

TWC/2013/0861

Sutherland Business & Enterprise College, Gibbons Road, Trench, Telford,
Shropshire, TF2 7JR

Outline planning permission for the erection of up to 123no. dwellings together with open space, sports pitches, landscaping and associated infrastructure, and the demolition of the existing school buildings with all matters reserved - ****Amended description, details submitted and change to site boundary****

APPLICANT

Telford & Wrekin Council (Property Services), James Dunn

RECEIVED

29/07/2014

PARISH

Wrockwardine Wood and Trench

WARD

Wrockwardine Wood and Trench

OFFICER Daniel Owen

This application was deferred by the Planning Committee on the 16th December 2015 so that the Committee can visit the site.

Although there was no debate of the application, a number of matters were raised at the Committee meeting by the public speakers Councillor Charles Smith, Councillor Shirley Reynolds and local resident Linda Madeley who addressed the Committee.

A response to those issues will be provided to Members through a Committee update note. However it is not considered that any new material planning considerations have been raised.

The original officer's report is included below. Please note that Paragraph 5.9 has been amended as it previously contained an error.

In light of the above the recommendation to the Planning Committee is still that the application should be approved.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the conclusions above, the recommendation to the Planning Committee on this application is that DELEGATED AUTHORITY be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to **GRANT OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION** (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval) subject to the following:

A.) The applicant submitting a signed Memorandum of Understanding relating to:

(i) A financial contribution of £145,000 towards the maintenance of the proposed sports pitches, a financial contribution of £55,000 to ensure the provision of a new ball court, a financial contribution of £5,000 towards the costs associated with the existing Traffic Regulation Orders and a financial contribution of £5,000 towards the monitoring of the Travel Plan.

B.) The following conditions and informatives:

1. A01: Time Limit Outline
2. A03: Submission of reserved matters
3. B002: Reserved matters
4. B011: Samples of materials
5. B041: Visibility Splays – Insert “2.4 metres by 43 metres” and “0.6 metres”
6. B042: Parking/Turning/Loading
7. B049: Notwithstanding the submitted details, development shall not take place until details for the provision of a 2 metre wide footway along the site frontage have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the consented development.
8. B061 Foul and surface water
9. Development shall not take place until a scheme for surface water drainage has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The proposed scheme shall reduce the surface water discharge rate to as near to greenfield rates as possible or by a minimum of 30% of that existing. Any attenuation feature should be designed to attenuate all flows up to and including the 1 in 100 year event +30% for climate change. The approved details shall be implemented in full prior to the first occupation of the development.
Reason: To reduce the impact of this development on the surrounding surface water infrastructure.
10. B121: Landscape Design
11. B133: Trees – Replacements
12. B149: Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted, a suite of bat and bird boxes shall be erected on the site. The type and location of the boxes shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and the scheme shall then be undertaken in accordance with the agreed details.
The following artificial nesting/roosting boxes shall be provided:
 - A total of 15 woodcrete bat boxes suitable for nursery or summer roosting for small crevice dwelling bat species shall be erected on the site prior to first use of the buildings hereby permitted as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
 - A total of 20 woodcrete artificial nests suitable for small birds such as robin, blackbird, tit species, sparrow and swallow shall be erected on the site prior to first occupation of the buildings hereby permitted in locations agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: To ensure the provision of roosting/nesting opportunities for wildlife in accordance with section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
13. B149: Prior to the erection of any external lighting on the site a lighting plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained for the lifetime of the development. The submitted scheme shall be designed to take into account the advice on lighting set out in the Bat Conservation Trust booklet Bats and Lighting in the UK

14. All development, demolition or site clearance procedures on the site to which this consent applies shall be undertaken in line with the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by MottMacDonald (August 2013)
Reason: To ensure the protection of wildlife
15. B150: Site environmental management plan
16. C38: Approved plans

Informatives

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| 1. | I40 | Conditions |
| 2. | I41 | Reason for grant of permission |
| 3. | Ecology: | Bats |
| 4. | Ecology: | Ecology – Nesting Wild Birds |
| 5. | Ecology: | Storage of Materials |
| 6. | Ecology: | Trenches and pipework |
| 7. | RANPPF1 | Approval – National Planning Policy Framework |

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes.

This application is before Committee following a request from Wrockwardine Wood and Trench Parish Council for the application to be considered by Planning Committee.

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This is an outline planning application for the demolition of the existing school buildings and for the erection of up to 123 dwellings together with open space, sports pitches, landscaping and associated infrastructure. All matters of detail have been reserved for subsequent approval.
- 1.2 The redevelopment of the Sutherland Co-operative Academy site forms part of the Telford & Wrekin Council's 'Building Schools for the Future' programme which is now coming to an end. The recently opened Telford Priory School has replaced the Sutherland Co-operative Academy and the Wrockwardine Wood Arts College. The Telford Priory School and its associated facilities were forward funded by the Council from the capital funding generated from the disposal of surplus school sites such as this.
- 1.3 An indicative layout has been submitted in support of the application that shows where vehicular access could be provided and broadly how the development could fit on the site. This includes areas of green open space to the south of the site and the existing and proposed playing pitches to the north.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 Trench is located towards the north east of the built up area of Telford, approximately 4 km to the north of the Telford Town Centre and approximately 2.2km to the north of Oakengates Train Station. The

Hortonwood Industrial Estate is located to the north on the opposite side of the A518 that links Telford to Newport and the A41.

- 2.2 The majority of the site is generally flat and there is an overall rise from north to south. The existing open space to the south of the site is banked with the site level dropping down from west to east. There are a number of trees along the Gibbons Road boundary of the site and towards the centre of the site to the north of the existing school buildings. There is also a hedge that runs along the western boundary of the site.
- 2.3 Gibbons Road runs along the eastern boundary of the site and contains a number of houses, predominately two-storey semi-detached properties that face the application site. The western boundary mainly runs along Woodhouse Crescent with the south western edge of the site sitting adjacent to Holy Trinity Church (a Grade II Listed Building) and its associated churchyard. There is a footpath linking Gibbons Close with Woodhouse Crescent.
- 2.4 The existing school buildings are located between Woodhouse Crescent and Gibbons Road just to the south of another footpath than links Lennox Road in the east to Gordon Road in the west. To the north of that footpath is an existing area of open space (known as Trench Playing Fields / Furnace Lane Playing Fields) that contains a football pitch and a multi-use games area as well as a footpath that links Gibbons Road to Trench Road in the north.
- 2.5 The Trench Tots nursery is situated in an existing demountable building to the north of the main school buildings on the Gibbons Road side of the site. This existing business would be retained as part of the development.
- 2.6 The site is within the built up area of Telford and the majority of the site is located within the Green Network as defined within the saved Wrekin Local Plan.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Planning Applications:

TWC/2015/0208: Application for prior notification of proposed demolition of the Sutherland Cooperative Academy. Demolition determination: Permitted Development: 02/04/2015.

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF)

- The NPPF is not the development plan for Telford and Wrekin but it is a material consideration in this case because all of the borough's development plan policies have to be viewed in the light of this more recent national guidance.
- Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes,
- Section 7: Requiring good design,

4.2.1 Core Strategy policies

- CS1: Homes
- CS3: Telford
- CS8: Regeneration
- CS9: Accessibility and Social Inclusion
- CS10: Community Facilities
- CS11: Open Space
- CS14: Cultural, Historic and Built Environment
- CS15: Urban Design

4.3 Saved Wrekin Local Plan policies

- UD2: Design Criteria
- H9: Location of New Housing
- H23: Affordable Housing
- OL3: Green Network
- OL4: Development in the Green Network
- LR4: Outdoor Recreational Open Space
- LR6: Developers contributions to outdoor recreational open space provision within residential developments
- T4: Development Principles
- T22: Planning Obligations

