



Planning Committee

Wed 13 Sep
2023
7.00 pm

Council Chamber
Town Hall
Redditch

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact

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GUIDANCE ON FACE TO FACE MEETINGS

If you have any questions regarding the agenda or attached papers, please do not hesitate to contact Gavin Day (gavin.day@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

PUBLIC SPEAKING

For this meeting the options to participate will be in person, by joining the meeting using a video link, or by submitting a statement to be read out by officers.

The process approved by the Council for public speaking at meetings of the Planning Committee is (subject to the discretion and control of the Chair) as summarised below:

in accordance with the running order detailed in this agenda and updated by the separate Update report:

- 1) Introduction of application by Chair
- 2) Officer presentation of the report.
- 3) Public Speaking - in the following order:-
 - a. Objectors to speak on the application;
 - b. Ward Councillors (in objection)
 - c. Supporters to speak on the application;
 - d. Ward Councillors (in support)
 - e. Applicant (or representative) to speak on the application.

Speakers will be called in the order they have notified their interest in speaking to the Democratic Services Team (**by 12 noon on Monday 11th September 2022**) and invited to the table or lectern.

- 4) Members' questions to the Officers and formal debate / determination.

Speakers will be called in the order they have notified their interest in speaking to the Democratic Services Team and invited to address the committee.

Each individual speaker will have up to a maximum of 3 minutes to speak, subject to the discretion of the Chair.

Each group of supporters or objectors with a common interest will have up to a maximum of 10 minutes to speak, subject to the discretion of the Chair.

Notes:

- 1) Anyone wishing to address the Planning Committee on applications on this agenda must notify Gavin Day from the Democratic Services Team on 01527 64252 (Ex 3304) or by email at gavin.day@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk before **12 noon on Monday 11th September 2022.**
- 2) Advice and assistance will be provided to public speakers as to how to access the meeting and those using the video link will be provided with joining details for Microsoft Teams. Provision has been made in the amended Planning Committee procedure rules for public speakers who cannot access the meeting by Teams, and those speakers will be given the opportunity to submit their speech in writing to be read out by an officer at the meeting. Please take care when preparing written comments to ensure that the reading time will not exceed three minutes. Any speakers wishing to submit written comments must do so by **12 noon on Monday 11th September 2022.**
- 3) Reports on all applications will include a summary of the responses received from consultees and third parties, an appraisal of the main planning issues and a recommendation. All submitted plans and documentation for each application, including consultee responses and third party representations, re available to view in full via the Public Access facility on the Council's website www.redditchbc.gov.uk
- 4) It should be noted that, in coming to its decision, the Committee can only take into account planning issues, namely policies contained in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 and other material considerations, which include Government Guidance and other relevant policies published since the adoption of the Development Plan and the "environmental factors" (in the broad sense) which affect the site.
- 5) Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when the committee might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded.
- 6) Late circulation of additional papers is not advised and is subject to the Chair's agreement. The submission of any significant new information might lead to a delay in reaching a decision. The deadline for papers to be received by Planning Officers is 4.00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

Further assistance:

If you require any further assistance prior to the meeting, please contact the Democratic Services Officer (indicated on the inside front cover), Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services, or Planning Officers, at the same address.

At the meeting, these Officers will normally be seated either side of the Chair, who will be seated at the front left-hand corner of the Committee table as viewed from the Public Gallery.



Planning

Wednesday, 13th September,
2023

7.00 pm

Council Chamber Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Peter Fleming (Chair)	Chris Holz
	Imran Altaf (Vice-Chair)	Sid Khan
	Juma Begum	Anthony Lovell
	Andrew Fry	Timothy Pearman
	Bill Hartnett	

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and / or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.

3. Confirmation of Minutes (Pages 7 - 22)

To receive the minutes of the Planning Committees on 12th July 2023 and 26th July 2023.

4. Update Reports

To note Update Reports (if any) for the Planning Applications to be considered at the meeting (circulated prior to the commencement of the meeting)

5. 22/01316/OUT - Land Rear of Sambourne Lane, Astwood Bank, Worcestershire (Pages 23 - 40)

6. 22/00976/FUL - Lowans Hill Farm, Brockhill Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 6QX (Pages 41 - 64)

7. 23/00202/FUL - The Alexandra Hospital, Woodrow Drive, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 7UB (Pages 65 - 74)

8. 23/00854/FUL - 157 Easemore Road, Riverside, Redditch, B98 8HU (Pages 75 - 78)

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Planning Committee

Wednesday, 12th July, 2023

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Peter Fleming (Chair), Councillor Imran Altaf (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juma Begum, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Sid Khan, Anthony Lovell, Timothy Pearman and Karen Ashley

Also Present:

Councilors Joe Baker and Kerrie Miles

Officers:

Helena Plant, Amar Hussain (on Microsoft Teams), Paul Lester, Sharron Williams and Max Howarth (of Anthony Collins Solicitors)

Democratic Services Officers:

Gavin Day

18. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Chris Holz with Councillor Karen Ashley in attendance as substitute.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

20. UPDATE REPORTS

The Chair announced that an update report had been published, a copy of which had been circulated to all Members.

Members indicated they were familiar with the contents of the report and were happy to note the report and proceed with the meeting.

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21. 22/01553/REM - PHASE 6 DEVELOPMENT, BROCKHILL EAST, HEWELL ROAD, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE

The application was reported to Planning Committee for determination as the application was for major development 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 33 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

The application was for Brockhill East, Hewell Road, Redditch, Worcestershire and sought reserved matters approval for 109 dwellings and associated works and infrastructure.

Officers detailed that the application was part of a cross boundary development which extended into Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) which was addressed by application (22/01608/REM).

Page 8 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack detailed the phases for the development. Officers confirmed that Phases 1 and 2 had been completed and Phase 3 was in the process of being constructed, Phase 4 had also been approved but construction had not started. Officers further detailed that although Members were being asked to consider Phase 6, Phase 5 had not been submitted by the applicant. Officers commented that Phase 6 was a natural continuation from Phase 4 and comprised mostly 2-5 bed 2 storey dwellings.

Officers drew Members attention to the proposed Tenure Plan detailed on page 13 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack, and identified the location of the affordable housing units, being split between shared ownership and affordable rate properties.

The development followed the topography of the land with care being taken to consider overlooking properties/open space. The property per hectare rate was 32 dwellings which was lower than the previous phases of 37 dwellings per hectare, this had been predominately due to the larger proportion of 4/5 bedroom dwellings in Phase 6.

Officers identified that there was a shortfall of affordable housing in Phase 6 which the applicant assured would be compensated for during subsequent phases. Officers further identified that the overall development had an affordable housing provision of 30% in RBC and 40% in BDC. Officers assured Members there was sufficient protection in the Section 106 Agreement to enforce meeting the required quotas, therefore ensuring the affordable housing targets

were achieved on the site overall. This would be considered under future phases.

Officers drew Members attention to proposed landscaping plans detailed on pages 26-32 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack. Officers further detailed the large amount of green space within Phase 6 which amounted to 77% of the site and included a range of landscaping, biodiversity, recreational and SuDs benefits. The plans also included additional native tree, hedgerow and shrub planting.

Officers detailed that the streets would track through Phases 5 and 6 and around the edge of the district centre to connect to Phase 2 with a carriageway. The applicant provided that the curved shape of the main road would provide traffic calming by reducing the speed of vehicles.

Sufficient parking would be provided for all dwellings on site and the development would provide an additional 22 spaces for visitors. Worcester County Council (WCC) Highways had been consulted and after several iterations had indicated no objections subject to Conditions.

North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM) had also been consulted and had no objection subject to Conditions.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Joe Baker, Ward Member for Batchley and Brockhill, addressed the Committee in objection to the application. Miss Harriet Jarvis, on behalf of the developer, also addressed the Committee in support of the application.

Officers clarified the following points after questions from Members.

- That the Terms “Flats” and “Maisonettes” in the report were used interchangeably and were both referred to the same properties, Officers indicated these to members shown in red on page 14 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.
- The relevant payments had been received in line with the Section 106 Agreement, however, as a result of the Phase 6 application, further payments may be required.
- That all the concerns raised by WCC Highways, had been addressed in their entirety and WCC Highways had no objection to the application subject to Conditions.
- The Section 106 Agreement outlined money to be supplied to WCC Highways for the provision of a bus route, however, the plan for the route and accompanying bus stops had not been decided.
- That subsequent Phases would develop the road network and complete a through road for the whole development.

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- All properties would be fitted with electrical vehicle charging points.

Members then proceeded to debate the application.

Members thanked Officers for their correspondence prior to the Committee meeting clarifying a few queries that they had. Members were pleased that the developer had decided to include an additional 22 visitor car parking spaces. However, Members were still concerned that there may not be enough parking and that people would still need to park on the road which would lead to difficulties with larger vehicles getting past.

Members expressed that they would like to have known about the future development which might take place as that could impact on the current site/application, but respected that it was not always possible.

Members were disappointed that the proposed bus route had not yet been identified, or that any provision had been made in the development for prospective bus stops to accommodate the public getting on/off in safety.

Members appreciated that they had to vote on the application as printed, however, they requested that Officers make note and feedback to the developer the concerns raised during the debate.

Members were reminded that they could only have regard to material planning considerations, it was reiterated by Officers that matters regarding the applicant's history, previous development phases or the overall housing provision within the Council were not Material Planning Considerations.

It was noted that Councillor Khan left the meeting for part of the debate between 20:03 to 20:06 hours, therefore, he took no part in the vote or decision on the application.

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 outlined on pages 18-21 of the Public Reports Pack.

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22. 23/00596/FUL - BIRCHENSALE MIDDLE SCHOOL, BRIDLEY MOOR ROAD, REDDITCH, B97 6HT

This application had been reported to the Planning Committee as the site was owned by Worcestershire County Council (WCC). 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 35 to 47 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

The application was for Birchensale Middle School, Bridley Moor Road, Redditch, B97 6HT and sought extension to its existing buildings and external works.

Officers drew Members attention to the Update Report and clarified that there would be an increased intake of up to 30 additional student a year going into year 5 and there would not be an immediate intake into years 6-8. When the new students had progressed through the school, and new pupils had joined into year 5, the overall school placement capacity would eventually increase by 120 spaces by 2027. Officers also drew Members attention to the additional Condition 10 detailed on page 6 of the Update Reports pack, to be added to the original Recommendation.

The Site Location Plan outlined on page 39 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack identified the proposed areas of development. The application proposed a two-storey extension to the southern classrooms which would generate an additional 6 Classrooms. There would further be an extension to the school Hall to accommodate the increased number of pupils during lunchtime, and an extension to the existing sports hall.

Due to the extension of the sports hall and the increased school capacity, the carpark area would also be refurbished and extended. Officers detailed that parking spaces would increase from the current 34 up to 52 spaces. Officers further detailed that the carpark expansion encroached on to some Primarily Open Space, However, the area in question was not normally used for sport or recreation and as the carpark expansion would be necessary for the development, the loss of the small area of open space was deemed acceptable.

Officers outlined that the Councils policy was to support the Local Authority to provide sufficient school spaces for children. Officers further detailed that WCC Highways and NWWM raised no objections subject to suitable Conditions being attached.

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Officers clarified the following points after questions from Members.

- That the school would remain open during the development, and it was not planned to be completed during the school holidays.
- That there was no Condition for a construction management programme to be submitted prior to the commencement of the development.
- The carpark extension would be a tarmac finish with appropriate drainage.

Members then debated the application.

Members discussed incorporating a construction management plan as an additional Condition to the recommendation, this was to ensure a safe environment for the children with as little disruption to their education as possible.

Members also discussed adding a Condition for “Wheel Cleaning” to be mandatory for construction work, this was to ensure the disposal of mud onto the local highways would be mitigated.

Members were satisfied that the loss of the green area was necessary for the development and the need to provide more school places for children.

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;

- I. **Conditions 1-9 as outlined on pages 29-32 of the Public Reports Pack;**
- II. **The additional Condition 10 outlined on page 5 of the Update Reports pack;**
- III. **An additional Condition 11 requiring a construction plan be submitted prior to the commencement of the development;**
- IV. **An additional Condition 12 requiring a wheel cleaning policy to be implemented.**

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23. 22/01325/FUL - TOWN HALL, WALTER STRANZ SQUARE, REDDITCH

This application had been reported to the Planning Committee as the landowner of the site was Redditch Borough Council. 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 49 to 62 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

The application was for Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch and sought a non-material amendment to the new public NHS entrance at ground floor level and localised landscaping works.

Officers detailed to Members that the original application 22/01325/FUL came before planning Committee in December 2022, however, as construction progressed it had been identified that the internal/external levels previously assumed no longer worked with the original proposal.

To address the increased difference in levels, a non-material amendment was put forward by the developer to change the shallow ramp to a small flight of steps and an accompanying platform lift for those with mobility issues.

Officers drew Members attention to page 60 and 61 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack to give a visual indication of what the site could look like. Officers further identified the dwarf wall which needed to be constructed.

Officers clarified the following points after questions from Members.

- The variety of tree to be planted (Hornbeam) had been decided upon in consultation with the Arboricultural Officer and consideration was given to the potential future impact of the adjacent sculpture at that time.
- In the event of the lift breaking down, visitors to the NHS area of the site would be able to enter via existing Town Hall entrances which had sufficient mobility solutions and ramps.

