

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Gemma Monaco (Chair), Councillor Salman Akbar (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Tom Baker-Price, Michael Chalk, Julian Grubb, Mark Shurmer and Anthony Lovell

Also Present:

Karen Hanchett - County Highways

Officers:

Helena Plant, Mary Worsfold, Steve Edden, Amar Hussain and Charlotte Wood

Democratic Services Officer:

Sarah Sellers

115. CHAIR'S WELCOME

The Chair welcomed the Committee members and officers to the virtual Planning Committee meeting being held via Microsoft Teams. The Chair explained that the meeting was being live streamed on the Council's YouTube channel to enable members of the public to observe the committee.

116. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bill Hartnett and Councillor Roger Bennett. Councillor Anthony Lovell attended as substitute for Councillor Bennett, and Councillor Mark Shurmer attended as substitute for Councillor Hartnett.

117. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

118. UPDATE REPORTS

The Update Reports were noted.

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Chair

119. APPLICATION 20/00599/FUL - LAND OPPOSITE 24 DROITWICH ROAD, DROITWICH ROAD, FECKENHAM, WORCESTERSHIRE, B98 8JE - H2LAND

Development of 2 no. Dwellings

Officers presented the application for the construction of two residential dwellings on a plot of overgrown land located on the opposite side of the road to number 24 Droitwich Road, Feckenham, and took Members through the plans and photographs in the Site Plans and Presentations Pack.

Members were referred to the Update Report and the fact that a satisfactory Badger Mitigation Survey had now been received, in light of which an additional condition was being sought.

Officers explained that the application site had been subject to two previous applications for dwellings (under reference numbers 19/01588/FUL and 19/00716/FUL) which had been refused by the Local Planning Authority and appealed to the Planning Inspectorate. The appeals on both applications had been dismissed and copies of the decisions were attached to the Committee report and summarised on page 5 of the agenda pack.

Officers referred Members to the main issues in relation to the application, including the location of the site within the Feckenham Conservation Area, the relevance of Policy 9 (Open Countryside), the fact that the proposed dwellings would align with existing dwellings on either side of the plot and not impose on the Manor House opposite, and the fact that officers, following consultation with the Council's Conservation Officer, deemed the vernacular design of the two dwellings to be acceptable.

Notwithstanding the past use of the site in connection with the Manor House, as a historic kitchen garden, when looking at the weight to be attached to the competing considerations, and taking into account the improvements in design specifications compared to the two previous applications, the conclusion reached by officers was that the proposals were acceptable and the application was recommended for approval.

At the invitation of the Chair the public speakers listed below addressed the Committee, the first three in objection to the application and the fourth in support : -

- Dr Hugo Hammersley - local resident
- Mr John Fisher – local resident
- Mr Alan Smith - Chair of Feckenham Parish Councillor
- Mr Neil Pearce - Planning Agent for the Applicant

In response to questions from Members, officers confirmed that: -

- In the context of the two appeals, the Planning Inspector had placed weight on the poor design of the proposed dwellings, rather than rejecting the principle of development at the site. One of the designs (for two dwellings) had been in the style of a barn that was out of character for the setting, and the other design for a single dwelling was considered to be poor.
- There had been no objections to the application from County Highways and the use of the existing access onto the B4090 was suitable.
- The Planning Inspector had considered the past use as a kitchen garden and in that context had regarded the site as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset, although a low amount of weight had been attached to this factor, and it was found by the Inspector to be outweighed by arguments in favour of use of the land for housing.

In debating the application Members referred to a number of the issues raised during public speaking and pointed to the difficulties in balancing the potential loss of the land of historic interest as against the other relevant factors, including the re-use of the site to provide dwellings given the absence of a five year land supply.

Views were expressed in support of granting the application based on the improved design of the proposed dwellings which were felt to be appropriate for the Conservation Area, the separation of the site from the Manor House by the road, the un-used and overgrown state of the land and the limited infilling in the gap in the existing street scene that would result.

Other views were expressed in opposition to the application and an alternative recommendation to refuse the application was moved but not seconded.

Following further debate, the recommendation to grant the application as set out in the officer's report (as amended in the Update Report) was moved and seconded and put to the vote.

RESOLVED that

Having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to:-

- 1. the conditions and informatives set out on pages 20 to 25 of the main agenda;**

2. additional condition number 19 as set out on page 1 of the Update Report; and
3. amended condition number 17 which is replaced by the following wording appearing on the Update Report:

Condition 17

Prior to commencement of the development hereby approved a licence from Natural England shall be obtained to close off the on-site badger setts. The details of this approved licence, confirmation of successful badger exclusion/destruction and a full mitigation plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The works on site shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: For the adequate protection of badgers.

120. APPLICATION 20/01638/FUL - LAND TO THE SOUTH OF ALFRICK CLOSE, ENFIELD, REDDITCH - LNT CARE DEVELOPMENTS

Erection of a three story 66 bed care home for the elderly with associated works

Officers outlined the application and described the location of the site and the proposed layout of the residential home with reference to the plans and photographs in the Site Plans and Presentations Pack.

The use class would be C2 (nursing home) and the site would be accessed from Alfrick Close. The application had been assessed as complying with the relevant policies and would not affect the amenity of other nearby dwellings. There were no objections on highways grounds and Members were referred to the updated information regarding provision of 24 onsite parking spaces as set out in the Update Report.

At the invitation of the Chair, Mrs Tracy Spencer addressed the committee on behalf of the Applicant.

In debating the application Members welcomed the proposal for the land to be used to provide a nursing home which Members felt was a suitable use for that particular location and would provide a benefit to the town and local residents.

RESOLVED that

Having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, authority be delegated to the Head of Planning,

**Regeneration and Leisure to GRANT planning permission
subject to: -**

- a. The satisfactory completion of a planning obligation (unilateral undertaking) ensuring that:**
 - Contributions are paid to the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) towards GP Surgeries.**
 - A section 106 monitoring fee is paid to the Borough Council**

And

- b. The conditions and informatives listed on pages 43 to 49 of the main agenda**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.40 pm