4.4 Telford & Wrekin Local Plan

- Limited weight can be given to this plan at the present time and it does not form part of the adopted development plan. Nonetheless, the Local Plan has been prepared on the basis of detailed evidence and it is the Council's view that the policies in it are sound and consistent with national policy.
- HO1: Housing requirement
This Policy states that the Council will make provision for the delivery of 15,555 net new dwellings across the borough up to 2031. The Council has identified sufficient specific deliverable sites to meet the first five years of the plan and a further supply of developable sites for the remainder of the lifetime of the Local Plan.
- HO2: Housing site allocations
The purpose of this Policy is to clearly set out, in broad terms, the sites and locations critical to the delivery of the Local Plan strategy, as well as other allocations that will contribute towards meeting the growth requirements up to 2013. This policy proposes a number of site allocations including this site (Site H3 Sutherland School).

4.5 Green Guarantee

- The Local Plan proposes to protect over 150 Green Guarantee spaces within Council ownership from development that reflects the Council's commitment to the provision of locally accessible green spaces and to meet the needs of local communities.

5. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Standard consultation responses

- 5.1 Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council: raised concerns that public open land has been included in the planning application boundary. Concerns are also raised regarding the provision of a senior football pitch on the old community centre site and that the siting of a senior pitch would seriously affect resident's quality of life. There would be no objection to the continuation of junior football on the community centre site, but with some extra ball protection. No changing facilities, toilets or parking areas are provided. The proposed entrance to the estate is not in the right place and should be located where the existing main entrance is in Gibbons Road with a further entrance from Woodhouse Crescent. Land for the expansion of Trench Tots is not included in the application. 35 % of the properties should be social affordable housing.
- 5.2 Shropshire Fire Service: No objection. It will be necessary to provide adequate access for emergency fire vehicles. There should be access for a pumping appliance to within 45 metres of all points within the dwellings. This issue will be dealt with at the Building Regulations stage of the development.
- 5.3 Severn Trent Water: No objection subject to a condition relating to the submission of plans relating to foul and surface water drainage.
- 5.4 West Mercia Police: No objection subject to a condition relating to the applicant aiming to achieve the Secured by Design award status for the development.
- 5.5 National Grid: Due to the presence of National Grid apparatus in proximity to the specified area, the contractor should contact National Grid before any works are carried out to ensure our apparatus is not affected by any of the proposed works.
- 5.6 Sport England: An objection to the proposal was submitted as it involves the loss of an existing playing field and it had not been demonstrated that the playing field would be replaced by a playing field of equivalent or better quality. Further information was then provided to Sport England regarding the context of this proposal and other projects to be delivered in the schools rebuilding programme. When the loss of the playing fields at the Sutherland School is considered within the overall context of new provision being delivered within the Playing Pitch Summary the proposals subject of this application are considered to be consistent with E4 of Sport England's playing field policy and also with National Planning policies which require that any loss of sporting facilities are replaced by new provision that is at least equivalent in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility. This being the case, Sport England withdrew its objection to the application.
- 5.7 Environmental Services (Arboricultural): No objection subject to conditions and comments regarding the detailed design of the layout on existing trees.

- 5.8 Environmental Services (Drainage): No objection subject to conditions relating to foul and surface water drainage.
- 5.9 Environmental Services (Highways): No objection subject to conditions relating to the detailed layout of the site, including roads, footways, buildings and parking and turning areas, details of surface water drainage, details of road/footway/cycleway construction, details of traffic calming measures and details of footway and cycleway linkages. Financial contributions are also requested towards the removal of existing Traffic Regulation Orders and the monitoring of a Travel Plan.
- 5.10 Environmental Services (Parks and Open Space): No objection subject to conditions and a memorandum of understanding relating to the new sports pitches and ball court.
- 5.11 Education: No objection subject to a financial contribution towards Primary and Secondary education facilities in the vicinity of the development.
- 5.12 Ecology: No objection subject to conditions requiring bat and bird boxes, the submission of a lighting plan, a landscaping scheme and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the submitted ecological appraisal. In addition informatives are requested relating to bats and nesting wild birds.
- 5.13 Affordable Housing: The applicant proposes that no affordable housing will be provided as part of this development. The accompanying Planning Statement notes that, rather than affordable housing, the scheme will provide a significant alternative community benefit in the form of the new Telford Co-operative Academy. This document also refers to a supporting Viability Appraisal.
- 5.14 Conservation: No objection.
- 5.15 Urban Design: No objection in principle to the redevelopment of this site for residential, but advise that the layout and design should be revisited and revised as part of the subsequent Reserved Matters.
- 5.16 Planning Policy: No objection:

5.2 Neighbour consultation responses

- 5.2.1 A total of 165 letters were sent to the occupiers of neighbouring properties. In response 5 letters of objection were received from 4 separate addresses, including the Rector of Holy Trinity Church. Following an amendment to the proposal the consultation process was undertaken again and 5 objections were received. The main issues raised relate to:
- Concerns over the drainage system and flooding;
 - Three storey houses would be out of character and may impact on privacy,
 - The new access is directly opposite No.72 Woodhouse Crescent,

- The proposed emergency vehicle access would need measures in place to control access,
- Concern over provision of new football pitches and impact on amenity,
- Lack of parking, changing and toilet facilities,
- Questions raised regarding the management of the pitches,
- Lack of open space on the plans,
- Concerns raised about the proposal to introduce a senior pitch,

5.2.2 A letter of support has also been received stating that the proposal would regenerate the Trench area.

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

6.1 Having regard to the development plan policies and other material planning considerations, including comments received during the consultation process, the planning application raises the following main issues:

- The principle of the development
- Impact on school playing fields
- Green Network;
- The design and layout of the proposal;
- The impact on neighbours;
- Impact on Listed Buildings
- Highway matters;
- Planning obligations;
- Other matters

The principle of the development

6.2 The NPPF encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed. The majority of the application site consists of open land and school playing fields which would not be regarded as previously developed land. However the NPPF does not state that development on land that is not previously developed should be resisted in principle and does state that local planning authorities should boost significantly the supply of housing. The NPPF also advises that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and encourages local planning authorities to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes.

6.3 Core Strategy Policy CS1 (Homes) states that every household in the Borough with an affordable, decent and appropriate home, to meet local need and be delivered in a way that creates locally inclusive sustainable communities. Policy CS3 (Telford) states that Telford will be the focus for the Borough's development, that it will accommodate the majority of new homes, jobs and services and that the regeneration of its neighbourhoods will be supported.

- 6.4 Policy CS8 (Regeneration) states that development associated with regeneration initiatives will be supported, including where it improves the quality of housing. Policy CS9 (Accessibility and Social Inclusion) aims to improve social inclusion and accessibility by making sure that everyone is afforded reasonable opportunity to access homes, work, schools, recreation and open space, sports facilities, healthcare, food shops and other key services. Development should promote sustainable forms of transport, be located in existing centres to minimise the distance people travel and include measures that minimise the negative environmental impacts of travel.
- 6.5 The application site is located within the defined Telford urban boundary and so the principle of the development of the site would accord with the broad aims of Policy CS3. The proposal will contribute towards the regeneration of the area and indirectly towards the development of a new school in close proximity to the site. It will provide a range and type of housing and is located within 400m of a Local Centre. As such the proposal is considered to be a sustainable form of development that is acceptable in principle when assessed against Core Strategy Policies CS1, CS3, CS8 and CS9.
- 6.6 Policy CS10 (Community Facilities) relates to community facilities and states that the loss of existing land or buildings used for the benefit of the community will be resisted and that development for non-community uses will only be considered where a lack of need is demonstrated or acceptable alternative provision exists or is proposed. The existing school on this site has been relocated to the Telford Priory School which provides new replacement educational facilities which are of community benefit and that assist in the regeneration of north east Telford. The associated redevelopment of this site for housing will therefore support the objectives of Policy CS10.
- 6.7 Saved Wrekin Local Plan Policy T4 (Development Principles) states that housing developments on sites over 0.4 hectares in Telford should be located close to an existing bus route with a regular service, except where it is located less than 800 metres from a Town or District Centre, or 400 metres from a local centre. A local centre is located approximately 400 metres to the north west, and the No.7 bus route provides a regular service, with bus stops available on Trench Road to the north and Church Road to the west. The proposed development will therefore be in conformity with this policy and represents a sustainable form of development.

Impact on School Playing Fields

- 6.8 Part of the site constitutes a playing field as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 and as such there was a statutory requirement to consult with Sport England. Sport England initially raised an objection to the planning application as it was not clear to them at that time how the loss of playing fields was to be mitigated. Since then the additional information that relates to the Council's school rebuilding programme, in particular the 'Completed Schemes' section of the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy, was provided to Sport England.

- 6.9 This information shows that the existing pitch to the north of the site will be retained and that three additional mini pitches will also be provided as part of this development. Following the receipt of that information Sport England has confirmed that because the playing field being lost would be replaced by an equivalent or better in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility, they have withdrawn their objection. As such it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in this regard.

Green Network

- 6.10 Most of this site falls within the Green Network which covers the school playing fields and the sports courts around the school buildings. Saved Wrekin Local Plan Policy OL4 (Development in the Green Network) states that development in the Green Network may be permitted provided that the proposed development demonstrates that there are exceptional circumstances, it contributes or is complimentary to the aims of the Green Network or that environmental and community benefits are part of the proposal. In addition Policy CS11 (Open Space) states that development on open space will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that there will be significant community and environmental benefits delivered by the proposal. The redevelopment of this site for housing is associated with the development of a replacement school building which will provide significant community benefits in the form of new educational facilities and it will assist in the regeneration of north east Telford. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with the provisions of Policies CS11, OL3 and OL4.
- 6.11 It should be noted that the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (the public consultation on the plan has now closed and a revised version is due to be published in January 2016) proposes to remove the Green Network designation from this site and to allocate it as a housing site. Only two representations were received regarding this site during the public consultation on the Local Plan. Whilst only limited weight can be attached to the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan at this time it does give an indication of the Council's intentions for this site. In this regard the proposed development does not conflict with the proposed Telford & Wrekin Local Plan.
- 6.12 The south west corner of the site is also identified within the Council's Green Guarantee which is currently open for public consultation (until 30th January 2016). The Green Guarantee identifies areas of council owned land that will be formally recognised areas of open space for leisure, recreation and biodiversity purposes and protected from any development. The indicative layout plan shows that this area of the site would be retained as open green space. Whilst only limited weight can be given to the Green Guarantee at this time it is important to note that the proposal would not conflict with the intentions of the Council to protect such areas.

The design and layout of the proposals

- 6.13 This is an outline planning application with all matters of detail reserved for subsequent consideration. The precise siting, design and appearance of the houses are therefore not known at this stage and the application seeks

consent for the principal of erecting up to 123 houses on the site. Should this application be approved a subsequent reserved matters application setting out all of the specific details would need to be submitted to the local planning authority.

- 6.14 An indicative layout plan has been submitted to demonstrate how the site could be laid out and further information is provided within the Design and Access Statement. They indicate that the site would provide a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses. The houses would face out towards Gibbons Road but would be set back behind a landscaped buffer and an internal estate road. A mixture of standard and private roads is proposed with houses backing onto Woodhouse Crescent. The layout plan shows that houses would generally have on-plot car parking spaces and private rear gardens.
- 6.15 The character of the wider area is mixed with a strong building line along Gibbons Road of semi-detached houses. There are also bungalows to the south west of the site and the properties along Woodhouse Crescent are also predominately semi-detached. The main area of the site measures approximately 3.6 hectares and the proposal equates to a density of development of 35 dwellings per hectare which is considered to be suitable for this urban area.
- 6.16 There are trees within the site including along the Gibbons Road, the majority of these will be retained. There is also an existing hedge that runs along the western boundary of the site and this is also to be retained. It is recommended that additional planting to this hedge should be included as part of the detailed landscaping proposals that come forward as part of the reserved matters application.
- 6.17 The proposal also includes the retention of the existing sports pitch to the north of the site and the provision of three new smaller pitches. Two would be located on the area of the site that currently contains the tennis courts and other hardstanding and the third pitch would be located to the north east of the site on existing open space that formed part of the demolished Youth Centre.
- 6.18 It is considered that the proposals would be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS15, saved Wrekin Local Plan policy UD2 and the NPPF.

The impact on neighbours

- 6.19 There are a number of existing houses around the site that could be affected by the proposal. The indicative site layout plan shows that the proposed houses would be located approximately 40 metres away from those on the opposite side of Gibbons Road which would be more than sufficient to protect the living conditions of the occupiers of those properties. The layout also shows that the houses would typically be located in excess of 22 metres away from the properties to the west of the site in Woodhouse Crescent which

would also be sufficient to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on living standards by way of loss of privacy or overlooking.

- 6.20 One of the issues raised in the objections that were received against the proposal is that the provision of three-storey dwellings would result in an unacceptable level of overlooking of neighbouring houses. Whilst the indicative layout does make reference to the development being made up of two and three-storey houses this would be considered at the reserved matters stage when the precise layout and design of the houses is submitted and a full assessment can be made.
- 6.21 Concern has also been expressed about the potential for noise and disturbance from the sports pitches shown on the submitted layout plans with the primary concern seeming to be that the existing sports pitch to the north of the site is annotated as being a senior rather than a junior pitch. The objections refer to senior football not having been played on this pitch for a number of years and also to problems that were experienced by residents at that time. Concern was also raised that a senior pitch would be larger than the existing pitch and that this would take the edges closer to neighbouring houses, footpaths and the existing play area.
- 6.22 This issue has been clarified with the Council's Parks and Open Space Officer who has confirmed that whilst the pitch has been used for senior football in the past and there is sufficient space for it to be used as a senior pitch it is currently used as a junior pitch as there are no available changing facilities. Whilst there is a possibility that senior football could return to the pitch at some point in the future (if new changing facilities were built) this does not form part of this application.
- 6.23 As stated the precise siting and design of the houses is reserved for subsequent consideration and further assessment of the separation distances between houses and the location of habitable room windows will be undertaken at that time. The indicative layout demonstrates that up to 123 houses could be provided on the site without resulting in a detrimental impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring houses and as such the application is acceptable in this regard.

Impact on Listed Buildings

- 6.24 The Holy Trinity Parish Church (a Grade II Listed Building) is located to the south west of the application site with the associated churchyard being separated from the application site by railings to the churchyard, an existing footpath and a patchy hedgerow along the application site boundary. The Church was erected in approximately 1833 and was designed by Samuel Smith of Madeley. It is a plain red brick Georgian church with a slate roof.
- 6.25 Core Strategy Policy CS14 (Cultural, Historic and Built Environment) states that the Borough's cultural, historic and built environmental assets will help underpin the overall quality of life for the community and visitors alike. These assets help deliver our wider economic, social, and environmental objectives

and along with the natural environmental assets, they create the Borough's local character and distinctiveness. The aim of the policy is to protect and enhance the Borough's existing, unique built and cultural assets and to deliver new development to support a rich cultural fabric and this will be achieved by, amongst other things, protecting and enhancing the historic environment and built heritage within the Borough.

- 6.26 The NPPF advises that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal and that they should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset. The NPPF also states that substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional and that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 6.27 Given the proximity of the site boundary to the churchyard there is the potential for the development to impact on the setting of the listed Church and the existing level of openness will be reduced. The proposed landscaped buffer between the churchyard and development (the Green Guarantee land) will help to alleviate any potential harm to the setting of the Church and will also allow existing soft boundary treatments to be retained and enhanced. The land level generally falls away from this part of the site and whilst proposed levels would be considered as part of the reserved matters application it is likely that any housing would be set at a lower level that would further reduce its impact on the setting of the listed building. It is considered that any impact on the setting of the listed building would be minimal and that the proposal is acceptable in this regard.
Highway matters
- 6.28 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment that concludes that the proposed residential use of the site would result in an increase in traffic compared against the former use of the site as a school and that the junction capacity assessments that were undertaken demonstrate that the proposed level of development can be accommodated within the existing and proposed highway infrastructure.
- 6.29 As stated above this is an outline planning application with all matters, including the means of access to the site, reserved for subsequent consideration. However indicative details have been submitted that state two access points would be provided into the site from Gibbons Road and a single, emergency, point of access would be provided onto Woodhouse Crescent.
- 6.30 The Council's highways officers have considered the proposals and have confirmed that they have no objections to the proposal subject to conditions requiring the submission of a Travel Plan and further details relating to drainage, road/footway construction, footway/cycleway linkages and details of traffic calming measures to Gibbons Road. As stated the precise details of the development, including the layout of the site, location of access points for

vehicles and footpaths and proposed levels will be submitted as part of a reserved matters application and will be considered in detail at that time.

Planning Obligations

- 6.31 As part of the consultation process financial contributions have been requested towards Primary and Secondary Education facilities. Given that the disposal and development of this site forms part of the wider Building Schools for the Future programme and in particular the provision of the new Telford Priory School no further financial contributions will be sought. A Viability Assessment was submitted in support of the planning application that concluded that the provision of affordable housing on this site would make the development unviable. This has been assessed by the Council's Development Delivery Group Specialist who has agreed with the appraisal. As such no affordable housing will be provided.
- 6.32 The three new mini sports pitches equate to a large amount of Public Open Space that will require future maintenance and a financial contribution towards this is required. The Council's Public Open Space Officer has requested that a contribution of £145,000 is provided.
- 6.33 The size of the development triggers the need for a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) and whilst no details were shown on the indicative layout the Council's Parks and Open Space Officer has requested that a fenced ball court is provided on-site. In order to ensure that this is provided it has been agreed with the applicant that a payment of £55,000 will be made and that the Council will install the required ball court.
- 6.34 There are existing Traffic Regulation Orders in place that are defunct now the school has relocated. There is a legal process involved in their removal and an associated cost. Highways Officers have requested that a contribution of £5000 to deal with this and any other orders that may be required in connection with the development. In addition a Travel Plan monitoring sum of £5000 has also been requested.
- 6.35 In identifying the required planning obligations on this application the following three tests as set out in the CIL Regulations (April 2010), in particular Regulation 122, have been applied (in addition to saved Wrekin Local Plan Policy T22) to ensure that the application is treated on its own merits:
- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - directly related to the development; and
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 6.36 As the Council is the landowner it is not possible for the financial contributions to be secured through a S106 Agreement as the Council cannot enter into such an agreement with itself. Therefore a Memorandum of Understanding will need to be signed between the heads of the relevant council departments to commit to those contributions being made.

Other matters

- 6.37 The proposal also includes the provision of three new mini sports pitches. Details are required of how they will be constructed and maintained and this can be secured through conditions. The ongoing maintenance of the two new mini pitches at the far northern end of the site would be undertaken by the Council as it does not form part of the land that is being sold and will remain in the Council's ownership. The two new mini pitches will be maintained and managed by the Council or by the future developer of the site and this matter can be controlled through the imposition of suitably worded conditions and the Memorandum of Understanding.
- 6.38 The buildings on the site have negligible potential for roosting bats to be present and all the trees on the site have been assessed as low value for roosting bats. The site also has low foraging value for bats and poor connectivity to potential foraging or roosting sites. The site has potential for nesting wild birds to be present and so vegetation should be cleared outside of the nesting bird season (March to September). There is a small pond on the site which is relatively recent, is choked with pond weed and has low potential for Great Crested Newts to be present. The pond does support low numbers of common frogs and should be drained and removed in the winter months. The site has negligible potential for badgers and no physical evidence of setts or foraging activity was recorded during the supporting Ecological appraisal. That appraisal recommends that the biodiversity value of the site could be enhanced by the provision of species rich grassland within the public open space along with a scheme of largely native species tree and shrub planting. All of the above matters can be controlled through the imposition of suitably worded planning conditions.
- 6.39 Reference was made in the representations to drainage issues within the area and the Council's Drainage Officers and Severn Trent Water were consulted on the proposals. No objections have been received subject to the imposition of conditions to ensure that details relating to foul and surface water drainage are submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Details regarding the direction of flows to an area of Public Open Space or a dedicated conveyance system and the future ownership of that system are also required.
- 6.40 Reference was made in an objection to the Trench Tots nursery and the lack of additional land that is being made available for that business. No objection has been received from the Trench Tots nursery and there would be land to the side of the existing building that could be used for a future extension. However this would be the subject of a planning application in its own right and would be considered at that time.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The proposal is acceptable in principle given that it forms part of a wider programme that will deliver community benefits for the area. It has been demonstrated that the sports pitches will be appropriately re-provided as part

of the overall development and that important areas of open space will be retained and provided. The site is within a sustainable location and will provide a range of house types. It is considered that the number of dwellings applied for can be accommodated on the site without having a detrimental impact on the character of the area, the streetscene or the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. Subject to conditions the proposal is also acceptable in terms of ecology and drainage.

8. RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Based on the conclusions above, the recommendation to the Planning Committee on this application is that DELEGATED AUTHORITY be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to **GRANT OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION** (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval) subject to the following:

A.) The applicant submitting a signed Memorandum of Understanding relating to:

(i) A financial contribution of £145,000 towards the maintenance of the proposed sports pitches, a financial contribution of £55,000 to ensure the provision of a new ball court, a financial contribution of £5,000 towards the costs associated with the existing Traffic Regulation Orders and a financial contribution of £5,000 towards the monitoring of the Travel Plan.

B.) The following conditions and informatives:

1. A01: Time Limit Outline
2. A03: Submission of reserved matters
3. B002: Reserved matters
4. B011: Samples of materials
5. B041: Visibility Splays – Insert “2.4 metres by 43 metres” and “0.6 metres”
6. B042: Parking/Turning/Loading
7. B049: Notwithstanding the submitted details, development shall not take place until details for the provision of a 2 metre wide footway along the site frontage have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the consented development.
8. B061 Foul and surface water
9. Development shall not take place until a scheme for surface water drainage has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The proposed scheme shall reduce the surface water discharge rate to as near to greenfield rates as possible or by a minimum of 30% of that existing. Any attenuation feature should be designed to attenuate all flows up to and including the 1 in 100 year event +30% for climate change. The approved details shall be implemented in full prior to the first occupation of the development. Reason: To reduce the impact of this development on the surrounding surface water infrastructure.

10. B121: Landscape Design
11. B133: Trees – Replacements
12. B149: Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby permitted, a suite of bat and bird boxes shall be erected on the site. The type and location of the boxes shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and the scheme shall then be undertaken in accordance with the agreed details.
The following artificial nesting/roosting boxes shall be provided:
 - A total of 15 woodcrete bat boxes suitable for nursery or summer roosting for small crevice dwelling bat species shall be erected on the site prior to first use of the buildings hereby permitted as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
 - A total of 20 woodcrete artificial nests suitable for small birds such as robin, blackbird, tit species, sparrow and swallow shall be erected on the site prior to first occupation of the buildings hereby permitted in locations agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: To ensure the provision of roosting/nesting opportunities for wildlife in accordance with section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
13. B149: Prior to the erection of any external lighting on the site a lighting plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained for the lifetime of the development. The submitted scheme shall be designed to take into account the advice on lighting set out in the Bat Conservation Trust booklet Bats and Lighting in the UK
14. All development, demolition or site clearance procedures on the site to which this consent applies shall be undertaken in line with the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by MottMacDonald (August 2013)
Reason: To ensure the protection of wildlife
15. B150: Site environmental management plan
16. C38: Approved plans

Informatives

1. I40 Conditions
2. I41 Reason for grant of permission
3. Ecology: Bats
4. Ecology: Ecology – Nesting Wild Birds
5. Ecology: Storage of Materials
6. Ecology: Trenches and pipework
7. RANPPF1 Approval – National Planning Policy Framework