Members then considered the application.

Members were concerned that the lift would eventually break down and cause disruption, Officers assured the Committee that the application represented the neatest solution to the issue and that if the developer continued with a ramp approach, due to the difference in levels, the ramp would come out a substantial distance and intrude into the square, Officers further assured the Committee

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that the lifts were not prone to malfunction or maintenance issues and that they would not expect problems to arise frequently.

On being put to a vote it was

RESOLVED that

permission be GRANTED for the non-material amendments shown on External Works Detailed Plan Dwg. No. (90)002 Rev. C1, and External Works Plan Dwg. No. (90)001Rev. C5.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.56 pm



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Wednesday, 26 July 2023

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Peter Fleming (Chair), Councillor Imran Altaf (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juma Begum, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Chris Holz, Sid Khan, Timothy Pearman and Gemma Monaco

In Attendance:

Councillors Monica Stringfellow and Joe Baker

Officers:

Ruth Bamford, Helena Plant, Amar Hussain (Via Microsoft Teams), Max Howarth (of Anthony Collins Solicitors), Steve Edden, Sharron Williams and Sukvinder Agimal (of Worcestershire County Council Highways)

Democratic Services Officer:

Gavin Day

24. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Anthony Lovell with Councillor Gemma Monaco in attendance as substitute.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Bill Hartnett, Juma Begum, Andy Fry and Sid Khan declared an interest in relation to Agenda item 6 (Minute No29), 23/00537/Ful - Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch. In that they had campaigned to prevent the library moving into the Townhall building and as F1(d) "public libraries and public reading rooms" was included as a proposed use as part of the application they stated that they could not vote positively for the application and therefore were pre-determined.

Officers clarified to Members that Agenda item 6 (Minute No29) proposed a range of activities covered under F1 and F2(b) which included the provision of education, display of works of art, museums, public/exhibition halls, public worship, law courts and local community halls/meeting places. The application did not specify which of those uses would be used within the Town Hall.

.....
Chair

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26. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Planning Committee of 21st June 2023 were presented to Members.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the Planning Committee held on the 21st June 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

27. UPDATE REPORTS

The Chair announced that an update report had been published, a copy of which had been circulated to all Members.

Members indicated they were familiar with the contents of the report and were happy to note the report and proceed with the meeting.

28. 22/01316/OUT - LAND REAR OF SAMBOURNE LANE, ASTWOOD BANK, B96 6EP

This application was being reported to the Planning Committee as a large number of representations in objection to the application had been received, the application was subject to a planning obligation and the recommendation was for approval.

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 Land rear of Sambourne Lane, Astwood Bank, B96 6EP and sought outline approval with the matter of appearance reserved for 9 self-build / custom build detached dwellings with access.

Officers confirmed to Members that the application was for 9 self-build dwellings and that matters of appearance were not being considered as they would be covered under separate planning applications for the individual plots. Officers further clarified that the plot boundaries detailed on page 9 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack would be the maximum footprint of the buildings and any dwellings would need to be situated entirely within those build zones.

The additional and current tree screening was identified by Officers on page 9 of the Site Plans and Presentation pack, it was further highlighted that a number of mature silver birch trees would need to be removed to accommodate the development.

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Officers further informed Members that the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 placed an obligation on Councils to supply plots for self-build units and that there was a 10 plot shortfall within Redditch Borough Council and that therefore significant weight should be afforded to this matter.

The applicant had requested a number of minor changes to the Conditions; therefore, Officers were seeking delegated powers to amend the Conditions and to finalise the Section 106 agreement.

At the invitation of the Chair, local residents Patrick Hanglin, Karen Baggott and Fraser Baggott addressed the Committee in objection to the application. Mr John Jowitt addressed the Committee in support of the application.

Officers clarified the following points after questions from Members.

- The topography of the site was not flat, the separation distances between properties had been increased to accommodate this.
- The two storey plots could be either a traditional two storey house or a Dormer Bungalow with a second level in the roof space. Both would be classified as two storey buildings.
- There would be a 2m footpath to the site which would have a 1m grass verge opposite, this was deemed suitable for the size of the proposed development.
- There were no reports of any special habitats, Officers further clarified that animals may come to the site to hunt/forage but may not necessarily live on the site.
- Condition 12 outlined on page 24 of the Public Reports pack, was included as the development site was within 250m of a historical ground fill site. Officers identified its approximate location on page 8 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack, and further clarified that it was a precautionary measure as the development was only just within the 250m radius.
- That should the application be approved, there would be no way to influence timeframes on the individual self-build applications.

Members then debated the application.

Members were unhappy with the proximity of the development to the current properties when considering their privacy and the topography of the land. The concerns were most prominent with plots 1-4 and Members commented that they would be happier with the development if those areas were single storey plots.

Members queried the possibility of levelling out the land prior to development commencing but accepted that it was outside the

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scope of the application and that the design of the development and any overlooking considerations would be considered under future detailed applications.

On being put to the vote, as per the recommendation on pages 21 to 26 of the Public Reports pack, the Recommendation was not carried.

Officers informed Members that they needed to determine the application and give material planning reasons for their decision. Officers further detailed to Members that they could not amend the application, however, any suggestions made would be noted by the developer who was in attendance. The developer could choose to submit an amended application or to appeal any decision to refuse the application.

Members further discussed the topography of the land and expressed the opinion that to determine the application, a site visit to the location would be beneficial. This would give them an idea of the layout of the site and enable them to see whether there would be any infringement on the privacy of the existing residents.

Some Members expressed the opinion that a site visit would not assist Members with their deliberation.

Councillor Monaco proposed an Alternative Recommendation that the application be deferred pending a site visit by Planning Committee Members. The Alternative Recommendation was seconded by Councillor Fry.

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 DEFERRED to a future meeting of the Planning Committee subject to a suitable site visit being conducted by Planning Committee Members.

The meeting stood adjourned from 20:45 hours to 20:53 hours for a comfort break.

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29. 23/00537/FUL - TOWN HALL, WALTER STRANZ SQUARE, REDDITCH

Councillors Bill Hartnett, Juma Begum and Andy Fry who had declared an interest in relation to agenda item 6 (Minute No29), left the meeting room and took no part in the debate or vote thereof.

Councillor Sid Khan, who had declared an interest in relation to agenda item 6 (Minute No29), withdrew to the public gallery, but took no part in the debate or vote thereof.

It was noted that, the Legal Advisor to the Committee, had strongly advised those Members who had declared an interest to leave the meeting room. However, it was noted that Members who had chosen not to leave the meeting room, could not be compelled to do so.

The application was reported to the Planning Committee as the applicant was Redditch Borough Council, 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 17 to 36 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

The application was for the Townhall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch and sought the change of use from Town Hall to mixed use as Town Hall and Community Hub, including Use Classes F2(b) and F1, with associated extensions and works.

Officers listed the proposed uses for the Town Hall which were outlined on page 28 of the Public Reports pack. Those uses were identified as acceptable by Officers.

The application proposed two extensions to the building. A double height extension would be located at the existing entrance to the Town Hall from Walter Stranz Square and would provide a more open aspect to the enlarged main reception area for the community hub. Large areas of glazing would increase the amount of natural light into the community hub.

The second extension would be located at the far end of the east wing which would house a new circulation staircase, connecting the lower ground floor and upper floors. This extension would be mainly glazed at the base to give the effect of a 'floating box'. Glazing and cladding would be used for the staircase extension.

To reflect the design of the existing building, the main corner of both extensions would be chamfered, and both would be finished with a flat roof and parapet wall.

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The colour finish of the potential cladding for the extensions had been changed following comments from the Conservation Officer. A bronze anodised finish that would complement the existing building was now proposed. However, as the material had not been fully examined by Officers an additional Condition (Condition 3, Page 39 of the Public Reports pack) was imposed for the submission and approval of all materials.

Officers took Members through the proposed floor layouts for the application and highlighted the extensions on the proposed elevation slides on pages 24 to 27 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

Officers drew Members' attention to the comments received in an objection letter, which was summarised on pages 5 and 6 of the Update Reports pack. Officers assured Members that the accessibility of the building would be looked at in further detail during the building regulations stage of the development. Officers further drew Members' attention to Condition 4 which required a scheme of hard and soft landscaping to be submitted, the car parking and access would also be reviewed as part of that scheme.

At the invitation of the Chair, Andrea Berry addressed the Committee in objection to the application. Kate Wood, Agent for the application, addressed the Committee in support of the application.

Officers clarified the following points after questions from Members.

- That Officers did not expect any historical findings to be revealed as part of the development. However, due to previous discoveries in the area it was deemed appropriate to include an archaeology Condition to address this.
- The anodized material used in the development would have to be submitted prior to being used so it could be fully considered and approved.
- The provision of fire exits and the safety of the cladding came under building regulations and would be determined at the appropriate point.

Members then debated the application.

Members were satisfied with the responses to the concerns raised with regard to accessible access and that they were adequately covered with Conditions and under building regulations.

Members were of the opinion that the development would be a welcome renovation for the townhall and would utilise space more efficiently.

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On being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that

having had regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations,

- 1. Planning permission be GRANTED subject to;**
 - a. Conditions 1-10 outlined on pages 38 to 41 of the Public Reports Pack**
 - b. Condition 11 as Outlined on page 6 of the Update Reports pack.**

- 2. Delegated powers be GRANTED to the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure services to determine any subsequent Non-Material Amendment (NMA) associated with the implementation of the permission.**

30. 23/00683/FUL - TOWN HALL, WALTER STRANZ SQUARE, REDDITCH

The application was being reported to the Planning Committee as the landowner was Redditch Borough Council. In addition, the application required a Unilateral Undertaking. 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 37 to 43 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

The application was for the Townhall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch and sought the installation of a bike shelter with capacity for 6 bikes.

Officers referred to the previous and newly proposed bike shelter locations, as detailed on pages 38 and 41 of the Site Plans and Presentations Pack respectively.

The previous location was deemed too cluttered with the changes to the entrance and the existing sculpture. Since the new location was outside of the approved applications boundary it required a new application.

Officers clarified the following points after questions from Members.

- There were only 6 bikes proposed in the original application which was approved so the new application could only propose the same amount.

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- That there was CCTV coverage of the bike shelter in the locality.

Members were pleased to note that the developer had been given just 1 year to implement the application, as it was a simple development and had not warranted the usual 3-year timeframe. Members saw no reason to refuse the application, on being put to a vote it was.

RESOLVED that

having had regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, authority be delegated to the head of Planning and Regeneration to GRANT planning permission subject to: -

- 1. The satisfactory completion of a Unilateral Undertaking ensuring that cycle facilities were provided in the revised location instead of the location defined under planning application 22/01325/FUL and timing of the availability of the cycle facilities.**
- 2. Conditions detailed on page 46 of the Public Reports pack.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.28 pm

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

13th September 2023

Planning Application 22/01316/OUT**Erection of 9 self-build / custom-build detached dwellings and access. (OUTLINE application with the matter of appearance reserved)****Land Rear of Sambourne Lane, Astwood Bank, Worcestershire****Applicant: Mr Sam Meeten
Ward: Astwood Bank and Feckenham Ward****(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Steven Edden, Principal Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 548474 Email: steve.edden@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Members will be aware that this application was considered at Planning Committee on 26th July 2023. The application was deferred to allow Members to visit the site. The site visit, accompanied by the case officer took place on Friday 8th September 2023.

Site Description

The site comprises land to the rear of residential dwellings located on the eastern side of the A441 Evesham Road, Astwood Bank, and to the rear of dwellings located on the southern side of the B4092 Sambourne Lane to the north. The site comprises four conjoined gardens associated with 1203 to 1209 Evesham Road. An existing vehicular access would be used to access to the site which is located to the immediate east of the property 'Stonehurst' and to the immediate west of the property 'Uphill'.

The site, which measures 0.68 hectares consists of areas of grassland, scattered native scrub dominated by bramble, with some semi-mature trees including a number of silver birch. Beyond the sites eastern boundary lies arable land within the jurisdiction of Stratford upon Avon District Council. The site generally slopes in a west to east / north-east direction.

Proposal Description

The application seeks consent to erect 9 custom or self-build (CSB) houses, one of which would be a bungalow. The application has been submitted in outline with the matter of 'appearance' being reserved for future consideration. Matters of access, landscaping, layout and scale are to be considered under the current application.

Vehicular access would be via Sambourne Lane, the B4092.

The dwellings would be available for CSB only (as opposed to the Market Housing category), their provision governed by a s106 planning obligation.

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Relevant Policies**Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4**

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 2: Settlement Hierarchy

Policy 4: Housing Provision

Policy 5: Effective and Efficient use of Land

Policy 16: Natural Environment

Policy 17: Flood Risk Management

Policy 19: Sustainable travel and Accessibility

Policy 20: Transport Requirements for New Development

Policy 39: Built Environment

Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

Others

Redditch High Quality Design SPD

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015

Relevant Planning History

08/265/FUL	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 4 dwellings. Land at and to the rear of 'Uphill' Sambourne Lane, Astwood Bank	Application refused 18.9.2008 Appeal dismissed 28.05.2009
14/302/FUL	Demolition of existing dwellings and erection of 9 dwellings. Land to rear of 'Grandview' and 'Uphill' Sambourne Lane, Astwood Bank	Application Withdrawn 29.01.2015

Consultations**WCC Highways**

Comments summarised as follows:

No objection subject to the imposition of conditions.

The justification for this decision is set out below:

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Site observations

The site is located in a residential and sustainable location off a classified road within a 30mph speed limit. The proposal would utilise an existing vehicular access which has good unrestricted visibility in both directions. The site access is located to the east of the signal-controlled junction of Sambourne Lane / Evesham Road / Feckenham Road where pedestrian crossing facilities, including tactile paving and push button units are incorporated within the junction.

Sambourne Lane has footways and street lighting. No parking restrictions are in place in the vicinity of the site. The site is located within walking distance of amenities i.e., School, nursery, public houses, post office, bank etc. and is also located on a bus route. The nearest bus stops to the development are located approx. 200m from the site on Evesham Road. The bus stops serve services 12, 149, 149S, 501 and S77 services. The 149 travels between Redditch and Worcester, 4 buses per day (approximately 1 bus every 3 hours), Monday to Saturday.

Trip generation

The applicant has provided vehicle trip generation via the industry standard software, TRICS. The vehicle trip generation evidence provided by the applicant confirms that during the peak hour periods (08:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 18:00) 5 two-way trips are generated. This increases to 43 two-way trips across the 12-hour (07:00 - 19:00) period. These figures are accepted as being appropriate for this development.

The low level of trips identified above is not considered to have a severe impact on highway capacity at this location.

Highway safety

We note highway safety concerns have been raised by local residents in relation to speeding and congestion in the vicinity. However, it should be noted that the proposed access is in accordance with the Worcestershire County Council (WCC) adopted Streetscape Design Guide and highway safety is not compromised by the proposal.

The speeding concerns highlighted by local residents are a matter for the police to address and cannot be attributed to this planning application. Visibility splays in accordance with 85th%tile speeds can be achieved. These are 2.4m x 66m (eastbound) and 2.4 x 49 (Westbound). The applicant has shown splays of 2.4m x 80m in each direction which exceed the requirements and are acceptable.

Accident data available for the most recent 10-year period has been reviewed. This data identifies only 1 personal injury accident which occurred in 2016. This low level of accidents does not indicate the location to be unsafe.

Car Parking

The applicant has provided car parking in accordance with WCC parking standards. The applicant has also provided 2 visitor car parking spaces.

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Other matters

Vehicle tracking provided shows that a refuse vehicle can safely enter the site in a forward gear, manoeuvre within the turning head and exit in a forward gear.

Based on the analysis of the information submitted the Highway Authority concludes that there would not be an unacceptable impact and therefore there are no justifiable grounds on which an objection could be maintained.

North Worcestershire Water Management

Comments summarised as follows:

The proposed development site is situated in the catchment of the River Arrow. The site falls within flood zone 1 and it is not considered that there is any significant fluvial flood risk to the site. Risk to the site from surface water flooding is minimal, based on the EA's flood mapping.

Having reviewed the submitted Drainage Strategy plans and Flood Risk Assessment, I see no reason to withhold approval of this application on flood risk grounds and I do not deem it necessary to recommend attaching a drainage condition.

WRS - Contaminated Land

Comments summarised as follows:

No objection subject to a ground gases condition. The condition should require the applicant to incorporate gas protection measures within the new dwelling/s or undertake a gas risk assessment to ascertain if gas protection measures are required.

Arboricultural Officer

Comments summarised as follows:

There are some good quality trees standing within the southernmost boundary of the site with 1211 Evesham Road and prominent trees within the garden of that property beyond the hedge line. From the general layout of the site I would not envisage there being any potential threat of impact on the root plates of any of these trees or risk to the longer term sustainability. It is my understanding that the southern hedge / tree line would belong to 1211 Evesham Road giving it a further degree of protection from the development. Taking these items into account I can see no current risk / threat of harm to the trees / hedge and therefore would not have any expediency to raise a TPO on the trees.

There is a group of varying age and size of Silver Birch trees running through the midpoint of the site. These trees are however of low prominence within the landscaping of the area and are a short life span species, therefore I would have no objection to the loss of all the trees within this group under a suitable level of mitigation replanting within the scheme which the size of the plots should easily allow. In this respect, the proposed planting strategy is considered to be acceptable.

Stratford On Avon District Council

Comments summarised as follows:

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As an adjoining District Planning Authority, Stratford-on-Avon wishes to offer no representation. Any detailed approval must not have a detrimental impact upon the Arden Special Landscape Area which lies directly beyond the eastern boundary of the site

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeological Service

Comments summarised as follows:

In this instance the potential for the proposed development to impact below ground archaeology of significance has been assessed as low. I therefore have no objection to the proposed development on archaeological grounds and will not be recommending archaeological investigation through condition on this occasion.

RBC Strategic Planning Team

Comments summarised as follows:

The applicant's assertion that the dwellings will be available for Custom/Self Build only, their provision governed by a S106 obligation, is noted.

BORLP Policy 4: Housing Provision, does not specifically refer to the requirement for Self-Build plots across the Borough and this is to be addressed through the Local Plan Review which is currently underway. However, Paragraph 4.7 recognises that it is important that the housing needs of Redditch's growing population are met and there is an adequate mix of dwellings across all types and tenures.

National Guidance on Self Build Homes states at Paragraph 023 Reference ID: 57-023-201760228, that relevant authorities must give suitable development permission to enough suitable serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in their area. The level of demand is established by reference to the number of entries added to an authority's register during a base period. RBC currently has a shortfall of 10 plots and if approved this application would make a significant contribution towards this shortfall.

Councils Ecological Consultant (ECUS Ltd)

Comments summarised as follows:

I have reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and the Environmental Enhancement Scheme in conjunction with the site layout plan. I have noted that an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been submitted. The enhancement scheme includes several biodiversity protections or enhancements, including incorporation of native planting schedules, installation of inbuilt bat and bird boxes on the new properties and hedgehog holes in any new boundary walls or fences. This is all supported. Further surveys were considered to be needed to determine whether Great Crested Newts (GCN) are present or likely absent. I have noted the further GCN eDNA report which has subsequently been submitted where results were negative. No objections are raised in principle subject to the inclusion of conditions to ensure Biodiversity enhancement.

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Public Consultation Response

14 letters have been received in objection to the application.
Comments received are summarised below:

- Back garden development such as this should not be encouraged and does not echo the pattern of established buildings
- The density of development is too great
- The dwellings would be overbearing and will result in a loss of privacy through overlooking
- The development would result in a loss of outlook
- Properties would overshadow existing dwellings to the detriment of amenity
- Flora, fauna and wildlife in the area would be adversely affected
- Drainage concerns
- The proposal would create further congestion adding to pollution and noise disturbance
- Parking to serve the development is considered inadequate
- Given the nature of self-building there is a real risk of extended build timescales since each plot will potentially be built at different times and would continue for an unknown length of time.
- Precedent concerns
- Increased demand on community facilities
- The access road does not appear to be adequate for the movement of vehicles that would take place
- Existing residents' safety would be prejudiced due to additional vehicular movements
- Air Quality ramifications in part due to added congestion

1 letter has been received in support of the application.
Comments received are summarised below:

- This is a well put together scheme and a great opportunity for individuals to build their own homes. The custom and self-build initiative will be great for the local area.

Other matters which are not material planning considerations have been raised but are not reported here as they cannot be considered in the determination of this application.

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Assessment of Proposal

Principle

The site is located in Astwood Bank which the Local Plan identifies as a Sustainable Rural Settlement which offers an appropriate range of services and facilities. Policy 2 of the BoRLP4 supports development within the settlement boundary for identified development needs.

The site is located in a very sustainable location, within approximately 130m walking distance of the commercial centre of Astwood Bank, located along A441 Evesham Road and Feckenham Road. This includes local amenities such as retail and community services. Nearest bus stops are located within approximately 200m walking distance along both sides of Evesham Road offering frequent services.

Application 14/302/FUL sought the erection of 9 dwellings on the site on land to the rear of the properties 'Grandview' and 'Uphill'. That application was withdrawn by the then applicant in January 2015. Subsequent applications for planning permission, notably application 2015/056/FUL have granted permission for new dwellings, currently known as 'Ravenswood' and 'Ivy Crest' which complete the ribbon of development which currently stretches from 'Grandview' (to the west) to 'Boundary House' (to the east) all of which face towards Sambourne Lane to the North. The site layout plan submitted under application 14/302/FUL has been included within the presentation pack, in order that this plan can be compared to that of the site layout plan as submitted under the current application.

As set out above, outline consent is sought for the erection of 9 custom or self-build houses. This housing category is defined within the National Planning Policy Framework as being housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual.

'Self-build' and 'custom build' are two similar methods for building a home but are different in the way the process is coordinated. The amount of personal involvement will vary. Self-build projects are defined as those where someone directly organises the design and construction of their own home. With a custom build, the future occupier works with a developer who creates the house for that individual. The developer would deal with the day-to-day management of the build but the future occupier would have significant input into its design.

Notwithstanding the above, members will note that this is an outline application and that the matter of 'appearance' is a reserved matter which would be subject to a separate application for planning permission. If planning permission were to be granted in outline form, this would not allow the subsequent applicant for the matter of 'appearance' to effectively have complete freedom to act as they wished (carte blanche). The design and appearance of the development would need to comply with relevant policies of the development plan (having regard to responding to local character etc) in order for such an application to be acceptable.

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As set out by the Councils Strategic Planning Team, BORLP Policy 4: Housing Provision, does not specifically refer to the requirement for Self-Build plots across the District although this is expected to be addressed through the Local Plan Review which is currently underway.

National Guidance comments that local planning authorities must give suitable development permission to enough suitable serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in their area. Redditch Borough Council currently has a shortfall of 10 plots and if approved this application would make a significant contribution towards this shortfall.

Whilst RBC can demonstrate a 5 yr housing land supply, the proposals would make a clear contribution to the current shortfall of CSB plots. Considering the highly sustainable location of the site and the Governments objective of boosting significantly the supply of homes, the provision of CSB housing in accordance with the requirements of the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 should be afforded significant weight given the Councils current deficit with respect to CSB plots. As set out above, a S106 planning obligation would ensure that the dwellings would be available for Custom/Self Build only.

Character and appearance of the area
Policy 5 of the BoRLP, states, inter alia:

“5.4 Schemes for the development of private residential gardens will generally not be supported unless they lie within existing settlements, integrate fully into the neighbourhood, and can clearly demonstrate that there would be no detrimental impact on the current and future amenity, character and environmental quality of the neighbourhood. Development may be supported if there are substantial overriding environmental, social and economic benefits to justify the development.”

The supporting justification at para 5.13 explains:

“... Although garden land was previously defined as brownfield land, it has now been removed from this definition. This does not mean that all development on garden land should be refused but rather that careful consideration should be given to any proposals and whether there are any mitigating factors. One of the most important considerations will be the retention of the existing character of residential areas.....Development of garden land will only be supported where it fully integrates into the neighbourhood and is in keeping with the character and quality of the local environment.....”

The scheme as submitted differs considerably from that submitted under reference 14/302/FUL where, under that application, the dwellings were rather cramped within the site where all of which had gardens generally much smaller than those of surrounding dwellings. The relationship of the proposed dwellings to existing houses was also far from satisfactory. Further, the development was considered to be prominent from Sambourne Lane, with many of the 'backland' plots being highly visible from the B4092.

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By contrast, the development proposed under the current application would be well set back into the site with views of built form from Sambourne Lane being limited. Whilst the roofs serving the dwellings would be visible from beyond the eastern boundary, views would be restricted due to the presence of the existing eastern boundary hedge (where further planting is proposed) which provides effective screening. It should also be noted that due to the Evesham Road (ridge) to the west, many existing dwellings facing Evesham Road to the west of the site are already visible from land beyond the site's eastern boundary.

Overall, the density of development proposed is considered to be commensurate with its surroundings and could not be considered an over-development of the site having regard to the Council's High Quality Design SPD, details of which are covered in the following paragraph.

Residential amenity impacts

The site layout plan demonstrates that all dwellings would meet the Council's minimum space standards in terms of private amenity space, all achieving gardens of 70 m² and with rear gardens meeting the minimum 10.5m length. 'Rear to rear' separation distances of 21m (set out within the Council's High Quality Design SPD) where those relationships exist (Plots 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9), would be achieved and rear to flank wall separations would also be appropriate having regard to separation requirements. Your officers are therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not result in any impacts on existing occupiers which would materially harm amenity, having regard to matters of privacy, overshadowing, overbearance and loss of outlook.

Existing residents have commented that they are concerned about the effect of the development during the construction period and thereafter. It is accepted that such disturbance would be unwelcome, but such effects are an inevitable consequence of granting permission for new development. I am minded that this inconvenience would be temporary and is not in itself a reason to refuse permission. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) would be attached to the consent in the case of any approval to address such concerns and in my view would be effective in minimising potential noise and other disturbance to residents. This would also control construction operating hours which would typically be restricted to Monday to Friday 7:30am to 6:00pm, Saturday 7:30am to 1:00pm, with no working on Sundays, Public Holidays or Bank Holidays.

Highway safety matters

WCC Highway Authority have carefully considered the proposals and believe the scheme to be acceptable in highway safety terms concluding that the development would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety. Clearly noise and air quality would be affected by some degree. However, weighed against other benefits of the scheme, these impacts are not considered to be material. It is acknowledged that extra traffic would be unwelcome to existing residents, however, it is not considered that the

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increased number of trips would be significant in context of existing usage of the local road network.

All plots would have three (in-curtilage) car parking spaces with the exception of Plot 3 which would benefit from having 4 spaces. This provision complies with the Council's car parking space requirements. Further, two visitor spaces can be accommodated within the site.

Ecology

An Ecological Enhancement Scheme has been submitted in order to ensure that adequate protection measures and safeguards for wildlife are in place and that the measures proposed to enhance the area are detailed. It is also required in order to ensure that adequate Ecological Mitigation is planned for the development, on site. Native tree planting is proposed where there is currently none, to the north-eastern boundary. Existing planting to the southern and eastern boundaries would be retained and enhanced and other proposals include hedgehog friendly fencing (with gaps to the bottom) and hedgehog hibernation boxes. Bird and bat boxes would be incorporated with the development and site clearance works would only take place outside of the bird nesting season (between mid-March and mid-August). All retained trees would be afforded appropriate protection via planning condition.

Other matters

Sections 100ZA (4-6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires the applicant's written agreement to the terms of a pre-commencement condition. Written agreement to the terms of relevant recommended conditions has been sought and agreed by the applicant.

Some residents have raised concerns with respect to drainage matters. Foul drainage matters are covered under the Building Regulations regime rather than planning. In terms of surface water drainage, North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM) as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the area have commented that the site is in flood zone 1 and in an area at low risk of surface water flooding. Having reviewed the drainage strategy which accompanies the application, no concerns have been raised via the Council's professional consultees (NWWM) in this respect. Notwithstanding this, the use of permeable hardsurfacing would be required (see recommended condition below) in the case of planning permission being granted.

A planning obligation is currently at draft stage where the applicant's covenant that each residential unit be constructed as a custom or self-build dwelling.

Planning balance and conclusion

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. I have found that any harm to the character and appearance of the area would be very limited and capable of mitigation by careful design and landscaping.

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Although matters of concern have been raised by residents these are not considered to be of sufficient weight to justify the refusal of planning permission having particular regard to the fact that the development would comply with relevant minimum spacing standards set out with the Councils High Quality Design SPD. The effects on highway safety would be broadly neutral and the location is highly sustainable for the development proposed, having good accessibility to a range of facilities.

The Council cannot currently meet its duty under the 2015 Act in the fact that there is currently a deficit of 10 CSB units. The proposed development would make a significant contribution to the supply of sites for self-build housing in Redditch Borough in accordance with Section 5 of the NPPF and the associated PPG.

In conclusion, the application is considered to be a policy compliant form of development and subject to suitable conditions and completion of the legal agreement the proposals can be supported.

RECOMMENDATION:

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, authority be delegated to the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services to GRANT outline planning permission subject to:-

a) The satisfactory completion of a S106 planning obligation ensuring that:

- The dwellings be provided as custom / self-build only

and

b) The conditions and informatives as summarised below:**Conditions:**

- 1) Details of the appearance of each dwelling, (hereafter called 'the reserved matter') shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development of each dwelling begins and the development shall be carried out as approved.

Reason:- In accordance with the requirements of Section 92 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2) Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason:- In accordance with the requirements of Section 92 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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- 3) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than two years from the date of the approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason:- In accordance with the requirements of Section 92 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 4) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

Site Location Plan, Drg No 1546-07 - Revision D (amended) dated 03 Nov 2022

Site Layout Plan, Drg No 1546-12 - Revision L (amended) dated 05 June 2023

Access, Visibility Splay and Vehicle Tracking, Drawing FCL0129-01 (amended) dated 05 June 2023

Planting Strategy, Drg No 22124-IYL-8450-XX-DR-L-4000 Revision P04 (amended) dated 21 Feb 2023

Tree Protection Plan, Drg No 22124-IYL-8050-XX-DR-L-2300 Revision P01 (amended) dated 22 Feb 2023

Dr Stefan Bodnar MCIEEM Environmental and Ecological Enhancement Scheme and all recommendations contained therein dated 04 October 2022

Drainage Strategy Drg No FW2149-D-400 A2 dated 24 March 2023

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning

- 5) A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. This shall include but not be limited to the following:-

a) Measures to ensure that vehicles leaving the site do not deposit mud or other detritus on the public highway;

b) Details of site operative parking areas, material storage areas and the location of site operatives facilities (offices, toilets etc);

c) The hours that delivery vehicles will be permitted to arrive and depart, and arrangements for unloading and manoeuvring.

The measures set out in the approved Plan shall be carried out and complied with in full during the construction of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate on-site facilities and in the interests of highway safety and neighbour amenity

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- 6) The Development hereby approved shall not be occupied until the visibility splays shown on drawing FCL0129-01 have been provided. The splays shall at all times be maintained free of level obstruction exceeding a height of 0.6m above adjacent carriageway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 7) Each dwelling hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until sheltered, safe, secure and accessible cycle parking to comply with the Council's adopted highway design guide has been provided in accordance with details which shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the approved cycle parking shall be kept available for the parking of bicycles only.

Reason: To comply with the Council's parking standards.

- 8) Each dwelling hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until the proposed dwellings have been fitted with an electric vehicle charging point. The charging points shall comply with BS EN 62196 Mode 3 or 4 charging and BS EN 61851 and the Worcestershire County Council Streetscape Design Guide. The electric vehicle charging points shall be retained for the lifetime of the development unless they need to be replaced in which case the replacement charging points shall be of the same specification or a higher specification in terms of charging performance.

Reason: To encourage sustainable travel and healthy communities.

- 9) Prior to first occupation, pedestrian visibility splays of 2m x 2m measured perpendicularly back from the back of footway / edge of carriageway shall be provided on both sides of the access. The splays shall thereafter be maintained free of obstruction exceeding a height of 0.6m above the adjacent ground level.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 10) Prior to first occupation, the first 5 metres of the access into the development, measured from the edge of the carriageway, will be surfaced in a bound material.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 11) Prior to first occupation, a residential welcome pack promoting sustainable forms of access to the development will be submitted to and had approval in writing from the Local Planning Authority. The pack shall be provided to each resident at the point of occupation.

Reason: To reduce vehicle movements and promote sustainable access.

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- 12) a) Gas protection measures complying with Characteristic Situation 2 as set out in BS8485:2015 and CIRIA C665 as a minimum requirement must be incorporated within the foundations of the proposed structure(s). Following installation of these measures, and prior to the first occupation of the development, a verification report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Verification of the installation of gas protection measures must be carried out in accordance with current UK guidance and best practice.

Or

b) A risk assessment should be undertaken to establish whether the proposed development is likely to be affected by landfill or ground gas or vapours. The risk assessment must be provided to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, prior to the commencement of development. The assessment shall be carried out in accordance with current UK guidance and best practice.

c) Where the approved risk assessment (required by condition (b) above) identifies ground gases or vapours posing unacceptable risks, no development shall commence until a detailed remediation scheme to protect the development from the effects of such ground gases or vapours has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Following approval, the remediation scheme shall be implemented on site in complete accordance with approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

d) Following implementation and completion of the approved remediation scheme (required by condition (c) above) and prior to the first occupation of the development, a verification report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to confirm completion of the remediation scheme in accordance with approved details. Verification of the installation of gas protection measures must be carried out in accordance with current UK guidance and best practice.

Reason: To ensure that the risk to buildings and their occupants from potential landfill or ground gases are adequately addressed.

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- 13) Notwithstanding the submitted details, before above ground works commence, a scheme for biodiversity enhancement, including but not limited to the incorporation of permanent bat roosting features, hedgehog homes, nesting opportunities for birds, bee and insect houses, native species and wildflower planting shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The approved details thereafter shall be implemented, retained and maintained for their designed purpose in accordance with the approved scheme. The scheme shall include, but is not limited to, the following details: i. Description, design or specification of the type of feature(s) or measure(s) to be undertaken; ii. Materials and construction to ensure long lifespan of the feature/measure iii. A drawing(s) showing the location and where appropriate the elevation of the features or measures to be installed or undertaken. iv. When the features or measures will be installed within the construction, occupation, or phase of the development.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity, visual amenity and in accordance with the provisions of National Planning Policy Framework

- 14) Details of any external lighting to be provided in association with the development shall be submitted and approved prior to first occupation. Only external lighting in accordance with approved details shall be provided on the application site. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) there shall be no other external lighting provided on the application site without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity and residential amenity

- 15) All trees and hedgerows to be retained within the site shall be given full protection in accordance BS5837:2012 recommendations throughout any ground or development work on the site

Reason: In order to protect the trees and hedgerows which form an important part of the amenity of the site.

- 16) The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied until refuse and bin collection facilities shall be constructed in accordance with details first submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate bin collection area is installed in the interest of visual amenity and highway safety.

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- 17) All hardstanding's including the proposed access road and the parking areas shall be constructed using permeable materials and retained as such thereafter, details of which shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority prior to first installation.

Reason: To ensure permeable drainage to prevent potential flood risk and in accordance with sustainable drainage principles

- 18) Prior to first occupation, further details with respect to retaining wall structures required in connection with bin storage and footpath provision shall be submitted to and had approval in writing from the Local Planning Authority. The works approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

- 19) Construction work on any dwelling hereby approved shall not be commenced until details of the existing ground levels, proposed finished floor levels of the dwelling/s hereby approved and the proposed finished ground levels of the site, relative to a datum point which is to remain undisturbed during the development have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details as approved and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that residential amenities are not compromised

Informatives

- 1) The local planning authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner to seek solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with this planning application through negotiation and amendment.
- 2) This permission does not authorise the applicant to carry out works within the publicly maintained highway since such works can only be carried out by the County Council's Approved Contractor, Ringway Infrastructure Service who can be contacted by email worcestershirevehicle.crossing@ringway.co.uk. The applicant is solely responsible for all costs associated with construction of the access.
- 3) Drainage arrangements shall be provided to ensure that surface water from the driveway and/or vehicular turning area does not discharge onto the public highway. No drainage or effluent from the proposed development shall be allowed to discharge into any highway drain or over any part of the public highway.

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- 4) This consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to species protected under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). If a protected species is discovered during the construction period, all activity which might affect the species at the locality should cease. You should then seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to re-commencing works. This action is necessary to avoid possible prosecution and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This advice note should be passed on to any persons or contractors carrying out the development/works.

Procedural matters

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because eleven (or more) objections have been received, the application is subject to a planning obligation and the recommendation is for approval

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Planning Application 22/00976/FUL**Demolition of existing buildings and construction of 17 dwellings, new access via Cookridge Close, public open space, landscaping and planting, associated infrastructure and enabling works****Lowans Hill Farm, Brockhill Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 6QX****Applicant: Claremont Land and New Homes (Redditch) Limited
Ward: Batchley And Brockhill Ward****(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Mr Paul Lester, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 881323 Email: paul.lester@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Site Description

Lowans Hill Farm is a former farmstead that has fallen into disrepair and comprises a range of dilapidated agricultural outbuildings forming a U-shape courtyard arrangement centred around an overgrown area of hardstanding. The farmstead dates from the 18th Century according to the County Historic Environment Record.

There was a former farmhouse on site, however, this was demolished in 2009 following significant fire damage. Surrounding these buildings and structures lie overgrown scrub and grassed areas across the remainder of the site, particularly towards the south-eastern and northern ends of the site. There are scattered trees and scrub around the site, as well as piles of rubble and building materials left over from the demolition of the farmhouse and the collapse of parts of the existing buildings. The site suffers from anti-social behaviour, this has been confirmed following an officer site visit.

The western boundary of the application site abuts the edge of a new school. The ground levels drop down to the school from Lowans Hill Farm. The existing agricultural buildings are in poor condition. There is a significant level difference between most of the site and the southern boundary. The levels drop from the site to Cookridge Close due to the remodelling that has taken place to deliver the new road. The site sits higher than surrounding developments, with the levels falling away to the south, east and west.

Brockhill Allocation and Planning History

The key policy within the Local Plan regarding the application is Policy 46. This sets out that a strategic site at Brockhill East is appropriate for a high-quality mixed-use development comprising around 1,025 dwellings, employment (8.45 hectares) and relevant community facilities and services, a district centre (including convenience retail store), a first school and a sustainable public transport network.

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Policy 46 identifies several key principles, and these include:

- To incorporate a mix of housing types and the Council's current standard of affordable housing provision
- To deliver a district centre of high-quality design, avoiding design flaws which contribute to a feeling of being unsafe which meets local convenience needs.
- To deliver a school capable of use as a community facility including playing pitches

The wider site has a long planning history but can be summarised with the following applications.

- Phase 1 (2011/177/OUT): Mixed use development of 171 dwellings, public open space (no matters reserved) and outline application for 4,738 square metres of Class B1 (Business) floorspace and access. Planning consent was granted on 3rd October 2011.
- Phase 2 (2014/256/OUT): Mixed use development of 296 dwellings, play area, Community House and public open space and outline application for up to 3,100 square metres of Class B1 (Business) floorspace and access. Planning consent was granted on 29th March 2017.
- Land at Weights Lane (2012/120/OUT) Mixed use development of up to 200 dwellings, 5,000 sqm (gross) Class B1 office floorspace with associated open space and access arrangements. Planning permission was granted on 11th March 2014.
- Land at Weight Lane (reserved matters): (2015/265/RM) Layout, appearance, scale and landscaping for the erection of 200 no. dwellings with associated infrastructure and landscaping and the discharge of conditions 5, 9, 15 and 16 of the outline application reference 2012/120/OUT. Planning Permission was granted 16th December 2015.
- New School: (16/000007/REG3) New two-form entry First School with associated external areas including access road, hard play, grass pitches, forest schools' area, and parking. County application planning consent was granted on 13th October 2016.
- Hybrid applications 19/00976/HYB and 19/00977/HYB for up to 960 dwellings consisting of a full application for 128 dwellings accessed off Weights Lane, new public open space, drainage system, engineering operations associated works and an outline application (with all matters reserved with the exception of access) for the construction of the remaining dwellings with access points off Cookridge Close, Hawling Street and Weights Lane and including a new District Centre, new play facilities, new highway network, public open space, new drainage system and surface water attenuation, engineering operations and all associated works including landscaping.

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This was approved at Redditch Planning Committee on 27th January 2021 subject to the signing of s106 agreement. Following the signing of the s106 agreement, the Redditch decision (19/00977/HYB) was issued on 1st November 2021.

- Phase 4 (22/00359/REM) Application for reserved matters approval (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the construction of 72 dwellings and associated works and infrastructure, pursuant to the hybrid planning permissions 19/00976/HYB and 19/00977/HYB (Cross boundary application with Bromsgrove DC 22/00255/REM). Planning Permission was granted 26th August 2022.
- Phase 6 (22/01553/REM) Application for reserved matters approval (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the construction of 109 dwellings and associated works and infrastructure, pursuant to the outline planning permissions 19/00976/HYB and 19/00977/HYB. (Cross boundary application with Bromsgrove DC 22/01608/REM). This application was approved at the 12th July 2023 planning committee meeting.

Proposal Description

This scheme does not form part of any reserved matters application. It is a full application by a new developer that proposes 17 dwellings with a density of 26 dwellings per net developable hectare, providing a mix of 2, 3, and 4 bed detached and semi-detached properties. The dwellings will be 2 storeys in height, with 6 of the 3 bed properties having garages. They will face a central area, emulating the central courtyard layout of Lowans Hill Farm.

The development proposes 0.05ha (538 sq m) of green infrastructure, including a communal wildflower meadow and native trees. It is situated near new public open space and green infrastructure in Brockhill East Phases. A 1.8m high close-boarded fence will be placed to the rear of the gardens, with a new defensible hedgerow planted beyond. The landscape strategy aims to retain existing vegetation while replanting it along new boundaries, including native species and trees. The landscape strategy is proposed to enhance the site's overall biodiversity value.

The site will be accessed through the creation of a priority junction with Cookridge Close on the southern boundary of the site. It will include a dogleg to the east to overcome the level change from Cookridge Close. The main access road will lead to a central communal area, private drives, and a new public footpath. Off-road parking is provided for each plot in line with WCC Highway standards. No public access is available to the site beyond Lowans Hill Farm.

Relevant Policies:**Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4**

Policy 1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 2 Settlement Hierarchy

Policy 3 Development Strategy

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Policy 4 Housing Provision
 Policy 5 Effective and Efficient Use of Land
 Policy 6 Affordable Housing
 Policy 11 Green Infrastructure
 Policy 12 Open Space Provision
 Policy 13 Primarily Open Space
 Policy 16 Natural Environment
 Policy 18 Sustainable Water Management
 Policy 19 Sustainable Travel and Accessibility
 Policy 20 Transport Requirements for New Development
 Policy 39 Built Environment
 Policy 40 High Quality Design and Safer Communities
 Policy 44 Health Facilities

Other

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
 National Planning Policy Guidance
 Redditch High Quality Design SPD
 Open Space SPD

Relevant Planning History

2014/210/FUL	Reconstruction of farmhouse building to create two dwellings. Conversion of existing barns to create five dwellings and erection of garage buildings and stores	Approved	16.03.2015
2011/087/FUL	Reconstruction of farmhouse building to create two dwellings. Conversion of existing barns to create five dwellings and erection of garage buildings and stores	Approved	07.09.2011
2009/077/DEM	Application for prior notification of proposed demolition - Demolition of former Lowans Hill Farmhouse and outbuildings	Refused	23.06.2009

Consultations**Worcestershire Archive And Archaeological Service**

No objection subject to condition

- Written scheme of investigation
- Site investigation and post investigation assessment
- Historic environment interpretation panel

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Conservation Officer

Object to the proposal due to the loss of these non-designated heritage assets is not acceptable in heritage terms.

North Worcestershire Water Management

No objection subject to a surface water/drainage condition.

WRS - Contaminated Land

No objection subject to a tired investigation condition

WRS - Air Quality

No objection subject to conditions regarding

- EVCP
- Cycle Parking

Housing Strategy

There should be 30% affordable housing on the site (5 units).

2/3 of these properties should be social rent

1/3 Share Ownership/First Homes/Alternative Home Ownership.

Of the whole AH provision 25% should be First Homes and any remaining percentage should be shared ownership.

The viability assessment is noted. Housing Strategy will follow officer advice on this matter.

Worcestershire Highways – Redditch

Final comment will be provided as part of a written update to the committee report.

NHS Acute Hospitals Worcestershire

No comments received.

Arboricultural Officer

No objection subject to landscaping plan

Open Space

The open space on site is noted. While is the small loss of existing open space would not normally be acceptable. Following a review of the applicant's case, the specific site circumstance of Brockhill make it acceptable in this case. No objection.

NHS/Medical Infrastructure Consultations

Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG have identified that the development will give rise to a need for additional primary healthcare provision to mitigate impacts arising from the development. CCG calculates the level of contribution required in this instance to be £5,520, which will be towards new and additional premises.

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Education Department At Worcestershire

The proposed development will generate 5 first school aged pupils which equates to approximately 1 pupil per year group, and as seen above the catchment schools, Holyoakes Field and Tardebigge First Schools, do not have sufficient places to accommodate these pupils. There are 5 related schools within a 2-mile walking distance of the site, Batchley First and Nursery, St Stephen's CE First, St Luke's CE First, St George's CE First and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic First, which have space available, however, extant housing will generate 25 pupils of first school age per year group which will fill these spaces. Therefore, to accommodate the children generated from this proposed development a contribution is required for first Phase of education of £90,310.

The catchment middle school for the proposed development is Birchensale Middle School. The school has no available space to accommodate children generated by any new building developments within the area. Other related middle schools are St Bede's Catholic Middle, Walkwood CE Middle and Woodfield Academy. St Bede's is at capacity and looks to remain this way. The proposed development is forecast to generate three middle school aged pupils which is one pupil per year group. The catchment and related schools have approximately 16-18 spare places per year group across the area. However, extant planning will generate the need for 22 middle school places which will mean the schools will become oversubscribed. Therefore, a contribution towards the middle phase of education is required of £86,050.

The catchment for high schools for the proposed development is Trinity High and Sixth Form Centre. Trinity High is a popular school within Redditch and is currently oversubscribed. The proposed development is forecast to generate a need for a further three high school aged pupils, and as the school is full and there are no related schools a contribution for high school phase of education will be required of £74,899.

Total education contribution required £251,549.

Town Centre Co-ordinator

The Council endorsed Redditch Town Centre strategy which was developed alongside earlier versions of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No 4 (BORLP4) demonstrated a need for the following projects to take place.

- Tackling the Ringway
- Improving Public Spaces and Car Parking
- Sense of Arrival and Signage
- Improving the Café and Restaurant Offer
- Enhancing the evening and night time economy
- Enhancements to Church Green
- Tackling the Train Station
- Rejuvenation of Silver Street/Royal Square
- Improved Lighting, Safety and Security in the Town Centre
- Public Art Programme

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- Encouraging Town Centre Living

This need is set in the context of the town centre needing to maintain and enhance its role within the region. Whilst the strategy was initially being considered under the guidance the old PPGs/PPS and the Regional Spatial Strategy their abolition and replacement with the NPPF/NPPG doesn't remove the need for the town to grow and evolve. The wider context is now set in the much more advanced BORLP4 which confirms the new dwelling requirement as 6300 new dwellings up to the 2030. The location of the new developments to reach the 6300 requirement has been influenced by the proximity and accessibility to the town centre. Therefore, for development proposals to be as sustainable as possible the future residents will rely on the town centre for a large proportion of their work, shopping and leisure activities.

The enhancement of the public spaces is a consistent feature of both the previously council endorsed town centre strategy and now the BORLP4 in the form of Policy 31 which confirms the list of projects as above for which contributions will be sought. For the sustainable development of the town to continue it is essential that the wider developments contribute to the upkeep and improved vitality of the town centre which the residents of the new developments will heavily rely upon. Therefore, it is considered appropriate for new residential development to contribute to a these important town centre projects.

The contribution would be sought for Public Realm Improvements, this would include resurfacing & new street furniture - bins, benches and lighting etc. The scheme is costed at £3,280,636.00 which divided by 6049 (housing commitments) comes out at £542 per unit.

£542 x 17 homes = £9,214

Waste Management

No objection

Public Consultation Response

- 10 letters sent 27th July 2022 (expired 20th August 2022)
- Site notices posted 1st August 2022 (expired 25th August 2022)
- Press notice published in Redditch Standard 5th August 2022 (expired 22nd August 2022)

24 representations received **objecting** to the scheme on the following issues:

- Loss of heritage asset
- Loss of green space
- Detrimental visual impact
- Poor design
- Development will add to the already congested roads in this area

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- Highways safety
- Pedestrian safety concerns
- Concerns regarding the increased noise from traffic and development
- Concerns regarding the disruption during development from site traffic and work
- Destruction of wildlife habitats
- Concerns regarding the removal of tree and hedgerows and the effect this will have on the ecology of the site and wildlife
- Impact on protected species
- Lack of infrastructure to support the development

Other issues have been raised but these are not material planning considerations and have not been reported.

Assessment of Proposal

Principle

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at paragraph 74 requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing. As of 31st March 2023, Redditch Borough could demonstrate 9.83 years supply.

The key policy within the Local Plan regarding the application is Policy 46. This sets out that a strategic site at Brockhill East is appropriate for a high-quality mixed-use development comprising around 1,025 dwellings, employment (8.45 hectares) and relevant community facilities and services including a district centre (including convenience retail store), a first school and a sustainable public transport network. However, the policy does not protect or promote the reuse of these buildings as part of the allocation.

The application site at Lowans Hill Farm is included within the Redditch Brockhill East Strategic Site, identified within the adopted Borough of Redditch Local Plan and shown on the Policies Map. The policy therefore confirms that the principle of residential development on this site is acceptable, subject to several technical and design considerations.

Design and Layout

The NPPF at paragraph 126 states that "The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities".

Paragraph 130 confirms that permission should be refused for the development of poor design that fails to take advantage of the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

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Policy 39 of LP4 states that development in the Borough should contribute positively to the local character of the area, responding to and integrating with distinctive features in the surrounding environment. All development proposals should:

- Seek to optimise the potential of the site to accommodate sustainable development through making the most efficient use of the space available
- Be resilient to the effects of climate change, whilst also protecting and enhancing local distinctive and historic features to improve the character and quality of the local environment
- Incorporate features of the natural environment including infrastructure.

Policy 40 of LP4 refers to good design and states that good design should contribute positively to making the Borough a better place to live, work and visit. All development should be of a high-quality design that reflects or compliments the local surroundings and materials. It should incorporate distinctive corner buildings, landmarks, gateways, and focal points at key junctions.

The proposal consists of a variety of house types and sizes to cater to various occupant groups, including couples, small, medium, and larger families. The houses are designed to be two-storey, with a mix of detached, link-detached, and semi-detached types. They are oriented around a communal open space in the centre of the site and reflect former agriculture farm buildings in a contemporary domestic manner. The materials and façade composition are informed by the irregular mixed use of window and door opening positions and sizes. Certain window and door openings are accentuated with darker brick surrounds, reminiscent of larger vehicle openings. The materials used include multi-red brick, plain clay tiles, and board and batten timber cladding.

The design and appearance of the dwellings are of good quality in accordance with Policies 39 and 40 of LP4, Redditch High Quality Design SPD and the NPPF.

The layout of the scheme accords with the Council's spacing requirements as specified in the Council's SPD on High Quality Design. With all garden areas around or above 70 sqm and the garden depth of 10.5m.

Policy 5 of LP4 refers to the potential density of housing that should be encouraged in the borough. The NPPF requires local planning authorities and developers to make effective use of land, especially if this would help meet identified housing needs where land supply is constrained. Section 11 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of making effective use of land, and with respect to density, Para 125 states that "where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site." The total site measures approximately 0.66 hectare in area, 17 units of accommodation proposed represent an approximate density of 26dph. Policy 5 of the Local Plan No. 4 requires a general density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare.

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While this is lower than outlined in the policy, this is in line with the density of surrounding developments across Brockhill East and surrounding area is similar. It is considered acceptable in this instance.

Applicants History with the site

The existing agricultural buildings on site are derelict and in a deteriorating condition. The applicant purchased the site in late 2021 and commissioned Farrow Walsh to undertake a Structural Condition Survey of the site and buildings. This Survey has been submitted as part of this application and includes a comprehensive suite of photographs of the existing buildings. The Survey found that in general the existing agricultural buildings are at present dangerous structures presenting a clear danger and that demolition should be undertaken immediately and the site boundary secured. The site is at present open to access and through previous unauthorised access presents an immediate danger to human health. The risks associated with the site include collapsing structures, falling from height, contaminated materials, trip hazards and sharp objects.

It is important to highlight that the applicant has explored the potential of repair and conversion of the existing buildings into residential use, however this would involve significant capital expenditure along with the remodelling of the front of the site to achieve an appropriate access from Cookridge Close. On this basis a conversion scheme is economically unviable. It is worthy to note that Persimmon Homes were granted planning permission for the conversion of the existing barns and reconstruction of the farmhouse building in April 2015. However, this permission has now lapsed, and the site has continued to deteriorate.

It is also worthwhile to note that planning permissions has been in place since 2011 to reuse the site, but development has not been forthcoming.

Historic Environment

The site is a farmstead of 18th century origins, identified in Historic England's (then English Heritage) 2012 Historic Farmsteads Characterisation project. The original host farmhouse has been lost, demolished in 2009. The remaining buildings comprise a loose rectangular-shaped arrangement of former agricultural buildings, set atop a topographical rise. Immediately to the northwest is the new school. To the southwest, south and southeast, the surroundings retain a degree of openness, with landscape buffers between the site and nearby housing development. The farm was considered for statutory listing by English Heritage prior to the destruction of the farmhouse in 2009, however this was rejected.

Lowans Hill Farm comprises u-shaped range of agricultural buildings alongside two detached buildings. The buildings are recorded on the HER; WSM62502, WSM54852, WSM33278, WSM41577 and WSM00017. The farmstead dates from the 18th century, although most of the extant structures appear to be from the 19th, except for the detached barn to the south-east.

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The buildings retain heritage significance due to their age and the example they offer of a farmstead which has developed over time, responding to economic requirements. There is further value in the survival of historic fabric, and the group's importance to the area as a remaining vestige of its agricultural past. The topography of the site, raised up above contextual development and visible from footpaths in the adjacent landscaped area, enhances their significance due to their visible prominence.

The Impact on Lowans Hill Farm as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA)

Non-designated heritage assets are on the lowest rung of the hierarchy of heritage assets, they do not have statutory protection, and their loss requires a balanced judgement (NPPF paragraph 203). The NPPF does not seek to prescribe how that balance should be achieved or what weight should be given to any matter.

The significance of Lowans Hill Farm as an NDHA would be totally lost due to demolition. NPPF paragraph 203 requires weighing "applications" that affect a NDHA and this means the consideration of the application (i.e. the scheme including the replacement buildings). It then requires a balanced judgement, having regard to the scale of any harm and the significance of the heritage asset. There is no requirement in this balance to give 'great weight' to the preservation of the heritage asset's significance. Paragraph 204 states that LPAs should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

To that end, the balanced judgement under paragraph 203 needs to consider the above benefits against the complete loss of heritage assets that do not qualify as locally listed buildings and generate marginal levels of streetscape and illustrative value.

However, it is considered that this harm is outweighed by the public benefit of the delivery of new homes on an allocated site, economic benefits to the local area, bringing a derelict, hazardous and disused site back into use, making effective use of land within a Strategic Site and wider environmental benefits including increased amounts of native trees, wildflower meadows, and species-rich native hedgerows, all of which will increase the biodiversity value of the site. The proposal would also give rise to limited employment during the construction of the proposed scheme. The proposal therefore contributes to public benefits that deliver economic, social, or environmental progress as identified within the NPPF.

The loss of the buildings is nevertheless an adverse effect but taking the merits of the proposed development into account and given the eroded significance of the non-designated heritage assets and their minimal levels of value, it is considered that the above benefits of the completed proposal result in an acceptable loss in heritage terms. Their proposed demolition is considered acceptable when a balanced judgement is made in accordance with paragraph 203 of the NPPF.

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Mindful of the requirements of paragraph 204 of the NPPF, a condition is proposed which sets out reasonable steps to ensure that the application proposal would take place after the loss of the heritage asset has occurred.

Landscaping and Trees

The application is supported by a landscape plan demonstrating the proposed landscaping across the site. The landscape plan includes a new communal wildflower meadow in the centre of the site and new native hedgerow and tree planting around the site.

The proposed development aims to improve biodiversity by planting more trees across the site, including near the entrance and a willow on the eastern boundary. The existing hedgerow, which is species poor, is proposed to be removed along the southern and eastern boundaries to incorporate an additional 8m sliver of land into the development. However, this loss will be compensated by creating a new native and species-rich hedgerow along the new boundaries. Additionally, new lengths of hedgerow will be planted within the site as part of the boundary treatment between dwellings. The loss of hedgerows, trees, and scattered scrub will be compensated for by the creation of a wildflower planted meadow, planting more native trees, and increased hedgerow, resulting in a biodiversity net gain.

The tree officer has visited the site and accessed the plan. They consider that the trees and hedgerow are of poor quality have limited amenity and biodiversity value and so they do not have any objection their removal. However, to mitigate these losses some replacement planting will be required; the inclusion of the new native hedgerow and Native trees is welcomed also shown on the landscape drawing.

Open Space

The proposed layout of Lowans Hill Farm includes 538sqm of on-site public open space (POS) through the provision of a communal wild flower meadow, providing attractive and natural features to the site. This area will also include the planting of new native trees.

The application site area extends beyond the existing physical boundary to the east and south, including an additional 8m sliver of land to facilitate the delivery of a viable residential scheme. This additional land allows for better spacing between dwellings and meets garden size standards. The additional 8m sliver is part of a wider area of POS delivered as part of Phase 1 of Brockhill East, amounting to about 2.9% of the POS of Phase 1 and 0.7% of the POS delivered across Phases 1 and 2. Significant areas of POS and green infrastructure are being delivered across the wider Brockhill East Strategic Site, notably as part of Phase 3. The loss of 0.08ha of POS is inconsequential in the context of wider provision in the area, as its usability is limited due to its topography and grassed area with limited ecological value. The proposed level of on-site open space is considered in accordance with Policy 12 of the adopted Local Plan and the standards for POS as set out in the Open Space SPD.

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Highways and Access

Policies 19 and 20 of the Local Plan set out a series of aspirations and requirements in relation to transportation and highway matters when considering planning applications. Furthermore, the NPPF at paragraph 111 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The development site will be accessed via a new vehicle and pedestrian access point onto the Brockhill East internal access road leading towards Cookridge Close to the south.

The new access road will directly serve seven residential plots (11-17) and provide a connection to two separate internal private access drives that themselves serve the remaining residential plots (1-5 and 6-10). The internal private accesses are compliant with the WCC Streetscape Design Guide for 'Private Shared Drives and Courtyard Parking Areas', which will operate as a private driveway.

Pedestrian access to the proposed development site will be afforded via 2m wide internal footways.

The WCC Streetscape Design Guide identifies, for residential developments, the following minimum parking requirements:

2-to-3-bedroom units – 2 car spaces, 2 cycle spaces; and,
4-to-5-bedroom units – 3 spaces, 2 cycle spaces.

The development fully complies with these requirements. 9 of the proposed dwellings have a garage in addition to these spaces.

In terms of servicing, a turning head is provided in the development. The turning head can accommodate a large Refuse Collection Vehicle (RCV) measuring 11.2m in length.

The proposed development will be immaterial and have a negligible impact on the safe operation of the local highway network.

During considering the application, amended details have been sought, seeking approval for the details of the access into the site from WCC Highways. WCC Highways is seeking clarification on final technical matters regarding this matter, and a written update and further planning conditions will be provided prior to the consideration of the application.

Ecology

A Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Preliminary Roost Assessment have been submitted. This reveals that there are no notable habitats or immediate vicinity, and the loss of these habitats is considered inconsequential. The proposed development will

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result in the loss of hedgerows, trees, and scattered scrub, but will be compensated by creating a wildflower meadow and planting more native trees and hedgerows. The site lacks ponds, making further surveys disproportionate. Bats are unlikely to be roosting on the site, and the removal of trees and hedgerows could reduce the availability of foraging resources for bats. A low-impact lighting strategy will be adopted to reduce the impact on foraging bats. The removal of scattered scrub, hedgerows, and trees could result in a reduction in hedgehog habitats, and a precautionary working method will be implemented during construction. Nesting birds and common bird species were observed on the site, but the loss of habitats is inconsequential to local bird populations.

It is considered that ecological matters are acceptable subject to suitable conditions.

Impact on Residential Amenity

Overall, it is considered that, given the degree of separation, position, and orientation between the proposed dwellings and neighbouring buildings, the proposal would not result in harm to the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties or future occupants of the proposed dwellings, in accordance with the above policies.

In relation to the construction phase of the development a Construction Environment Management would be required prior to the commencement of the development.

Planning Obligations

Paragraph 57 of the NPPF states that: "Planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following Tests" (Set out in Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010):

- a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - b) directly related to the development; and
 - c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 30% affordable housing - the policy requirement for affordable housing which would equate to 5 dwellings
 - Education (First, Middle and High School contributions) £251,549
 - Redditch Town Centre (Enhancement Contribution) £540 per dwelling - £9,214
 - Wheelie bin provision - (1 x green bin / 1 x grey bin) £710.60
 - Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG): £5,520 to be allocated for the improvement and/or extension of primary care infrastructure at Kingsfisher PCN
 - LPA Monitoring fee

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Affordable Housing and Viability

Policy 6 of the Local Plan requires a 30% contributions towards affordable housing from 11 or more dwellings. For the proposed development, this would require 5 on-site affordable units. In exceptional circumstances, the Borough Council may negotiate a more appropriate level of affordable housing provision or deferred payment scheme with the applicant. A viability case is applicable to these development proposals, and a Viability Assessment is supported to demonstrate exceptional circumstances regarding the scheme's economic viability and potential issues arising from affordable housing contributions.

At the national level, paragraph 57 of the NPPF states the following about viability:

“Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force.”

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) confirms that a viability assessment is a process of assessing whether a scheme is financially viable by looking at whether the value generated by the development is more than the cost of developing it. The PPG aims to achieve a standardised approach to viability and to ensure that a balance is struck between the aspirations of developers and landowners in terms of return against risk, and the aims of the planning system to secure the maximum benefits in the public interest through the granting of planning permission. The key elements to consider include Gross Development Value, costs, land value, landowner premium and developer return.

Due to the scale of the current proposal, financial contributions and 5 No. on site affordable housing units are required. A viability statement has been submitted for this proposal (Highgate Land and Development Consultancy Limited) and has been appraised by the Council's viability advisor, Dixon Searle.

Dixon Searle has reviewed the viability and commented that the overall approach to assessing the viability of the proposed development is appropriate in terms of general principles and the approach to the development appraisal. They have identified a residual profit. When compared to the target profit, the scheme produces a surplus of £64,679. While the scheme is relatively marginal in terms of viability. At this stage, Dixon Searle's view is that a nil affordable housing outcome and other contributions have not been justified, and the scheme appears sufficiently viable to support at least a small contribution up to the level of surplus identified.

In this case, it is evident that the development cannot afford to provide 5 affordable housing units and all financial contributions (outlined above). Following review by Dixon

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Searle, the Council accepts that conclusion and takes no issue with any part of the VA. The developer has accepted that £64,679 could be made available.

When there are insufficient s106 contributions available through a development site to satisfy all the matters that require a contribution (because the site would otherwise be unviable) and the planning judgement reached is that the development should nonetheless be permitted to proceed in the public interest, the Council has to prioritise where it will allocate the monies that are available. Logically, such prioritisation would reflect the Council's corporate priorities, which are:

1. Economic Development and Regeneration
2. Housing Growth
3. Skills
4. Improved Health and Wellbeing
5. Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour
6. Green Thread
7. Financial Stability
8. Sustainability
9. High Quality Services

On that basis where the development can directly contribute to economic growth, affordable housing (via housing growth) and education are likely to be top priorities. Accordingly, priorities around community facilities might be lesser priorities as they do not directly contribute to the Corporate Plan Priorities or other funding streams maybe available to deliver them. Clearly key infrastructure (generally such as highways) which is necessary to enable development to take place at all also must be a priority as they do contribute to the living environment and can negatively affect the local economy if not undertaken.

Where sufficient funding is not available to cover all planning s106 obligations it will be necessary to prioritise the list of contributions and may require the Council to decide that some obligations aren't met at all. It may be possible to still fund these obligations through other funding streams or alternatively it may be these obligations aren't as essential as others to make the development acceptable. The Council could prioritise the elements in relation to the agreed corporate plan whilst also taking into consideration the essential infrastructure needed specific to any site, such as highways or drainage.

The amount of s106 contribution allocated to each prioritised element will differ from site to site and will be subject to the detailed negotiations undertaken by the planning officer on behalf of the Council. Where it is the case that not all policy requirements can be met it is proposed that the Officers will prioritise in the following order:

- On and/or off site infrastructure necessary to make the development acceptable
- Affordable housing
- Education
- Open space and recreation

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- Other stakeholder contribution requests such as infrastructure costs associated with health provision.

The aims of the s106 planning obligations are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. Where a site isn't policy compliant due to viability it has generally been the case that affordable housing provision is compromised first, and this has a direct consequence on the ability of the council to meet the housing needs of those who can't afford to purchase on the open market. This, in turn, impacts on the Council's budget as each year more households approach the Council as homeless as they are unable to afford housing to meet their own needs.

There are other funding streams available to infrastructure providers, such as the County Council or the Local Enterprise Partnership, which can be bid for to reduce the burden on planning obligations. This includes bidding for government programmes for highways (the Local Growth Fund or Housing Infrastructure Fund for example) or education provisions, however the Council recognises that the opportunities for bidding might be limited.

Based on these considerations and in the absence of formal guidance, the following contributions (up to the value of £64,679) are sought:

- Waste and Recycling
- Redditch TC Contribution
- Off site Affordable Housing Contribution
- LPA Monitoring fee

Officers have carefully considered that relaxation of planning obligations and shortfall in affordable housing provision in this case and consider that it can be justified in line with Policy 5 of the Local Plan. Officers consider the relaxations of the planning obligations and shortfall of affordable housing is justified.

Conclusion

The Lowans Hill Farm site is part of the Brockhill East Strategic Site allocation, with the principle of residential development established. The policy requirements do not require the repair or conversion of existing buildings. Given issues of viability preventing the conversion of the existing buildings into residential use and given their continued deterioration, the proposed development officers a sustainable and good quality solution for the Lowans Hill Farm site.

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RECOMMENDATION:

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration and Leisure Services to **GRANT** planning permission subject to:

a) The satisfactory completion of a s106 planning obligation ensuring that contributions (up to the value of £64,679) are sought for the following matters:

- Waste and Recycling
- Redditch TC Contribution
- Off site Affordable Housing Contribution
- LPA Monitoring fee

b) Conditions as summarised below:

Conditions:

1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans, drawings and supporting information:

880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0101 PO3 Site Location Plan
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0105 P13 Proposed Site Plan
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0301-House Type 1-2B 4P-S3-P03
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0302-House Type 2a-3B 5P-Semi detached S3-P03
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0303-House Type 2b-3B 5P-Semi detached S3-P03
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0304-House Type 3-3B 5P Detached S3-P03
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0305-House Type 4-3B 5P Detached S3-P04
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0306-House Type 5a-3B 5P Semidetached Garage S3-P03
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0307-House Type 5b-3B 5P Semidetached Garage S3-P03
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0308-House Type 6-4B 6P Detached Garage S3-P03
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0309-House Type 7-4B 6P Detached Garage S3-P03
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0310-House Type 7a-4B 6P Detached Garage S3-P02
 880-D5A-00-ZZ-DR-A-0109 P02 Demolition Plan

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

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- 3) Prior to their first installation, details of the form, colour and finish of the materials to be used externally on the walls and roofs shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance, to safeguard the visual amenities of the area.

- 4) Notwithstanding the submitted plans, full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include proposed boundary treatment and other means of enclosure, hard surfacing materials, new planting, trees and shrubs to be retained, together with measures to be taken for their protection while building works are in progress.

All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the planting die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar sizes or species unless the local planning authority gives written approval to any variation.

Reason: To enhance the appearance of the development in the interest of the visual amenities.

- 5) Notwithstanding the submitted details, prior to above ground works a scheme for biodiversity enhancement, such as incorporation of permanent bat roosting feature(s) and or nesting opportunities for birds, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The approved details thereafter shall be implemented, retained and maintained for their designed purpose in accordance with the approved scheme. The scheme shall include, but not limited to, the following details:

- i. Description, design or specification of the type of feature(s) or measure(s) to be undertaken.
- ii. Materials and construction to ensure long lifespan of the feature/measure.
- iii. A drawing(s) showing the location and where appropriate the elevation of the features or measures to be installed or undertaken.
- iv. When the features or measures will be installed and made available.

Reason: To provide net gains for biodiversity to ensure the creation of wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors within development and minimize impact of the development on biodiversity.

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- 6) Prior to installation on site a scheme of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include plans detailing the position of any lighting cross referenced to a Schedule detailing the level of luminance. The lighting shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter be retained in that form. Reason:

Reason: To avoid disturbance to protected species and to safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining properties.

- 7) A construction environmental management plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of the development. This shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Working Hours during construction phase;
- Measures to ensure that vehicles leaving the site do not deposit mud or other detritus on the public highway;
- Details of site operative parking areas, material storage areas and the location of site operatives facilities (offices, toilets etc);
- The hours that delivery vehicles will be permitted to arrive and depart, and arrangements for unloading and manoeuvring.
- Details of any temporary construction accesses and their reinstatement.
- A highway condition survey, timescale for re-inspections, and details of any reinstatement.
- Comply with the requirements of Worcestershire regulatory Services Code of Best Practice for demolition and Construction Sites.

The measures set out in the approved plan shall be carried out and complied with in full during the construction of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To protect existing and new occupiers of residential areas from the unreasonable effects of noise, vibration, light and dust nuisance and to ensure the provision of adequate on-site facilities and in the interests of highway safety.

- 8) No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation, has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:
- a) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording.
 - b) The programme for post investigation assessment.
 - c) Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording.
 - d) Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
 - e) Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
 - f) Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

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The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (8) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 9) Within 12 months of the commencement of the development hereby approved, the content, design and location of an historic environment interpretation panel shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 10) No works above foundation level shall commence until a scheme for a surface water drainage strategy for the proposed development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of surface water drainage measures, including for hardstanding areas, and shall conform with the non-statutory technical standards for SuDS (Defra 2015) and the drainage strategy submitted with the application (20-064 DRAINAGE STRATEGY REV A). If a connection to a sewer system is proposed, then evidence shall be submitted of the in-principle approval of Severn Trent water for this connection. The scheme should include runoff treatment proposals for surface water drainage. Where the scheme includes communal surface water drainage assets proposals for dealing with the future maintenance of these assets should be included. The scheme should include proposals for informing future homeowners or occupiers of the arrangements for maintenance of communal surface water drainage assets. The approved surface water drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first use of the development and thereafter maintained in accordance with the agreed scheme.

Reason: In order to ensure satisfactory drainage conditions that will not create or exacerbate flood risk on site or within the surrounding local area.

- 11) Unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority development, other than that required to be carried out as part of an approved scheme of remediation, must not commence until conditions 1 to 6 have been complied with:

1. A preliminary risk assessment must be carried out. This study shall take the form of a Phase I desk study and site walkover and shall include the identification of previous site uses, potential contaminants that might reasonably be expected given those uses and any other relevant information. The preliminary risk

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assessment report shall contain a diagrammatical representation (conceptual model) based on the information above and shall include all potential contaminants, sources and receptors to determine whether a site investigation is required and this should be detailed in a report supplied to the LPA. The risk assessment must be approved in writing before any development takes place.

2. Where an unacceptable risk is identified a scheme for detailed site investigation must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to being undertaken. The scheme must be designed to assess the nature and extent of any contamination and must be led by the findings of the preliminary risk assessment. The investigation and risk assessment scheme must be compiled by competent persons and must be designed in accordance with the Environment Agency's "Land Contamination: Risk Management" guidance.

3. Detailed site investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and a written report of the findings produced. This report must be approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any development taking place. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and must be conducted in accordance with the Environment Agency's "Land Contamination: Risk Management" guidance.

4. Where identified as necessary a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to identified receptors must be prepared and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority in advance of undertaking. The remediation scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as Contaminated Land under Part 2A Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

5. The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development, other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

6. Following the completion of the measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a validation report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any buildings.

7. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, these will be subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority. Following the completion of any measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a validation report must be prepared, which is subject to the

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approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any buildings.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

12. Prior to occupation of the development, a Maintenance and Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority for the open space area shown on the approved.

Reason: To ensure that the open space is maintained to an adequate standard for the proposed occupiers of the development.

13. The demolition works hereby permitted shall not begin until documentary evidence is provided to the local planning authority demonstrating that contracts have been entered into by the developer to ensure that building work on the site subject to this consent begins within 12 months of the commencement of demolition in accordance with the scheme for which planning permission has been granted.

Reason: To prevent premature demolition in the interests of character and appearance and to comply with Paragraph 204 of the NPPF.

Procedural matters

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the application requires a S106 Agreement. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.

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Planning Application 23/00202/FUL**New two-storey extension (including plant space and vertical circulation) at rear of the existing two-storey hospital to provide 2 new surgical theatres and support accommodation. (part retrospective)****The Alexandra Hospital, Woodrow Drive, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 7UB,****Applicant: Mr Simon Blakemore
Ward: Greenlands Ward****(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Sarah Hazlewood, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527881720 Email: sarah.hazlewood@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Site Description

The site comprises the Alexandra Hospital situated to the south of Redditch and close to the boundary with Stratford upon Avon District. To the east of the site lies Tudor Grange Academy and to the south a new residential development accessed off Nine Days Lane. The hospital site itself is accessed off Woodrow Drive to the north of the site. The application site lies to the south of the hospital and is situated on a staff car park. Adjacent to the site is a creche for hospital staff and at a greater distance to the south are dwellings off Whetstone Street.

Proposal Description

The proposal comprises an extension to the existing hospital building formed from a mixture of single storey and two storey elements. The majority of the new accommodation is at ground floor level which includes two new operating theatres with associated accommodation including recovery areas, offices and staff facilities. At first floor level plant, heating and server rooms are proposed. The buildings have flat roofs and have a white finish.

Relevant Policies:

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Policy 16: Natural Environment
Policy 18: Sustainable Water Management
Policy 20: Transport Requirements for New Development
Policy 44: Health Facilities

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Others

High Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document
 NPPF National Planning Policy Framework
 NPPG National Planning practice Guidance

Relevant Planning History

21/00444/FUL	Creation of 2 new staff car parks and demolition of 2 existing staff carparks, plus creation of some additional infill car parking spaces around the trust site and repositioning of helipad	Granted	17.09.2021
21/00447/OUT	Outline application for the removal of existing carpark and demolition of existing apartment buildings (Use Class C3). Proposed new residential development of up to 92 homes (Use Class C3) with all matters, except the access road from Woodrow Drive to a point 100m west of the junction with Quinneys Lane, reserved (scale, layout, appearance, landscaping).	Pending decision	
22/01237/S73	Variation of condition 2 of application 21/00444/FUL - reconfiguration of north and west car parks and minor alterations to Quinneys Lane to bring it up to adoptable standards	Granted	16.02.2023

Consultations**Worcestershire Highways - Redditch**

No objection subject to conditions

North Worcestershire Water Management

I have reviewed the additional information and feel they have addressed any concerns I had. Based on this and the fact it is mostly retrospective, I am happy for the condition to be removed.

Public Consultation Response

A site notice was displayed 29.03.2023 which expired 22.04.2023.

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A press notice was published 31.03.2023 which expired 17.04.2023

A total of 8 letters were sent to nearby properties on 23.03.2023 which expired 16.04.2023

As a result of this publicity a total of 9 responses have been received of which 8 are recorded as comments in objection and 1 recorded as comments in support, however on reading this representation the comments are neither support nor objection.

The material planning matters raised include:

- The height of the building
- Loss of light
- Visually intrusive
- The colour finish of the building
- Noise impact

Cllr Marshall

Residents are asking if there can be some conditions to the granting of permission, such as changing the colour, so it blends into its environment and some strategic planting of shrubs around the new theatres.

Having visited the site, I must note they are very bright and in your face.

Assessment of Proposal

Principle

The site is covered by Policy 44 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No 4 (BoRLP). Paragraph 44.2 supports health related development in the curtilage of the Alexandra Hospital. Furthermore, paragraph 44.3 states that the land within the curtilage of the Alexandra Hospital will be safeguarded for development which is intended for genuine health related purposes. The proposal relates to an extension to provide two additional surgical theatres and associated development. The proposed theatres are projected to be able to treat an additional 193 patients a month. There are currently 18,500 people waiting for one or more treatments at the Alexandra Hospital of which 6,800-7,700 are likely to need to have their procedure in a theatre. The development is clearly one which is 'intended for genuine health related purposes' and therefore it is considered that the principle of the development is acceptable.

Highways/Car Parking

The extension is sited on an area used as staff car parking. As a result of the proposal a total of 84 staff car parking spaces will be lost.

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Previous applications at the hospital site have approved additional/replacement car parking provision as well as the loss of one staff car parking area. With respect to the developments relating to car parking Members attention is drawn to the parking appraisal plan provided at appendix 1.

Car park C has permission to be removed from the site under application 22/01237/S73. It is now the hospitals intention to retain this car park, however given that the application that sought its removal remains extant the retention of this car park is currently outside of the control of the Local Planning Authority. It is therefore considered necessary to control the number of car parking spaces across the whole hospital site to ensure that this development does not result in a net loss of car parking spaces. To this end, the applicants have suggested the use of a condition to ensure that a minimum number of car parking spaces are maintained across the whole site. The applicants are suggesting that there should be no fewer than 936 car parking spaces at the site at any one time. In coming to this figure, the following explanation has been provided:

Prior to the application proposals there were 904 car parking spaces across the hospital site. The application proposals result in the loss of 84 car parking spaces. (904 – 84 = 820 spaces). The car park (Area A) to the southeast has been enlarged by 116 car parking spaces (820 + 116 = 936). That figure of 936 parking spaces thus more than meets the demands of the proposed development and the existing (prior to development) operational needs for parking.

However, this figure assumes the retention of car park E which has permission to be removed as part of outline planning application 21/00447/OUT and has a resolution to grant from this committee. The application relates to the construction of up to 92 dwellings. It would therefore be likely that a total of 936 spaces could not be retained across the site in the long term without the benefit of further applications for planning permission, the acceptability of which is not certain.

It is therefore considered reasonable to control the number of spaces at 915. This is 11 more than the current situation (prior to any development taking place), assumes the retention of car park C which is now proposed by the hospital trust, takes account of the 84 spaces lost at car park B for this development (which have already been replaced by the expansion of car park A) and assumes the loss of car park E.

Having taken legal advice on the imposition of such a condition to maintain the 915 spaces across the site it is considered that a condition of this nature would meet with the tests set down at paragraph 56 of the NPPF. Namely that conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development permitted, enforceable, precise, and reasonable in all other respects.

The highway authority is content with this approach and having considered the trip generation forecasts for the proposed new theatres raises no objection to the proposal.

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The use of such a condition also provides the hospital the flexibility to develop its site (in accordance with the various planning permissions it benefits from) in the manner and order most suitable to its operational requirements and as and when funding becomes available for such capital projects.

Residential Amenity

The application site lies to the north of the dwellings accessed off Whetstone Street. The development will lie between 18 and 21 metres from the boundary of these dwellings and between 36 and 37 metres to the dwellings themselves. The hospital building lies at a slightly lower level than the dwellings and there is a landscaped area between the development site and the boundary with the Whetstone Street properties. The maximum height of the proposed development is 7.8 metres in the area closest to the dwellings on Whetstone Street.

It is noted that some of the representations received relate to the development causing a loss of light to these dwellings. Chapter 6 of the council's adopted High Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides key considerations for non-residential development. Development at a hospital is not explicitly listed however, the SPD makes clear that development should not impact on neighbouring amenity through overbearance, overshadowing and overlooking.

Given that the development lies to the north of the Whetstone Street dwellings, the track of the sun from east to west via the south and the distance between the development and these dwellings it is considered unlikely to result in overshadowing causing a loss of light. Whilst the outlook from these dwellings will have changed and the development is likely visible where there was none previously, this does not necessarily mean that the development is causing harm to amenity. In this regard it is considered that adequate distance remains between the dwellings and the hospital development to not cause an overbearing impact. With respect to overlooking, no windows are proposed at the upper level facing towards Whetstone Street. Whilst access will be necessary to the plant rooms, doors are provided on the west elevation and any use of this area would be transient going to and from the plant room. It is therefore considered that no harmful overlooking from the development would occur.

With respect to the representations made, a number of these raise the matter of potential noise disturbance from ventilation, filtering systems and generators. A noise assessment has been submitted with the application which states that noise should not be a reason to refuse planning consent. Worcestershire Regulatory Services have been consulted with respect to this matter and their response will be reported on the committee update.

Visual Amenity

The existing hospital building is two storeys in height and is largely finished in red brick with low pitched grey roof. There are elements of flat roofed additions to the roof at

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effectively third and fourth floor levels. There are some more recent elements which include the use of a render finish to the external walls.

A number of representations refer to the visual appearance of the proposed buildings, particularly with respect to the white colour finish and how this appears prominent and out of character with the existing buildings on the hospital site.

In response to this, the applicants have provided justification for the design of the building. Whilst not all the matters raised are material planning considerations, it is considered useful background for members to understand how the design of the building has been arrived at:

- In late 2022, the Trust had the opportunity to seek up to £25 million for the theatre development and associated work at the Alexandra Hospital. The outcome was the approval of a bid for of upwards of £18 million to cover the construction of two new modular operating theatres and associated work including car parking and an electricity substation.
- One of the requirements placed on the Trust was for the funding to be used by the end of financial year 2022/23, leaving less than six months from the initial submission of the bid for funding to the required start date for work. This reflects in part the urgency of expanding planned surgical capacity to deliver timely care for a growing number of patients on waiting lists for planned surgery, lists which had grown exponentially during the Covid pandemic.
- Local demand also meant that the alternative model (a rolling programme to refurbish the existing Alexandra theatres) was no longer viable because the clinical risk which would result from even the short term loss of that capacity.
- A decision was made to consider the use of off-site manufacturing in the form of modular theatres. Even this would be tight in the given timescales had it not been for the fact that the modular company was able to provide the first theatre, effectively from stock, as the last one of a number of modular theatres they had pre-built during the pandemic, supplying a number of these to other Trusts. This meant they then had manufacturing capacity to provide a second identical theatre, allowing both units to be delivered to site before the end of March 2023.
- As a result, a number of design decisions in terms of layout and appearance were already 'locked in', which included the choice to use white cladding as the material for the external envelope. Any significant changes to the unit that had already been built, including the external cladding would have incurred both additional costs and potential delays to the installation on site, losing the original benefits. Consideration was given to the design of the remaining, traditionally built building as this would sit alongside the modular theatres, providing the supporting accommodation including recovery, stores and staff facilities. A decision was taken to create this using a steel frame which could then be clad, using the matching cladding, an obvious solution to providing one cohesive building. This was therefore seen as a positive, rather than a choice that was being forced upon the Trust and their design team.

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- This approach also has the benefit of reducing the overall construction programme, making the building water tight sooner, for example, which allows the internal fit out to commence earlier and in turn allowing the building to become operational as quickly as possible.

Further consideration has been given to the visual impact of the proposal in view of the comments made. Reference is made to application 21/00447/OUT which has a resolution to grant permission for dwellings on the western edge of the hospital site. The application is made in outline form with layout a reserved matter for future consideration, however the applicants advance that moderate weight should be given to this application as the indicative layout shows housing extending to the south in a manner which could obscure some views of the proposed development from the junction of Nine Days Lane and Whetstone Street.

Further consideration has been given to cladding the building, applying a coloured finish, fencing and landscape planting in order to mitigate the concerns relating to visual impact. Of these cladding and applying a colouring finish are expensive and would necessitate directing funds away from clinical needs. Similarly, fencing is also expensive given the height it would need to be constructed at and consideration would have to be given to the visual appearance to ensure the fencing in itself would not be harmful to the character of the area. The applicant would, however, be willing to submit and have approved a scheme of landscaping which could be controlled by condition. It would be envisaged that planting could be provided on the bank to the west/south west of the development to provide screening from views gained from this direction.

Officers are mindful that whilst the appearance of the proposed extension is different when compared to the predominant appearance of the existing hospital building, this does not necessarily mean that it is harmful to the visual amenities of the area. The hospital building, whilst having a dominant character, does feature flat roofed elements in colours other than red brick and at a height greater than the majority of the hospital as well as rendered elements. It is also considered that an appropriate planting scheme would provide a buffer and softening of the colour of the building.

Conclusion

The development of the site for additional theatre accommodation and associated development is acceptable in principle in accordance with Policy 44 of the BoRLP. It is considered that the development would not cause a harmful impact to the amenities of the occupiers of nearby dwellings on Whetstone Street and that adequate parking provision can be ensured across the site through an appropriately worded planning condition. Whilst it is noted that the finished colour of the building is largely at odds with the existing building, it is not considered unduly harmful, and the provision of a landscaping scheme will ensure that the appearance of the building can be softened from key vantage points. In addition, this matter has to be balanced against the significant benefits that will arise from the development through the provision of additional theatre

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accommodation and the increased number of surgical procedures that will be carried out at the site.

Your officers have therefore concluded that the application would amount to sustainable development and would not conflict with the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 as a whole. Subject to compliance with conditions as listed in full below, a favourable recommendation can be made.

RECOMMENDATION:

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

Proposed Site Layout Plan (11)302 Rev P2
Proposed Block Plan (10)201 Rev P3
Site Location Plan (10)003 Rev P2
Proposed Ground Floor Plan (30)302 Rev P1
Proposed First Floor Plan (31)302 Rev P1
Proposed Roof Plan (32)302 Rev P1
Proposed Elevations (41)302 Rev P1
Proposed Elevations (41)303 P1
Proposed Sections (43)302 Rev P1
Surface water manhole schedule Rev C3 19.04.23
Foul manhole schedule Rev C3
Water Management Statement Rev P0
Drainage Layout 8330-CCE-XX-00-DR-C-0200 Rev C01

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

2. The Development hereby approved shall not be opened to the public until 8 electric vehicle charging spaces have been provided in accordance with a specification which shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To encourage sustainable travel and healthy communities.

3. The Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until sheltered and secure cycle parking to comply with the Council's adopted highway design guide has been provided in accordance with details which shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the approved cycle parking shall be kept available for the parking of bicycles only.

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Reason: To comply with the Council's parking standards.

4. The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until a sign and road marking strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate on-site facilities and in the interests of highway safety.

5. There shall be no fewer than 915 car parking spaces across the Alexandra Hospital site at all times, of which no less than 270 spaces shall be available for visitor car parking.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate on site parking facilities.

6. Within 6 months of the date of this permission a landscaping scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved landscaping scheme shall be implemented on site within the first planting season following the agreement of the scheme.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity

Procedural matters

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

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**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

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Planning Application 23/00854/FUL**Internal layout alterations and upgrade to current building regulations. Erection of a two-storey side extension****157 Easemore Road, Riverside, Redditch, B98 8HU****Applicant: Mr Andrew Rainbow: Redditch Borough Council
Ward: Abbey Ward****(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Steven Edden, Principal Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 548474 Email: steve.edden@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Site Description

The site is located to the northern side of Easemore Road within the Riverside area of Redditch. To the east lies Mallard Close, to the north is Meadow Hill Crescent, with the host dwellings rear garden backing on to rear gardens serving properties in Beckett Close, further to the west.

157 Easemore Road is a detached three bedroomed dwelling which has been vacant since 2021. The property, along with three other detached houses, 157a (to the north) and 153 and 155 (to the south) are accessed via a cul-de-sac 'arm' which itself is accessed via the main part of Easemore Road to the south. This access point is located roughly mid-way between Beckett Close to the west and Mallard Close to the east.

Proposal Description

Internal improvements are proposed to bring the property up to modern habitable standards. A flat roofed (former) garage which is attached to the property's northern side which has since been converted to living accommodation and which runs from the front of the property to the rear is proposed to be demolished. In its place, a two-storey extension is proposed which would incorporate a new ground floor bedroom, shower and downstairs WC. At first floor level, a further bedroom with ensuite facilities is proposed. The property would thus become a 5 bedroomed dwelling. It is understood that the property would be retained by the Council for a particular tenant in need of a five bedroomed family home.

Relevant Policies**Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4**

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 39: Built Environment

Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

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Others

Redditch High Quality Design SPD
NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Relevant Planning History

None

Consultations**Worcestershire County Highway Authority**

No objection

Public Consultation Response

No comments received

Assessment of Proposal

Policy 39 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No 4 (BoRLP4) states that development should contribute positively to the surrounding environment and Policy 40 of the Local Plan expects development to be of a high-quality design that reflects or complements local surroundings and materials. The two-storey extension which would be 2.7 metres in width, would be 'set back' 1.8 metres from the existing (principal) front elevation, acknowledging the scale and proportion of the existing building and remaining visually subservient to the existing dwelling in accordance with the Councils High Quality Design SPD. Eaves height and roof pitch would match the existing as would materials (clay tiled roof above brick walls).

In view of the above it is considered that the proposed development would positively contribute and complement the local surroundings, in accordance with Policies 39 and 40 of the BoRLP4.

Paragraph 130 (f) of the NPPF states that planning decisions should seek a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants. Furthermore, the Borough of Redditch High Quality Design SPD provides further guidance in relation to residential amenity, seeking to protect against adverse loss of light, outlook, privacy and overbearing impact.

Internally, the accommodation would provide future occupants with a modern living space in accordance with Nationally Described Space Standards.

Notwithstanding the lack of representations received despite notifying 5 adjoining residential occupiers, your officers are satisfied that no loss of residential amenity would result from granting permission.

Although additional living space is being provided, parking for at least 3 cars can be accommodated within the curtilage of the property in accordance with parking standards.

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It is noted that WCC Highways raise no objection to the application.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposals are acceptable in design terms and would not harm the character and appearance of the existing property nor that of the surrounding area.

No detrimental impacts to nearby residential amenities have been identified and the dwelling would provide a good standard of amenity for future occupiers. No highway safety issues have been raised by statutory consultees or by third parties. It is therefore considered that planning permission should be granted subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION:

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

Drg No 5022010- RDG - XX - XX - PL-A-001 Location and block plans
Drg No 5022010- RDG - XX - XX - PL-A-102 Proposed Plans

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

- 3) All new external walls and roofs shall be finished in materials to match in colour, form and texture those on the existing building.

Reason:- To ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance, to safeguard the visual amenities of the area and in accordance with Policies in the Local Plan.

Procedural matters

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the applicant is Redditch Borough Council. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.

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