues: environmental enhancement

THE SITE AND PROPOSAL:

This is an application for full planning permission for the realignment of the existing Park Lane, which will become a through route, and provision of hard and soft landscaping together with a new parking area. The new section of highway will link the northern section of Park Lane with a section of highway outside the main entrance to the Woodlands Primary School.

The site comprises the former Dolphin Public House and derelict/semi-derelict spaces in the vicinity of the Park Lane Centre. A panna court play facility occupies a temporary position facing the Centre. The area is served by a network of tree/shrub lined roads cycleways, paths and car parks with Park Lane having been stopped up previously such that there is no through route at this point with vehicular access serving the Park Lane Centre and Bennett House from the western side with the Medical Centre and Woodlands Primary School served from the eastern truncated section of Park Lane. The proposal would effectively provide a through route and open up areas for development. Traffic calming devices are proposed that will restrict access to one lane of traffic only across a 'raised table'. A zebra crossing would be located outside Woodlands Primary School.

The proposal forms part of the wider Woodside Regeneration Project managed by the Council in partnership with the Homes & Community Agency and Advantage West Midlands. The project seeks to bring about improvement and revitalisation of Woodside by providing a new local centre comprising new retail facilities, public open space/public realm improvements and additional new housing. Although the central part of this proposal is to provide a through route, the proposal will create a pedestrian square immediately in front of the Park Lane Centre thus enhancing the entrance into the Centre and improve connectivity. It will also provide an arc of parking (24 spaces) that will serve the needs of the local centre and its facilities (including future retail units). Raised planters and bollards would prevent vehicular access beyond this car park whilst the area would be lit and CCTV provided. The existing car parking serving the Medical Centre and to the rear of Park Lane Centre

would remain unaffected. The existing cycleways and footways will be retained and routing enhanced.

Members will appreciate that this proposal forms part of other elements within the regeneration scheme including a new Wrekin Housing Trust Extra Care facility, the Park Lane redevelopment by Bellway Homes comprising 186 new housing units, proposed new retail shopping parade and a new community park. A public exhibition of the application proposals took place in August and discussions took place directly with the Woodlands Primary School, Bennett House, Park Lane Centre and the Medical Centre to ensure the design accommodated their requirements.

PLANNING HISTORY: No relevant history

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The proposal has been assessed under the following policies:

National Policies:

PPS 1 Paragraphs 34-39 (Design)

PPS 1 Sustainable Development

PPG13 Transport Paragraph 68

Wrekin Local Plan Policies:

UD2 (Design)

UD4 (Landscaping)

Core Strategy:

CS 10: Community Facilities

CS 15 Urban Design

CONSULTATION RESPONSE:

Parish Council confirmed that they have no objections to this application.

Highway Authority – discussions held between the Highway Authority and applicants.

Neighbour Consultations:: No Objections

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The proposal forms part of an important regeneration project for Woodside designed to improve, enhance and regenerate this area of Telford. There have been significant improvements to the Radburn designed estate to date and this proposal seeks to build upon and continue the overall improvement

The road has been designed to visually integrate with the proposed square and open space and curve around existing buildings thereby helping to reduce the formality of the road and encouraging pedestrian and cycle movement. The

materials to the square comprise light coloured blockwork. Trees and shrubs details show a good mix and is complimentary to the square and Centre.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

1. A3 Type and duration of permission
2. B15 Sample of materials
3. C80 Landscape implementation
4. Highway condition
5. Highway condition

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2009/0724 Erection of 2no.classrooms, library, toilet block and extension to entrance/admin area
Lawley Primary School, Arleston Lane, Lawley, Telford, Shropshire.
Recommendation Code: FG
Ward: Wrockwardine

APPLICANT:
Telford & Wrekin Council

RECEIVED ON:
27/08/09

PARISH
Lawley & Overdale

WARD
Wrockwardine

CASE OFFICER:
Andrew Mackriell

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: None

MAIN ISSUES: Design and appearance of the extensions and the likely impact on the amenities of the surrounding area.

THE PROPOSALS:

The application is to extend the modern part of the school building with an extension comprising two new classrooms, a library and toilet facilities. A smaller extension at the front of the building would enlarge the lobby/reception and head teacher office.

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA:

The school is situated adjoining new residential development in Lawley. The school site comprises the original school building to the north, and a modern extension which is mainly single storey, in yellow brick, which now forms the main part of the school building.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT:

LDF Core Strategy DPD Policy CS15 Urban Design
Wrekin Local Plan 'saved' Policy UD2

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

The Council's Engineers have recommended a shallow mineworking condition be imposed on any approval.

The main part of the extension is proposed for an existing playground therefore Sport England have been consulted and any response will be reported to Plans Board.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

The main extension proposed would be 24 metres in length and would extend into an existing hard-surfaced games area which adjoins this part of the school. The extension would be single storey with appropriately pitched roofs and its overall design would match the appearance of the existing school building.

The site of the existing play area is adequately screened from the surrounding area. It is on a slightly lower land level and there is maturing planting and trees adjoining

the rear of the school site and the playing field. Therefore it is considered that the building of an extension on this area would not have a significant detrimental impact on the amenities of the surrounding land uses.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

A3 Standard time limit

C68 External materials to match existing building

REASONS FOR APPROVAL:

The proposed extensions represent significant additions to the main school building which would provide essential new teaching facilities. The development would be of a satisfactory design and appearance which would harmonise with the modern part of the school building. The development of the school site would have little impact on the street scene and would not detract from the general amenities of the surrounding area.

Notes