

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 8th April 2015 at 6.00pm in the Telford Suite at Shropshire College Hotel School Ltd (The Telford Whitehouse Hotel), Watling Street, Wellington, Telford TF1 2NJ

PRESENT: Councillors J C Minor (Chair), N A Dugmore, E J Greenaway, K R Guy, R T Kiernan, J Loveridge, A A Mackenzie (as substitute for A S Jhawar), L A Murray and C R Turley.

PC-086 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 18 March 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

PC-087 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor A S Jhawar.

PC-088 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

With regard to planning application TWC/2015/0177 Councillor E J Greenaway advised that she was a member of Lawley & Overdale Parish Council but had not been involved in any discussions on this application.

With regard to planning application TWC/2014/1053, Councillor R T Kiernan advised that he was a member of the Wrekin Masonic Association (the applicants), and would withdraw from the meeting during consideration of this application.

With regard to planning application TWC/2014/1053, Councillor N A Dugmore advised that he was a member of a masonic association, but not the one that had submitted the planning application.

With regard to planning application TWC/2014/0178, Councillor C R Turley advised that he was a Council appointed Trustee to the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust and the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust

With regard to planning application TWC/2014/0178, Councillor K R Guy advised that he was a member of Madeley Town Council but had not been involved in any discussions on this application.

PC-089 DEFERRED/WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

None.

PC-090 SITE VISITS

None

PC-091 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION

Members had received a schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Committee and fully considered each report and the supplementary information tabled at the meeting regarding each planning application.

- (a) TWC/2015/0177 - Land off Park Road/Royal Way, Malinslee, Telford, Shropshire

This was a full application for the erection of 81 dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping. The application site (1.64ha) was currently an area of open ground that had once formed part of a colliery spoil mound, and was located on the northern edge of the Malinslee neighbourhood. The principle of residential development on the site had been established with approval in February 2014 of an application for the erection of 93 dwellings. This application sought an amendment to that scheme by removing the proposed apartments and replacing them with bungalows. As previously, the site would provide entirely affordable housing for rent, and would be owned and managed by the Wrekin Housing Trust. An update report was tabled at the meeting which contained additional consultation responses from Highways and Development Plans. Two further objections had been received from neighbouring properties, but these had not raised any new issues. The update report also contained a revised recommendation, and the Council's Solicitor advised that this needed to be further amended to reflect the need for a deed of variation linking this application to the existing Section 106 Agreement from the previous permission. Since the Section 106 Agreement was entered into, a figure of £44,981.84 had been proposed for the future adoption of open space.

A member of Lawley & Overdale Parish Council had been due to address the Committee, but was now unable to attend the meeting. The Parish Council's objections were set out in the report.

Ms S Woodvine, a local resident, addressed the Committee and expressed the view that the development would completely change the character of the local area, which was of a semi-rural nature. This would be overwhelmed by this development. There were concerns about highway safety as a result of this development, with already busy roads and a history of accidents in the vicinity. There would also be an adverse impact on the already busy roundabout close to Southwater, and it would be better to provide an access off West Central Way. In terms of pedestrian safety, there were insufficient pavements and footpaths in the area.

Mr P Dover, the applicant's agent, addressed the Committee and stated that this was a 100% affordable housing scheme that would help to address the shortfall of such housing in the Borough area. The amended application had reduced the number of dwellings by twelve, with lower density bungalows replacing the higher density blocks. The density was now around 49 dwellings per hectare, which was in line with local planning guidelines. The application complied fully with the National Planning Policy Framework and with local planning policies. There were no objections from the Council's Highways department, and that the issues raised by the Tree Officer could be addressed through effective woodland management.

The Planning Officer advised on the principle of development, highways impacts, design considerations, affordable housing and the viability of the development, open space provision, contributions for education provision and trees/woodland/landscape considerations. In terms of the revised density of dwellings, this was in accordance with the guidelines contained in the Central Telford Area Action Plan (CTAAP). The applicants had clarified certain detailed aspects of highway design and matters relating to pedestrian-cycle access provision and number of visitor car parking spaces. The amended recommendation contained conditions proposed by the Highways Engineer in relation to the access arrangements and the provision of a footway/cycleway link. The application site was considered to be in a highly sustainable location, one of CTAAP's preferred housing sites and close to bus services, leisure facilities, schools and the town centre. The proposed site was available and deliverable, and would deliver a significant number of affordable dwellings. The amended application did not raise any significant new issues or adverse impacts on existing residential amenity etc. The application was therefore recommended for approval subject to the variation of the Section 106 Agreement and to appropriate conditions.

Some Members expressed concern at the impact the development would have on the local highway network, resulting in increased safety concerns for drivers and pedestrians. In response to a question about the proposed mix of accommodation, the Planning Officer confirmed that it was a 100% affordable rented housing scheme. In response to a question about the commuted sum for the adoption of open space, the Council Solicitor advised that this was the amount that had been calculated by Parks and Open Spaces based on the amended application. However, it would be up to the applicant to decide whether to take up that option. Members noted that the principle of development on this brownfield site had been established, and that the amended application was beneficial in terms of the provision of bungalows and a reduction in the overall density.

It was moved and seconded that the amended recommendation in the update report be approved. On being put to the vote, it was:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2015/0177 authority be delegated to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant planning permission, subject to a deed of variation linking the application with the existing Section 106 agreement, and subject to the conditions set out in the update report.

(b) TWC/2014/0178 – 21A St Michael's Close, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire

This was an outline application for the erection of two dwellings with associated access. The application site comprised garden land adjacent to 21A St Michael's Close on the southern edge of the Madeley area. The site sloped considerably west to east towards Coalport Road, which formed the boundary of the Severn Gorge Conservation Area and the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site. The site fell within the Borough's Green Network designation, including the existing property. The application sought permission for the creation of vehicular access off St Michael's Close, but with all other matters reserved for later approval. The application had been deferred at the last meeting of the Committee on 18 March 2015, and Members had undertaken a site visit prior to that meeting.

Mr A Cousins and Mrs J Millward, local residents, addressed the Committee and expressed the view that the development would have a dominating impact on neighbouring properties resulting in loss of privacy. This would constitute an infringement of their human rights. The proposed site was subject to flooding and land instability, and was completely unsuitable for development. The development would constitute an unacceptable extension into the Green Network contrary to Local Plan policies, and would have a detrimental impact on the adjacent World Heritage Site.

Mr C Roberts, the applicant's agent, advised that the application had been subject to considerable discussion over the last 10 months, resulting in revised plans to make it more acceptable and to address local residents' concerns. The application did not present any significant conflict with national and local planning policies, and the practical matters such as land stability, drainage and highways had been addressed to the satisfaction of the statutory consultees on these issues. It had been accepted by the Planning Officer in the report that the development would not significantly affect the amenities of neighbouring dwellings. There had been objections on the grounds of loss of views and impact on property values, but these were not material planning considerations.

The Planning Officer advised on the principle of residential development, the loss of Green Network land and the associated impact on local wildlife and existing trees, ground stability and whether the site was suitable to accommodate further development, and the impact on amenities of neighbouring properties and the character of the area. In terms of the Green Network, it was considered that the site was not compatible with many of the principles on such designation, being part of a residential curtilage where permitted development rights existed, being enclosed and inaccessible to the public and having negligible ecological or wildlife value. In relation to land stability, the applicant had submitted a verified Slope Stability Declaration Form which concluded that there was no engineering reason why the proposed development should not proceed. Some information had been received that day from the Shropshire Archaeological Service regarding a possible medieval boundary bank and ditch at the eastern edge of the site, and some further details were tabled for Members. Large parts of the probably post-medieval ditch had already been destroyed, and the Archaeological Officer had not raised any objections to the development nor any necessity for conditions for archaeological works to be

undertaken. The application was therefore recommended for approval subject to the conditions outlined in the report.

During the ensuing discussion, Members referred to their visit to the site, which they had found to be very poorly drained with water discharging onto the land. There were historic drainage and flooding problems at this site, and there was concern that this was contributing to land instability in the immediate vicinity. Concerns were also raised about whether there was a demonstrable need for housing in this location and whether the site could support two dwellings. Reference was also made to the proximity of the World Heritage Site and Severn Gorge Conservation Area, and it was believed that this was a sensitive site in terms of the character of the area. Members considered the potential benefits that the development might bring, but concluded that these were outweighed by the harm that would be caused to the character of the site and the immediate area.

It was therefore moved and seconded that the application be refused. On being put to the vote, it was unanimously:-

RESOLVED – That with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0178, outline planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

- **Over-development of the site, constrained by the site's boundaries, topography and parking arrangements;**
- **Inappropriate development within the Green Network, on a sensitive location as an approach into the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site and Severn Gorge Conservation Area;**
- **Insufficient information to establish the adequate drainage of the site.**

Councillor R.T. Kiernan left the meeting room before consideration of the next application.

(c) TWC/2014/1053 – Site of Masonic Building, Constitution Hill, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

This was an outline application for the erection of 4 dwellings with associated access. All other matters were reserved at this stage. The application site was located to the west of the Masonic Hall, and was currently redundant land within a largely residential area of mixed housing types. The existing access from Constitution Hill would be widened to form a shared access road serving the proposed dwellings and the retained car park for the Masonic Hall.

Ms J Bleach, the applicant's agent, stated that the application had been subject to considerable consultation, and the layout and elevations of the development had been designed to avoid overlooking of neighbouring properties or causing adverse impact on their amenity. The proposed number of parking spaces exceeded that required by the Highways Engineer, and there would be sufficient parking for the Masonic Lodge. The site was in a very sustainable location and was in accordance with local and national planning policies. The proposed development would help to

fund much needed renovation works to the Masonic Hall building, and to build a dining room extension.

The Planning Officer advised on the principle of development, the character and appearance of the proposed development, impact on amenities of neighbouring properties, parking and highway safety, ecology and drainage. There had been 15 letters of objection to the application, but it was considered that this was an acceptable development whose layout and scale would not compromise the amenity of nearby properties. The development was in a sustainable location and was highly accessible to the district centre of Wellington.

Members noted that the principle of development on the site had been previously established some years ago, and that this was currently redundant land in a highly sustainable location.

It was therefore moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. On being put to the vote, it was:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/1053, planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions set out in the report.

PC-092 TREE PRESERVATION ORDER

The Arboricultural Officer presented the report of the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services concerning the making of a provisional Tree Preservation Order at Princess Avenue, Arleston, Telford, and which sought confirmation of the Order.

On 17 February 2015, a provisional Tree Preservation Order (TPO) was made in respect of two copper/purple beech trees and one silver birch tree at Princess Avenue, Arleston, as identified on the plan attached to the report. An objection to the TPO was received from the landowner, Wrekin Housing Trust, in respect of all three trees. A copy of the objection and supporting documents was appended to the report.

In response to questions regarding the acquisition of the land by the current landowner, the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist confirmed that the amenity land was purchased from the Council by the Housing Trust. However it was not unusual for a TPO to be served if there was a potential threat to trees of value from subsequent development. The Arboricultural Officer advised that the trees dated back to the early 1930s when the estate was constructed and now formed a major amenity attribute to the area, encouraging wildlife and providing scale to the area. The Housing Trust had confirmed that they wished to redevelop the amenity area, but it was considered that the amenity value of the trees outweighed any reasons given for their removal.

RESOLVED – that the Borough of Telford & Wrekin (Trees at Princess Avenue, Arleston, Telford TF1 2LJ) Tree Preservation Order 2015 be confirmed without modification.

The meeting ended at 7.08 pm

Chairman:

Date: