

PLANS BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Plans Board held on Wednesday, 20 June 2012 at 6.00pm in the Reception Suite, Civic Offices, Telford, Shropshire

PRESENT: Councillors J C Minor (Chairman), N A Dugmore, R T Kiernan, J Loveridge, A A Meredith (as substitute for Councillor I T W Fletcher), G C W Reynolds, S A W Reynolds, M J Smith, C R Turley

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A A McClements (for planning application TWC/2012/0240) and Councillor R J Sloan (for planning application TWC/2012/0103)

PB-007 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Plans Board held on Wednesday, 30 May 2012 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman

PB-008 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor I T W Fletcher

PB-009 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C R Turley declared a personal interest in planning applications TWC/2012/0075 and TWC/2012/0261.

Councillor M J Smith declared a personal interest in planning application TWC/2012/0219.

PB-010 DEFERRED/WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

None

PB-011 SITE VISITS

RESOLVED – that:-

- (a) in accordance with minute number PB-005 (30 May 2012), a Site Visit takes place on Wednesday, 11 July 2012 at 3.00pm in respect of planning application TWC/2012/0145 Maddocks Sports & Social Club, Church Street, Oakengates, Telford, Shropshire, TF2 6BP; and
- (b) that the following applications be deferred for Site Visits to take place on Wednesday, 11 July 2012:
 - (i) 3.30pm - TWC/2012/0261 - Land off Wrekin Course, Wellington Road, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire; and
 - (ii) 4.00pm - W2008/0473 - Former Dale End Garage, Dale Road, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire; and
 - (iii) 4.30pm - TWC/2012/0075 - Land off Concorde, Dawley Bank, Telford, Shropshire, TF4 2QB

PB-012 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION

Members had received a schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Board and fully considered each report and also the supplementary information tabled at the

meeting regarding planning applications TWC/2012/0075, TWC/2012/0103, TWC/2012/0219, TWC/2012/0240, and TWC/2012/0261.

(a) TWC/2010/0771 9 Park Street, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire, TF7 5LA

This was an application for planning consent for the demolition of a detached dwelling, and the erection of a row of four terraced properties fronting Park Street Madeley.

Councillor G Green, Ward Member, had requested that the application be determined by the Plans Board and the application had been deferred at the meeting of the Board on 30 May 2012 to enable Members to undertake a site visit.

The Planning Officer clarified that access to the site was an adopted highway. Referring to the site visit, Members considered that there was sufficient land on the site to accommodate the proposals, further noting that the size of the parking bays were larger than the required standards.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2010/0771 planning permission be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

(b) TWC/2012/0103 Land off Grooms Alley, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

These proposals sought full planning permission for the erection of 40 dwellings with associated roads, access, sewers and external works.

Councillor R J Sloan, Ward Member, had requested that the application be determined by the Plans Board.

Councillor R J Sloan, Ward Member, welcomed the proposed development of this site but represented the concerns of the owner of 20 Saville Close (situated adjacent to the site access) regarding noise and disturbance during construction.

Mr S Smythe, Applicant, spoke in support of the proposals and indicated that the company operated with sensitivity towards residents' needs and would seek to limit inconvenience and disruption during construction. He would, therefore, not object to operational management conditions.

The Planning Officer suggested that if Members were minded to approve the application, additional conditions could be applied regarding operational management, construction management and mud on road.

Members generally welcomed the proposals but were keen to ensure that disturbance to residents from the previously approved single access point would be limited. Members also welcomed provision of affordable housing units.

RESOLVED – that with regard to planning application TWC/2012/0103 planning permission be granted subject to the applicants entering into a Section 106 agreement to provide £52,549.20 towards education provision, £2000 towards provision of additional footway link, the transferral of open space to Telford & Wrekin Council, contribution towards future maintenance of open space, and provision of 4 affordable units of accommodation; and further subject to the conditions set out in the update report and additional conditions relating to operational management, construction management and mud on road.

(c) TWC/2012/0219 8 High Street, Hadley, Telford, Shropshire, TF1 5NL

This was an application for change of use from a Youth Project Centre (Sui Generis) (of its own kind) to an Islamic and academic education centre (D1 - non-residential Institutions). The premises was owned by the Council and was currently being marketed for sale and the Al Huda Trust had agreed commercial terms to purchase the property from the Council subject to planning permission being obtained for the change of use. The proposals for the operation of the education centre were set out in the report together with extensive comments from the Parish Council and neighbour consultation responses.

The application had been deferred at the meeting of the Board on 30 May 2012 to enable Members to undertake a site visit. An update report was tabled which set out a local resident's views regarding the timing of the site visit.

Cllr A Twyford, representing Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council spoke in opposition to the application, stressing that the Parish Council did not object to the service provided by the Trust, but considered that the proposed site was inappropriate. Cllr Twyford indicated that the Parish Council's objections centred upon inadequate parking provision which could result in road hazards and subsequent risk to the safety of young people using the proposed Education Centre, and would also result in an adverse impact upon amenities.

Mrs A Scott, a local resident, spoke against the application on the grounds that there was insufficient parking to accommodate increased activity at the site; she considered that there was a need for parking during lessons, and that the opening hours coincided with the busiest hours from the adjacent takeaway and that the proposals would, therefore, have a negative impact upon highway safety and residential amenity.

A representative of the Al Huda Trust spoke in support of the application to explain the community benefits brought by the Charity and allay any fears regarding Trust activity. He considered that the supporting information demonstrated a sustainable transport approach and reminded members that some of the services provided by the Trust could take place under the existing use permission with no emphasis on alleviating parking issues. The Trust had worked closely with the Council to bring this application to Board.

The Planning Officer drew Members' attention to the consultation responses received to date and advised that in Policy terms the proposals were compliant with Policy CS10 which supported the provision of new community facilities and, as the premises are in close proximity to the immediate local centre, the proposals met policy criteria. The Council's Highways Engineer accepted the details for travel arrangements. Referring to the site visit undertaken earlier in the afternoon, the Planning Officer noted that road users ignored double yellow lines but indicated that this was a police enforcement issue rather than a planning issue. She also confirmed that only a 1m access strip at the side of the building was Council owned and not the site to the rear of the premises. The Planning Officer further informed Members that consent for the premises to be used as a Youth Centre and cafe was given in 1980; use was, therefore, long-established but needed conversion to allow the Trust's teaching activities to take place as the proposal would no longer be a mixed use.

Councillor M J Smith, who was also one of the Local Ward Members, clarified his reasons for proposing a site visit at the last meeting to put consultation responses into context. He was disappointed that the Board had not been able to view the inside of the premises in order to equate the size of the building for the proposed use. He considered that there were considerable parking issues and considered that this could be alleviated if some agreement could be reached with the owner of the site at the rear to allow it to be used as a turning space. The Planning Officer indicated that she had been passed a letter, dated 20 June, from the neighbouring supermarket owner which confirmed that the land at the rear of the

premises was in their ownership and that, as they saw benefits to 8 High Street being occupied, they would be pleased to allow the Trust to use this space as a drop off and pick up point.

Councillor G C W Reynolds was encouraged by the overwhelming support that the Trust had from its students; she considered that the Trust should be supported in providing its services which were of great community benefit. She noted that the building was currently an eyesore and considered that its occupation would be an improvement to the street scene.

Councillor C R Turley also considered that the Trust provided a valuable community service and fully supported the change of use to sustain this.

Councillor S A W Reynolds echoed comments regarding the invaluable service provided by the Trust in educating young people and welcomed the neighbour's offer to allow the use of land to the rear as a drop off and pick up point.

Councillor N A Dugmore noted that the building already had permission for use as a youth centre, but he did have some concern regarding parking on double yellow lines and he questioned whether the bus route would be diverted away from the building following the regeneration of Hadley Centre.

The Planning Officer confirmed that the regeneration of Hadley would not affect the bus route.

Councillor J C Minor welcomed the application and considered the applicant had taken responsible steps to address the issue of parking.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2012/0219 planning permission be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

(d) TWC/2012/0240 Land at Arleston, Telford, Shropshire

This application sought outline planning permission for residential development on 7.26 hectares of land for up to 103 dwellings (Use Class C3) and 50 extra care units (Use Class C2), provision of two new access roads and associated drainage, open space and landscaping. A site visit had taken place on the afternoon of 20 June 2012.

Councillor A D McClements, Ward Member, acknowledged that she had previously supported development of Green Network land at the Ercall Wood Technology College site (TWC/2012/0069) because, on balance, that development was of great educational and community benefit to residents in her Ward. However, she was unable to support this application as there was no such community benefit. She noted that many of the residents in the Ward opposed the loss of this valued piece of green network in their community. Councillor McClements argued that the topography of the site would result in the proposed Extra Care facility being visually dominant over Kingsland and expressed suspicions that the proposed Extra Care facility was being used to appease development at the site. She also referred to traffic flow and the potential for increased use of mini-motors, drainage issues which would also impact the nearby Bucks Head Football Ground and fears that the site would be further developed in the future resulting in long-term urbanisation of precious natural open space.

Mr G Devey spoke on behalf of local residents to oppose the proposals. He lamented the loss of green network which he considered was a valuable wildlife habitat, the destruction of which would greatly impact the ecology in the area and result in the loss of badgers, birds red-listed by the British Trust for Ornithology, rare bats and other small mammals. He

referred to the positive impact that open space had on well-being and for the development of children. He also considered that the topography of the site was unsuitable for a development of this size and that elderly people were already well served in the area.

Mr M Sitch, Applicant's Agent, spoke in support of the proposals. He stated that the applicant had worked with Council Officers to revise the application, had undertaken consultation exercises which had also resulted in changes to the proposals, that the Council's Strategy and Commissioning Officer welcomed the Extra Care provision. He advised the Board that the core business of the applicant was the provision of homes for the elderly and concluded that the development would be of significant benefit to the Borough, providing Extra Care facilities and affordable housing, creating jobs, maintaining public open space and ecological assets, retaining the public right of way and creating a play area and pedestrian crossing at Dawley Road. Mr Anthony Francis-Jones of the Bridleways Association also spoke in support of the application, welcoming the reinstatement of the public right of way to a minimum of Bridleway status and providing links to other routes. He was pleased to support the development which would maintain 50% of the site as green land.

The Planning Officer advised that, as set out more fully in the report, whilst there were policies in place to protect the green network, this proposal could be considered as an exception since the proposed development of the Extra Care facility was an appropriate community benefit which, when accompanied by the proposed environmental and ecological benefits, could be considered sufficient to outweigh the loss of 50% of the green network in this location. She reminded Members that the associated residential scheme was required for viability purposes but that 50% of the site would be maintained as public open space, increasing formal access to the site which was currently privately owned. The proposal included an acceptable level of affordable housing and the site was in an accessible and sustainable location, in close proximity to local shops and the Wrekin Retail Park together with a nearby hourly bus service to Wellington. Balance would be key to managing the ecological value of the open space with the retention of the majority of trees and, where removal was necessary, a scheme for replacement. The Council's Highways Engineer did not consider that the proposals would have an adverse impact and an improved pedestrian crossing was also proposed. With regard to drainage concerns, a flood risk assessment had been undertaken concluding that the site was at low risk of flooding; the developers had the right to discharge into the "stream" but intended to make improvements. In conclusion, the Planning Officer recommended the scheme for approval, subject to a Section 106 Agreement and conditions, as set out in the tabled update report, which included a change to condition 28 to change the Code for Sustainable Homes to Level 3 and an extra condition 33 for the proposed footpath link between Dawley Road and Arleston Lane to be a minimum of 2m wide for the entire length of the route.

Councillor C R Turley noted the history of refusal at this site and questioned whether there was capacity to build an Extra Care facility at this site since facilities would also be available nearby at Lawley and Ketley.

Councillor A A Meredith was concerned at the development of a Greenfield site, and questioned whether the availability of alternative Brownfield sites had been explored. The Planning Officer explained that sequential testing was not applicable in this case and that the Board's focus was upon the scheme presented to them.

