

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 26th April 2017 at 6.00pm in the Walker Room at Meeting Point House, Southwater Square Telford TF3 4HS

A

Present: Councillors J C Minor (Chair), N A Dugmore, I T W Fletcher, J A Francis (as substitute for Councillor N C Lowery), J Loveridge, , L A Murray, P Scott, and C R Turley.

Also Present: Councillor T Nelson (for planning application TWC/2017/0052)

PC-073 Apologies for Absence

Councillor N C Lowery

PC-074 Declarations of Interest

In respect of planning application TWC/2017/0208 Councillor J A Francis advised that this application was on the edge of her Ward boundary, but that she had not made any comments on the application.

Councillor P Scott declared an interest in planning application TWC/2017/0052 as he had held discussions with both Councillor T Nelson and indicated that he would withdraw from the meeting during the determination thereof.

PC-075 Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 5 April 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

PC-076 Deferred/Withdrawn Applications

None.

PC-077 Site Visits

RESOLVED – that a site visit takes place at 3.30pm on Wednesday, 17th May 2017 1 & 2 Newtown/66 Edgmond Road, Edgmond in respect of planning application TWC/2017/0122.

PC-078 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 update report.

a) TWC/2017/0052 21 Kings Head Home Park, Newport TF10 7LG

This application was for the erection of a single storey rear extension and installation of a decking area which had been called in by Councillor T Nelson. The application had been deferred from the last meeting in order for a site visit which had taken place on the afternoon prior to the meeting.

Councillor P Scott withdrew from the meeting during the determination of the application.

Councillor T Nelson, Ward Councillor, spoke on behalf of local residents who were against the application on the grounds of the scale, disproportionate ground levels, the extension being overbearing, the perspective, access and the temporary screening by trees.

Mr M Wemm, Applicant, spoke in favour of the application and sought to reassure Members regarding the use of high quality materials, the ground stability, drainage, no overlooking windows and the screening by newly planted trees which would, once grown, prevent the extension from being seen.

The Planning Officer reminded Members of some of the issues that they had looked at on the site visit including regarding the levels and the screening by the trees. Officers did not consider this development to be overbearing and asked Members to approve the application subject to the conditions set out in the report.

Some Members were of the opinion that there was an acceptable separation distance and that there was no evidence of issues with drainage. The conifers had been planted in the gap and were already growing above the fence and the height of the development was not considered to be any higher than the building already on site.

Upon being put to the vote it was, unanimously:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2017/0052 Planning Permission be granted subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the report.

At 6.14pm the Chair asked Members if they would be agreeable to a 5 minute adjournment to allow the representative from Network Rail to arrive at the meeting.

The meeting re-started at 6.18pm.

b) TWC/2017/0208 Footbridge to Telford Central Railway Station

This was a minor amendment to planning permission reference TWC/2016/0641 (Erection of replacement footbridge following demolition and removal of existing bridge structure together with associated level alterations, provision of retaining structures and access alterations) to omit pedestrian access ramp and supporting earthworks and amend the design of remaining ramps, staircases and supporting structures.

An update report was tabled at the meeting and contained additional comments from the Agent, Network Rail and a member of the public and clarified details of the footpath to Platform 2.

The Planning Officer informed Members that in order for the access ramps to be built a significant retaining structure would be needed and due to the poor ground conditions and this would mean a considerable increase in costs. The revised application omitted the access ramp and repositioned a steel structured staircase. The Ramp on Platform 1 was retained which connected with the bridge deck and revised steel staircase. If Members were minded to approve the application the current bridge would not be removed until the new bridge was built and open.

Mr S Clifford spoke on behalf of Network Rail who were supportive of the scheme which he considered was a welcome addition to the station. The new proposals were the best value for money and he supported the omission of the ramps as they were difficult to maintain and utilize.

Mr S Hollins, Applicant, spoke in favour of the application which had been funded by the Department of Transport. Due to poor ground conditions, the ramp to Platform 2 would take up to 60% of the budget so alternative options were discussed. The current ramp was not Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant. Many stations only had lifts and steps including Wolverhampton and Bromsgrove and the lifts had sufficient room for luggage, wheelchairs and pushchairs. There would be emergency button in place and there was a legal duty to provide an alternative route in case of emergencies. The proposed bridge would be more accessible and provided an attractive first impression to the Town.

The Planning Officer reminded Members that the principle of development had already been approved and this application sought to amend the access arrangements to the bridge deck from either side of the railway line. The most significant change would be to the side of Platform 2 where the proposed access ramp would no longer be provided due to the need for an 85m x 7m high embankment being engineered and would give a more open aspect into the station. Amendments would be made to the "drum" area in between the two bridge decks which would be accessed by steel staircases details of which would be conditioned as part of the planning approval. Access to the proposed bridge would be Equalities Act compliant as well as significantly improving access all users via the lifts. The continued use of the ramped access to the bridge from the north east side provided step free access for pedestrians and cyclists to the National Cycle route 55 and the gradient of the bridge was being reduced from 1:20 to 1:17. Wheelramps on both sides of the railway line would be provided. Lifts would be available from the first train at 5.38am to the last train at 12.36am. There was no impact on the Public Rights of Way Network and this would continue to be a key link in the strategic rights of way and cycle route network. A number of contingency plans would be put in place, including an emergency action plan, and these would form part of the planning conditions and there would be a 24 hour push button call facility for help. If Members were minded to approve the application, the current bridge would remain open and in use until the new bridge was in place and open to the public.

Some Members were concerned that the ramp was being omitted from the application and the issues this would raise for people with poor mobility. Further concerns were raised regarding vandalism, the lifts breaking down and safety issues whilst waiting for help, parking, the impact of closing the layby near to Platform 2, access for emergency services and the quality of materials being used. A question was raised as to how often the lifts on the other stations broke down. Other Members were of the opinion that this would make a fantastic visual gateway into the Town and the reduction of the ramp to 1:17 was a welcome improvement, the layby was not a legal parking area so it was considered not to be an issue and accepted that the lifts may break down but that there were sufficient contingency plans in place, if needed.

Network Rail confirmed that mitigation measures would be put in place and extra staff would be available on the Station once this became necessary and that the lifts would remain open from the first service on the day until the last train came through, even if this had been delayed. Breakdown of the lifts did occur, but it was considered that sufficient emergency measures were in place and call out times for

engineers were responsive and there would be a 24 hour help button for passengers on the Station.

The Service Delivery Manager - Highways, Transport & Engineering Services explained that the layby was an unofficial drop off and pick up point and it was illegal to park. Issues around queueing had been recognised and a review of the car park would take place once the bridge was in place to look at additional access points, pressure and congestion and the traffic signalling. An emergency access would be available for emergency services and, in an emergency, could be used to allow taxis to pick up passengers.

Upon being put to the vote it was, by a majority:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2017/0208 that delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant Planning Permission subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the report and update report (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval and any minor variations to the public rights of way plan required as a result of any issues occurring during the diversion/extinguishment orders to be delegated to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager).

The meeting ended at 7.01 pm

Chairman:

Date: