



Planning Committee

Wed 26 Jul
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 Democratic Services (Democratic@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 24th July 2023) 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 Democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk before **12 noon on Monday 24th July 2023.**
- 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 24th July 2023.**
- 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, 26th July, 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 - 10)

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, B96 6EP (Pages 11 - 26)

6. 23/00537/FUL - Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch (Pages 27 - 42)

7. 23/00683/FUL - Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch (Pages 43 - 48)

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Planning Committee

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Peter Fleming (Chair), Councillor Imran Altaf (Vice-Chair) (in attendance for Minute Numbers 16 and 17) and Councillors Juma Begum, Bill Hartnett, Chris Holz, Sid Khan, Anthony Lovell, Timothy Pearman and Sharon Harvey

In attendance

Councillor Kerrie Miles

Officers:

Helena Plant, Amar Hussain (on Microsoft Teams), David Kelly and Ryan Keyte

Democratic Services Officer:

Gavin Day

11. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Andy Fry with Councillor Sharon Harvey in attendance as substitute.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

13. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 24th May 2023 were a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

14. UPDATE REPORTS

There were no update reports.

.....
Chair

Planning

Committee

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

15. 22/01563/FUL - OLD YARR, BLAZE LANE, ASTWOOD BANK, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B96 6QA

The Chair announced that the agenda item was tabled in error and had been heard at a prior Planning Committee meeting on 24th May 2023, therefore, the item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

16. 23/00464/FUL - FECKENHAM FOOTBALL CLUB, MILL LANE, FECKENHAM, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B96 6HY

This application was being reported to the Planning Committee because the site included land owned by 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 11 to 17 of the Site Plans and Presentations Pack.

The application was for The Feckenham Football Club, Mill Lane, Feckenham, B96 6HY and sought planning permission for the erection of a storage shed.

Officers detailed that the site fell under four separate designations that restricted development, these were detailed on page 14 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

Officers further clarified the areas of designation for the site and the responses to consultations given during the course of the application.

- Designated Conservation Area – As the application was simple in construction, it was decided that it would preserve the significance of the conservation area and no objection was raised by the Conservation Officer.
- Greenbelt – The development was deemed an appropriate form of development in the greenbelt due to the surrounding land use.
- Primarily Open Space – the proposal supported the existing use of the wider site and did not result in any loss of the playing pitch and was therefore deemed appropriate.
- Scheduled Monuments – The application site was located within the Feckenham Manorial Moated site. The storage shed was in an area previously occupied by decking and situated on concrete slabs, therefore, no groundworks were necessary for the landscaping or foundations. As there would be limited physical impact on the site, no objection had been raised.

Planning

Committee

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

Members confirmed from Officers that there would be no increase in the hard standing on the site. Members commented that they considered the application to be very straight forward and 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 page 30 of the Public Reports pack.

17. 22/01562/FUL - OLD YARR, BLAZE LANE, ASTWOOD BANK, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B96 6QA

The application was reported to Planning Committee for determination because an objection had been received from Feckenham Parish Council and the recommendation was for approval. 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 15 to 20 of the Supplementary Agenda pack.

The application was for the Old Yarr, Blaze Lane, Redditch, B96 6QA and sought retrospective planning permission for a tractor store and manure clamps.

Officers detailed to Members the location of the site on page 17 of the Supplementary Agenda pack, and further detailed the floor plan of the tractor store and manure clamps.

The structure was deemed an appropriate facility in the green belt and it was considered that a permitted development fallback existed in relation to the construction of the manure clamps.

Officers drew Members attention to comments made by North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM) as detailed on pages 9 and 10 of the Supplementary Agenda Pack. Officers detailed that there were concerns raised over surface water runoff as the site fell within flood zones 2 & 3, therefore, to address the concerns raised by NWWM, conditions had been attached to the recommendation to mitigate the risks.

At the invitation of the Chair Mr Greg Collings, the applicant's Planning Agent addressed the committee in support of the application.

Officers clarified the following points after questions from Members.