Councillor N A Dugmore considered that there were positive elements to the proposal, including the retention of 50% of the site as public open space and undoubted economic benefits through employment opportunities. However, he also had some reservations with regard to the proposals. With regard to Highways issues, contrary to advice in the report, he felt that there would be an impact at both Cock Hotel and Bucks Head junctions and queried

the Education contribution that was limited to primary places. Councillor Dugmore also expressed disappointment that there was no affordable housing amongst the privately owned dwellings was included in the proposals and queried whether there was a pedestrian access to the Extra Care facility from Kingsland. Finally, he shared his concern that the hedgerow along Kingsland and Arleston Lane should be preserved and questioned whether it was possible to condition a limit to development at the site. The Planning Officer confirmed that the Highways Engineer's viewpoint was reached based upon information resulting from a modelling exercise. The Education contribution was calculated from a set formula and local policy was only to seek contributions for primary education. Similarly, policy did not make provision for affordable housing in use class C2; and given the high level of affordable provision, above that secured at determination on a neighbouring site under construction need was not an issue in the vicinity. The Planning Officer confirmed that pedestrian access to the Extra Care facility would be considered at reserved matters stage and that condition 16 should refer to Tree and Hedge Protection.

Councillor S A W Reynolds expressed concern that the siting of the Extra Care facility would be overbearing on Kingsland. She asked whether the proposed siting of the Extra Care facility, as shaded purple on the land use plan, could be moved elsewhere within the boundary of the whole plot. The Planning Officer advised that the Board was only being asked to consider the principle of siting the Extra Care facility within the purple shaded area on the plans before them. This location had been carefully considered taking into account the proximity to local services and the bus route together with the urban character of the immediate area. However, if they were so minded, Members could seek to defer the application for further negotiations to take place in this regard. Councillor S A W Reynolds, therefore, proposed and Councillor N A Dugmore seconded that this application should be deferred for further negotiation on this issue.

RESOLVED – that determination of planning application TWC/2012/0240 be deferred for the Planning Authority to negotiate further with the applicant regarding the position within the site boundary of the purple shaded area on the Land Use Plan which encompassed the proposed Extra Care Unit.

(e) TWC/2012/0261 Land off Wrekin Course, Wellington Road, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

This was an application seeking planning permission to construct a 40 space car parking area and hardstanding to site a mobile catering van, with provision of a footpath link leading to the track up to The Wrekin. The application further proposed to provide additional off-road parking and a pedestrian link to The Wrekin in order to avoid the dangers of pedestrians walking along the highway.

Councillor S Hutchison, Chair of Little Wenlock Parish Council, spoke against the application on the grounds that it would result in the removal of Greenfield land and an ancient hedgerow, the area was environmentally sensitive and close to an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Site of Special Scientific Interest, that the current car park provision was underused, encouraging an increase in vehicular traffic could increase the likelihood of accidents due to limited visibility and the narrow entry and egress. She also expressed concern that a caterer had not been secured to operate the site and it was not clear who would be responsible for maintenance of the site. Councillor Hutchison noted that the project was purported to be funded by the Huntington Lane Mining Community Trust Fund but that this funding had not yet been secured. Councillor Hutchison considered that a park and ride service from Wellington and Stoney Hill would be more appropriate and suggested that if Members were minded to approve the application, this should be with additional conditions to ensure that the site was used for car parking only, that written confirmation should be sought from West Mercia Police that a Traffic Regulation Order would be enforced

to restrict parking and that Telford and Wrekin Council would be responsible for ongoing maintenance of the site.

Mr A Francis-Jones, the Applicant's Agent spoke in favour of the proposals which he stated were modelled upon a similar venture at Haughmond Hill and encouraged Members to also visit that site if they were minded to undertake a site visit. He explained aspects of the sustainable design, as set out in the report, and explained that the volunteer-led application sought to address a particular problem and provide much needed facilities at this popular tourist attraction.

The Planning Officer drew Members' attention to the tabled update report which set out additional consultation responses. She advised that it was considered that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on the adjoining Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Site of Special Scientific Interest or the designation of the land as a Wildlife Site as there would be significant screening and sensitive materials would be used. Surveys had indicated there would be little impact on habitat as replanting of removed hedgerows would take place.

Councillor R T Kiernan, one of the Ward Members for this location, had grave concerns regarding the application, particularly with regard to highways issues and whether the car park would be utilised by visitors. He firmly believed that alternative sites, for example the disused firing range, should be considered before development was approved for this site. He noted that both Little Wenlock Parish Council and Wellington Town Council preferred a park and ride approach. With this in mind, Councillor Kiernan proposed a site visit, seconded by Councillor N A Dugmore.

RESOLVED – that determination of planning application TWC/2012/0261 be deferred to allow the Board Members to make a Site Visit.

The meeting ended at 7.45pm

Chairman:

Date: