

Planning Committee

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Timothy Pearman (Chair), Councillors Salman Akbar, Brandon Clayton, Andrew Fry, Karen Ashley, Emma Marshall and Bill Hartnett

Officers:

Ryan Keyte, Amar Hussain (On Microsoft Teams), Sarah Hazlewood, Claire Gilbert and Helena Plant

Democratic Services Officer:

Gavin Day

59. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Tom Baker-Price and Imran Altaf with Councillors Karen Ashley and Emma Marshall in attendance as substitutes respectively.

Apologies were also received from Councillor Michael Chalk.

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

61. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 18th January 2023 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

62. UPDATE REPORTS

An update report was received by Members who indicated that they had received sufficient time to read the update report and were happy to proceed with the meeting.

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Chair

63. 22/01237/S73 - ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, THE ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL, WOODROW DRIVE

This application was being reported to the Planning Committee for determination because the application was for major development and as such the application fell outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.

Officers presented the report and in doing so, drew Members' attention to the presentation slides on pages 5 to 15 of the Site Plans and Presentations Pack.

The application was for the Alexandra Hospital, Redditch. It sought the variation of Condition 2 of the previously approved application (21/00444/FUL) to reconfigure the layout of the car parks.

Officers detailed to Members the differences between the previously approved and proposed applications in terms of parking provision and orientation, which included the removal of the helipad.

Members' attention was drawn to the proposed changes to Quinneys Lane, which included some footpath alterations, as detailed on page 14 of the Public Reports Pack.

Officers clarified the following points during questions from Members:

- That the previous application had provision for 308 spaces to replace the 307 spaces lost with the demolition of the existing staff carpark, the proposed application would have 323 spaces.
- That the proposed application sought the removal of the helipad. The reason for removal given by the NHS Trust was that it was no longer necessary. Officers further detailed that a helipad could be installed in an alternative location should the position of the NHS Trust change.
- The trees being lost due to the proposed development were all young species, there were no protected trees or areas identified.
- That the Highways adaptations included the widening of the mouth of the entrance, a removal of a bump in the road and improvements to the pavement.

Members then considered the application.

Intense discussion ensued regarding the application, in particular concerns with the removal of the helipad. The following points and comments were made by some Members:

- That the helipad had been used recently and was a lifesaving facility.
- There was debate regarding whether having a Helipad had been a condition for the original planning application when the hospital was constructed.
- Concern was expressed regarding the time it would take to be constructed should the helipad, once again, be deemed necessary.
- The merits of deferring the application to receive more information from the NHS Trust, given that the loss of the helipad was not a material planning consideration.
- That to remove the helipad did not require planning permission, therefore, the NHS Trust could choose to remove it without prior notice irrespective of the outcome of the application.

To be noted, Councillor Clayton having suggested a deferral and the reasons why, was informed by Officers that his reasons for deferral were not valid.

Councillor Hartnett requested that it be noted that the loss of the helipad provision on site was not a material planning consideration and therefore, gave no basis to refuse the application.

Councillor Marshall requested that it be noted that the Planning Committee strongly disagreed with the removal the helipad.

Officers reassured the Committee in response to the comments raised, that the decision to remove the helipad was a an operational matter for the NHS Trust and was not a material planning consideration. Officers further advised that it would be inappropriate to defer or refuse an application on that basis, such an action could incur costs against Redditch Borough Council by the Planning Inspectorate should the decision be appealed.

Officers acknowledged Members strong feelings regarding the loss of the helipad and agreed to convey this feeling to the NHS Trust for information. Officers agreed to share any information they receive with Planning Committee Members.

On being put to a vote it was:

Resolved that

having had regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be granted subject to the Conditions, as detailed on pages 21 to 24 of the Public Reports Pack and the revised conditions as per the Update Report.

64. 22/01518/FUL - BENSON FOR BEDS, REDDITCH RINGWAY, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B98 8DU

Officers presented the report and in doing so, drew Members' attention to the presentation slides on pages 17 to 21 of the Site Plans and Presentation Pack.

The application was for Bensons for Beds, Redditch Ringway, B98 8DU and sought the change of building use from retail shop (Class E) to a gym (Class E) with some minor external alterations.

Officers detailed that the site's location was designated as being in the town centre in the local plan and therefore leisure facilities such as a gym were deemed acceptable.

Officers drew Members' attention to the comments from Community Safety as detailed on page 6 of the Update Report, in that this proposal would provide 24-hour legitimate presence in an otherwise unfrequented area and therefore, some informal surveillance. There was a potential risk of vehicle crime which could be mitigated by ensuring good lighting and CCTV. The applicant had confirmed that the 24-hour CCTV coverage on the front of the building would be monitored 24/7 by a central team and that the carpark is already lit. This is the way all Pure Gyms operate.

Officers clarified the following points during questions from Members:

- That there would be showers on site.
- There would be no lighting to the back or side of the building, the only lighting would be the 24hour lighting at the front. This arrangement would be identical to the lighting system which was currently operating on site.
- That the shared carparking facilities did not fall under the remit of the property, therefore, Members could not attach a condition which enforced the installation of cycle storage on site.
- In response to noise concerns, Officers detailed that there would be no classes or music at unsociable hours.

Members then considered the application.

Members discussed the impact to the nearby residents from the development. It was highlighted that the only residents were those at the rear of the property, so the lighting would be of little disturbance and that noise would be a managerial matter. Should noise complaints become an issue, it would become a matter for WRS to investigate.

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Members wished their concerns regarding potential disturbance to residents as a result of lighting, to be noted.

On being put to the vote it was

Resolved that

having had regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be granted subject to the Conditions and the Informative, as detailed on pages 29 of the Public Reports Pack.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.15 pm