Planning

Committee

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

- That there were a number of retrospective applications connected to the Old Yarr, all of which were considered separately on their own merits.
- Officers had not been aware of any pre-application advice being sought by the applicant from the Council.
- Due to the retrospective nature of the application, there could not be any pre-commencement Conditions attached to the recommendation. Therefore, the applicant would have 3 months to implement the Conditions.
- It was considered that a permitted development fallback existed in relation to the construction of the manure clamps. Therefore, it would not be possible to control nitrate run off through planning conditions.

Members then debated the application.

Members enquired whether any investigations were ongoing as they were aware of a number of rejected retrospective applications in relation to this site, Officers replied that the site remained under investigation.

Members expressed their concern regarding the applicant meeting the imposed Conditions, Officers reassured Members that they would maintain contact with the applicant, Should the conditions imposed not be complied with, the Council would consider an appropriate course of action.

Members expressed their displeasure regarding the retrospective nature of 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 12 and 13 of the Supplementary Agenda pack.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 7.27 pm

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

26th July 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.

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.

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

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:

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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 12 and 149 travel between Redditch and Worcester at a combined frequency of up to three buses per hour, 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.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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:

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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 Councils 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 Councils 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 applicants 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.

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

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, (hereafter called 'the reserved matters') shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any development 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.

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

26th July 2023

- 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

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

- 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) The Development 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) The Development 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) The Development hereby approved shall not be occupied until 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) The Development hereby approved shall not be occupied until the first 5 metres of the access into the development, measured from the edge of the carriageway, has been surfaced in a bound material.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 11) The Development hereby approved shall not be occupied until the applicant has submitted to and had approval in writing from the Local Planning Authority a residential welcome pack promoting sustainable forms of access to the development. The pack shall be provided to each resident at the point of occupation.

Reason: To reduce vehicle movements and promote sustainable access.

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

- 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.

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

- 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 with each reserved matters application. 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.

- 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.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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

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.
- 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

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

26th July 2023

Planning Application 23/00537/FUL**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.****Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 8AH,****Applicant: Redditch Borough Council
Ward: Abbey Ward****(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Sharron Williams, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 534061 Ext 3372 Email: sharron.williams@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Site Description

Redditch Town Hall is situated within the designated Town Centre zone defined in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (LP4). The proposal would be located within the designated Civic Open Space in the Town Centre as defined in LP4.

The Town Hall is constructed in red brick, with steeply pitched, brown metal mansards, with a deep fascia, hiding predominantly flat roofs. The plan form of the Town Hall element is roughly L-shaped and has heavily chamfered corners which are duplicated in smaller scale detailing, almost entirely avoiding rectilinearity throughout, contributing to an overall massive, Brutalist appearance.

The building is not listed or locally listed but was highlighted by Worcestershire County Council's Archives and Archaeology Services as a 20th century building of interest in the region and warrants consideration as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA) due to its historic significance as an administrative and political core to the town, and architectural significance as a relatively late, coherently designed Brutalist building.

The Town Hall is opposite the Palace Theatre which is a Grade-II listed building.

Proposal Description

A new community hub is proposed on the lower ground, ground, and first floor level of the east wing of the Town Hall building. The intention is to create a new community 'one stop hub' to greatly improve public access to services that are currently spread across the town. The public facilities will include public study desks, bookable meeting rooms, interview pods, local council and civic services and associated staff facilities.

Internal works are proposed in respect to the existing Council Chamber facilities and meeting rooms, that are planned to be relocated from ground floor to the second-floor level.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

Currently the Town Hall, which hosts local government functions such as Council Chamber facilities, committee meetings, as well as access to the public, is considered to be a 'sui generis' use. In addition, previous permissions listed under the planning history, have restricted any subsequent changes of use in certain parts of the building without the approval of a further application.

Against this backdrop and as the end users have not yet been finally confirmed, it is considered prudent to define the potential uses of the community hub to be those that fall within Class F1 and F2(b). Therefore, the description includes a change of use of the premises as well as extensions to the building.

Uses that fall within Classes F1 and F2(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 are as follows:-

Class F1 uses are generally learning and non-residential institutions and defined in 7 parts:

- F1(a) Provision of education
- F1(b) Display of works of art (otherwise than for sale or hire)
- F1(c) Museums
- F1(d) Public libraries or public reading rooms
- F1(e) Public halls or exhibition halls
- F1(f) Public worship or religious instruction (or in connection with such use)
- F1(g) Law courts

Class F2(b) uses are local community related and include halls or meeting places for the principal use of the local community.

Whilst internal works would be required to enable this provision, two extensions are also proposed. The extensions will be finished with feature windows and bronze anodised cladding.

A double height extension will be located at the existing entrance to the Town Hall from Walter Stranz Square and comprise of mainly glazing to provide an open airy aspect to the enlarged main reception area for the community hub. Large areas of glazing will increase the amount of natural light into area of the building which is currently a poorly lit internal space. To reflect the design of the existing building, the main corner of the extension will be chamfered and be finished with a flat roof and parapet wall. A revolving door is proposed to enable access into the building.

The other extension located at the far end of the east wing will house a new circulation staircase, enhancing connectivity between the lower ground floor and upper floors. This extension will be mainly glazed at the base to give an effect of a 'floating box'. Glazing and cladding will be used for the staircase extension. To reflect the design of the existing building, the main corner of the extension will be chamfered and be finished with a flat roof and parapet wall.

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

26th July 2023

As the proposed works will enable more efficient use of the lower ground floor (previously occupied by the nursery and Council facilities), the potential end user for this space will also have a separate access into the building from lower ground level. To improve the visual appearance of this aspect of the building, full height glazing is proposed for existing window openings.

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

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 13: Primarily Open Space

Policy 22: Road Hierarchy

Policy 30: Town Centre and Retail Hierarchy

Policy 31: Regeneration for Town Centre

Policy 39: Built Environment

Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

Others

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance

Redditch High Quality Design SPD

National Design Guide

Relevant Planning History

1979/137/OUT	Construction of Civic Offices and Commercial Offices	Approved	17.05.1979
1979/588/FUL	Construction of Civic Offices and Commercial Offices	Approved	29.01.1980
87/135	Change of use of public restaurant to creche (restrictive use)	Approved	01.05.1987
98/439	Change of use to creche/nursery/childcare facilities (restrictive use)	Approved	20.11.1998
2013/130/RC3	Public art piece to celebrate the Redditch Springs and Wireform Industry on grassed area next to town hall	Approved	26.09.2013

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

26th July 2023

21/01619/FUL	Proposed installation of air source heat pump and associated equipment including external buffer vessel	Approved	21.01.2022
22/01325/FUL	Application for full planning permission to form of a new public entrance at ground floor level and localised landscaping works at the Town Hall, Redditch.	Approved	09.12.2022
23/00683/FUL	Installation of a bike shelter with capacity for 6 bikes.	Pending	

Consultations**Conservation Officer**

The proposals will cause harm to the non-designated heritage asset of the Town Hall and minor harm to the Grade II listed Palace Theatre through impact on its setting. With respect to the Town Hall, this is due to elements of design detailing which do not harmonise with the existing building, which is itself a highly coherent, homogenous design. With respect the Theatre, this is due to the clash of design features on the Town Hall, which serves to draw greater attention to it, away from the Theatre.

On both proposed extensions there appears to be inconsistent alignment of edgings, copings and glazing transoms with the existing building's structural features. It may be possible to manage this by condition, requiring detailed cladding and glazing drawings to be submitted and approved. I also accept that final material choices can be agreed by condition.

The more significant factor, however, is the unusual glazed base to the proposed stair core extension, which is inconsistent with the existing building's solid, grounded, structurally honest architectural language, all of which are hallmarks of Brutalism (mid-late 20th century). The extension instead is ungrounded, detached and 'floating' (structural illusion rather than honesty), an attribute more common to Modernism (early-mid 20th century). It draws attention to the 'base', which is not actually the stair's base, and gives the impression of an entrance feature/zone, which it is not, all making for a confusing reading of this side of the building.

In the context of such a coherently designed building, this inconsistent feature is jarring and harmful; it draws attention to itself rather than enhancing the existing.

Notwithstanding the above, the Town Hall is not listed and so its level of significance is, at most, low-medium. Combined with a medium level of harm, the overall impact is low-medium.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

While the Palace Theatre has a high level of significance, the impact upon it is less, as its setting is already densely developed. The overall impact is therefore considered to be at the lower end of less than substantial harm.

These harms should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, which include enabling a viable, long term use for the Town Hall, although I would note that in my view the harm is not necessary to secure the use; further design revisions could reduce/remove the harm.

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeological Service

Consultation advice relates to below ground archaeology only and not the standing building. The application has been checked against Worcestershire's Historic Environment Record and is considered to have potential to impact buried undesignated heritage assets of archaeological interest.

The proposed development site is located within the historic core of Redditch. The Historic Environment Record records two monuments within the proposed development area itself, Site of Fire Station, shown on 1938, 4th Edition OS map (WSM36677) and Site of Spring Works in Red Lion Street (WSM72819). Re-developed during development of the New Town, the proposed development area was, as shown on early Ordnance Survey maps, historically bisected by Red Lion Street and George Street. Early Ordnance Survey maps record a relatively dense concentration of buildings within the extent of the proposed development area.

Medieval tenement plots are recorded just north of the proposed development site, on both the north and south side of Alcester Road (WSM19816 and WSM19815), while archaeological investigation in 1996 and 1997, on the opposite side of Alcester Street (WSM70428) north and west of the Palace Theatre, identified a probable Medieval moated site, overlying evidence of 13th-14th century agriculture. A large ditch, approx. 6m wide by 3m deep and orientated east to west, was recorded with a cobbled area, interpreted as a trackway, to the north running almost parallel. Silty, waterlogged deposits lay within the ditch base. Possible re-modelling of the ditch and platform took place in the later 15th century and deliberate backfill deposits in the ditch indicated that the site had fallen out of use by the 17th century. It is probable that any building within the moat was dismantled at this time. A large quantity of roof tiles were found, but a lack of other building materials suggests that the building was timber framed. Land between Redditch Ringway, Alcester Street, Red Lion Street and Owen Street is a suggested site of Redde Dych village (WSM01094)

The application is judged to potentially impact buried undesignated heritage assets of archaeological interest that could be altered by the development. On this basis, it is recommended that a programme of archaeological works be secured and implemented by means of a suitably worded condition. This should comprise an archaeological watching brief on any groundworks associated with development.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

In addition, it is noted that there will be an internal removal of apparent original fabric, particularly at Lower Ground, Ground and Second Floor level. The Redditch Town Hall maintains a level of both historic and architectural interest as both a key development of the New Town and as an example of post war civic architecture.

Given the scale of development and the anticipated impact on the historic environment, I would also recommend the implementation of the condition Level 1 Historic Building Record (as defined by Historic England), to photographically record areas of internal change, prior to the commencement of works. A Level 1 record is the lowest level of recording and can be undertaken by the applicant/agent with no specialist knowledge.

Cadent Gas Ltd

Application is in close proximity to medium and low pressure assets. No objection, but informative note required.

WRS - Contaminated Land

The site was previously a bus depot, and the area has a history of spring and needle manufacture. Immediately to the north (adjacent), there is a history of fuel tanks associated with the historic town hall. WRS recommend a condition to ensure potential contaminated land (PCL) issues on site are appropriately addressed.

WRS - Noise

Due to its town centre location with relatively distant residential premises it is not considered necessary for a CEMP. No plant etc appears to be being relocated. No objections.

Worcestershire Highways

No highway objections for 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. The net additional gross internal floorspace following development is 194sqm.

The site is located in a sustainable town centre location within acceptable walking distances of all amenities and facilities which includes a train station and bus station. The site has an existing staff only car park consisting of 48 car parking spaces. It is noted 40 existing car parking spaces and cycle parking will be available during the construction period since an area of 8 car parking spaces will be used as the site compound, these will be reinstated once the works on site are completed.

I have not requested an increase in the car parking provision due to the sites sustainable location, there would not be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The existing site now includes use Classes F2(b) and F1s which could lead to an intensification of the site it is therefore recommended 10 additional cycle parking spaces be provided on site. There is an option for these cycle parking spaces to be provided in the vicinity of the staircase extension since a new entrance is proposed at this location.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

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

The proposed development site is situated in the catchment of the Batchley Brook & Hewell Stream. 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. Based on the available information there is 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.

Community Safety Manager

Recommend that the applicant considered Secured by Design Gold or Silver Award. Due consideration should be given to issues of crime prevention and vulnerability. Security between public access areas and private staff only areas need to be clearly identified. Quality of surveillance both informal and formal (CCTV).

Public Consultation Response

Two public consultations have taken place in respect to this application.

First consultation

Site Notice posted 11th May 2023 expired 4th June 2023

Press Notice 19th May 2023 expired 5th June 2023

Neighbour consultation letters sent out on 10th May 2023 expired 30th June 2023

Second consultation

Site Notice posted 28th June 2023 expired 22nd July 2023

Press Notice 30th June 2023 expired 17th July 2023

Neighbour consultation letters sent out on 22nd June 2023 expired 16th July 2023

To date one letter of comment has been received raising comments in respect to difficulty using the existing disabled access arrangements from the Town Hall car park into the building.

Another representation has been received but doesn't relate to material planning issues and as such has not been included in this summary.

Assessment of Proposal

The Use

Members will be aware that there are proposals to transform Redditch Town Hall into a new community hub providing multiple services.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

Work has already started to transform the Town Hall into that community hub, with the west wing of the Town Hall currently being refurbished for the NHS to use as a clinical therapy/counselling space on the ground floor, with general office accommodation /meeting space on the first floor.

This application involves the relocation of the existing Council Chamber facilities to the second floor of the building enabling the opportunity to reuse the lower ground floor, ground floor and first floor space for community hub type uses.

As mentioned above the application includes the change of use of the building from Town Hall to Mixed Use as Town Hall, and Community Hub including Use Classes F2(b) and F1, with associated extensions and works.

As it is unclear at this stage who will be the end users of the community hub facilities, it is considered prudent to define the use of the east wing of the building to uses that fall within Classes F1 and F2(b) only as defined below:-

Class F1 uses are generally learning and non-residential institutions and defined in 7 parts:

- F1(a) Provision of education
- F1(b) Display of works of art (otherwise than for sale or hire)
- F1(c) Museums
- F1(d) Public libraries or public reading rooms
- F1(e) Public halls or exhibition halls
- F1(f) Public worship or religious instruction (or in connection with such use)
- F1(g) Law courts

Class F2(b) uses are local community related and include halls or meeting places for the principal use of the local community.

The site is within the Town Centre zone and Civic Open Space as defined in Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 (LP4). Policy 30 of LP4 requires the Town Centre to be the preferred location for many facilities including social and community facilities.

The proposed uses cited above are acceptable community activities that could easily occupy the intended facilities and would not conflict with the existing uses within the building, including the new NHS facilities proposed to be available soon. In addition, the proposed uses would be acceptable Town Centre uses complying with Policy 30 of the LP4 which encourages tourist and cultural activities, as well as social and community venues. Policy 30.6i of LP4 promotes the redevelopment and diversification of the Town Centre by providing vibrant mixed-use areas and enhanced public realm.

Extensions

To enable the implementation of the community hub facilities, extensions are proposed to provide a new entrance and an additional circulation staircase. The additional staircase

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

would provide access to the community hub facilities at lower ground level, ground level, first floor level, as well as access to the relocated Council services that will be provided from the second floor onwards.

To provide a renewed presence for the building in respect to enhanced Council facilities and new community hub, a double height glazed entrance is proposed on Walter Stranz Square which is regarded as the most convenient access to the Town Hall from the town.

The extensions have been revised following on from negotiations between officers and the applicant in respect to comments made by the Conservation Officer regarding the design of the extensions. As mentioned above the building is regarded as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset and is also opposite the Palace Theatre which is a Grade-II listed building.

Initially the extensions were rectangular and horizontal attenuation jarred with the building's prominent horizontal attenuation features. It was also evident that the rectangular form of the two extensions clashed with the building style of the Town Hall which has heavily chamfered corners. In addition, the elevations initially submitted showed a material dark grey finish with dark colour glazing bars. The architect's intention was to provide a modern contrast to enable the history of the building to be clearly read rather than trying to blend in and devalue the quality of the original with a pastiche.

Officers considered that the shape of the extension including the pronounced upper floor overhang of the staircase, the colour finish of the cladding, and positioning of the glazing bars, clashed with the design of the Town Hall and would cause harm to the setting of the Palace Theatre.

Revisions have been made to the scheme which now shows the following:-

- A reduction in the mass of the staircase extension.
- Chamfered corners have been introduced on prominent corners of the extensions.
- Horizontal attenuation (utilising glazing bars and cladding features) has been carefully applied to ensure alignment is as close as possible, with horizontal attenuation features that exist on the building.
- The colour finish of the potential cladding has been amended to a bronze anodised finish that will now harmonise and complement the existing building. Whilst this colour has been mutually agreed between the applicant and your officers, a condition would be imposed for the submission and approval of all materials including the cladding.

Although revisions have been made to the scheme, concerns have still been raised by Conservation in respect to the design. The architect acknowledges the comments and potential suggestions made to further revise the scheme, and responds as summarised below:-

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

- If the plans were to amend the building to provide further office space or link floors, and the stair core was simply a functional addition then the design may be different. However, the proposal is trying to achieve a very ambitious conversion of office space into a public, accessible and community facility and the stair will be an integral part of this. The contrast in use we feel justifies the cost and design ambition of a high-quality modern addition to the building.
- In our experience this approach is generally recognised as a suitable approach to extending existing (and even listed) buildings. The modern contrast enables the history of the building to be clearly read. This approach has also been taken at the theatre and to a lesser extent by the NHS with their entrance proposal.
- The glazing at the ground floor level in our opinion is wholly appropriate and helps denote the ground floor (which due to the topography is at first floor level). This is already denoted by roof features and so we believe our addition provides another interesting detail to further emphasise this and provide a clear break of old and new. The internal space within the Town Hall building will be open to views and light, and when viewed externally the extension will be an illuminated feature particularly in the darker evenings.
- The design of the extensions represents a high-quality approach which is respectful of the existing building and its surroundings.

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Paragraph 202 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Conservation harm identified in this case is *low-medium impact* on the Town Hall as a non-designated heritage asset, whilst harm to the Palace Theatre (Grade-II listed building), would be considered as at the *lower end of less than substantial harm*. As mentioned above under Paragraph 202 of the NPPF, the less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits. In this situation, the public benefits would be making more efficient use of the Town Hall by introducing additional uses to provide a community hub facility optimising the viable use of the building.

In coming to a 'balanced judgement' as required by para 203, officers consider the revised plans enable the proposals to complement the existing building whilst still projecting a modern interpretation. The proposals also enable the optimum viable use of the Town Hall building whilst ensuring that harm to buildings of significance and their

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

setting such as the Palace Theatre is minimised in accordance with paragraphs 202 of the NPPF. The revised proposals are considered to be acceptable complying with Policies 39 and 40 of the LP4.

The new entrance extension will be located at the South-East corner of Walter Stranz Square. The site is within the Civic Open Space as defined in LP4. Policy 13 of LP4 requires open space areas to be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced to improve quality, value, multifunctionality and accessibility. In order to maintain the levels of open space provision in the Borough, proposals which would result in the total or partial loss of Primarily Open Space will not normally be granted planning permission unless it can be demonstrated that the need for development outweighs the value of the land as an open area.

A criteria is set out in the Policy and should be applied when assessing applications for development in open space areas:-

- i. the environmental and amenity value of the area;
- ii. the recreational, conservation, wildlife, historical, visual and community amenity value of the site;
- iii. the merits of retaining the land in its existing open use, and, the contribution or potential contribution the site makes to the Green Infrastructure Network, character and appearance of the area;
- iv. the merits of protecting the site for alternative open space uses;
- v. the location, size and environmental quality of the site;
- vi. the relationship of the site to other open space areas in the locality and similar uses within the wider area;
- vii. whether the site provides a link between other open areas or as a buffer between incompatible uses;
- viii. that it can be demonstrated that there is a surplus of open space and that alternative provision of equivalent or greater community benefit will be provided in the area at an appropriate, accessible locality; and
- ix. the merits of the proposed development to the local area or the Borough generally.

