

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.

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Chair

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

- 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