Whilst the site is located within the Civic Open Space as annotated in LP4, due to the location of the new extended entrance (adjoining the Town Hall building), it is considered unlikely that the proposal would conflict with the above criteria and would not hinder the use of the Square for open space purposes. 13.8 supports this view as it sets out that where a building is already located on land that is designated as Primarily Open Space, proposed development within its curtilage or immediate surroundings may be acceptable subject to the proposal complying with other relevant planning policies and material considerations. The design of the proposed entrance is acceptable complementing the streetscene and would be in accordance with Policies 39 and 40 of the Local Plan No. 4.

Consultation responses

An extensive public consultation has taken place twice for this application due to the change in the description of the application. Only 1 comment has been received which

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

does not include any comments in respect to the proposals but refers to existing mobility access arrangements between the Council car park and Town Hall entrance. Property Service Officers will be looking into this as a separate matter to the application proposal.

Consultee comments include the request for conditions to cover potential contamination issues should they arise, and County Archaeology Services request standard conditions including a condition to photographically record the interior of the building prior to works taking place. Worcestershire Highways note that the proposed uses could lead to an intensification of the site and have requested a condition for additional cycle parking facilities.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed uses would be compatible with existing uses within the Town Hall, the proposed uses would be acceptable uses in this Town Centre location complying with the Council's policies.

The proposals complement the existing building whilst still projecting a modern interpretation and enable the optimum viable use of the Town Hall building whilst ensuring that harm to buildings of significance and their setting such as the Palace Theatre is minimised in accordance with paragraphs 202 and 203 of the NPPF and policies in LP4. For these reasons the development complies with the provisions of the development plan and would be acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

- a) Planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions 1-10 and**
- b) 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.**

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 plans and drawings to be defined.

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

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

- 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) Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a scheme for hard and soft landscaping shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the following:

Details of all proposed planting, including numbers and species of plant, and details of size and planting method of any trees.

All hard landscaping shall be completed in accordance with the approved scheme prior to first occupation of the development. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

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

- 5) 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 immediately to the Local Planning Authority. The applicant is advised to immediately seek the advice of an independent geo-environmental consultant experienced in contaminated land risk assessment, including intrusive investigations and remediation.

No further works should be undertaken in the areas of suspected contamination, other than that work required to be carried out as part of an approved remediation scheme, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority, until requirements 1 to 4 below have been complied with:

1. Detailed site investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons in accordance with the Environment Agency's 'Land Contamination: Risk Management' guidance and a written report of the findings

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

produced. The risk assessment must be designed to assess the nature and extent of suspected contamination and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any further development taking place.

2. 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.
3. The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the re-commencement of any site works in the areas of suspected contamination, other than that work required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
4. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification 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 on site.

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

- 6) No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation(s), 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.

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

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

- 7) 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(s) of Investigation approved under condition (6) 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.

- 8) Level 1 Record: The development shall not be commenced until a Level 1 Historic Building Recording (as defined by Historic England) has been completed in accordance with the guidelines laid out in the Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire and submitted to the County Historic Environment Record.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 9) The premises shall be used for a mixed use as a Town Hall, and Community Hub including uses that fall within Classes F1 and F2(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) and any subsequent amendments thereto.

Reason:- To define the permission.

- 10) The Development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until 10 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.

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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**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

26th July 2023

Planning Application 23/00683/FUL**Installation of a bike shelter with capacity for 6 bikes.****Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 8AH,****Applicant: Mr Mike Taylor
Ward: Abbey Ward****(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Sharron Williams, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 534061 Ext 3372 Email: sharron.williams@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Site Description

Redditch Town Hall is situated within the designated Town Centre zone defined in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (LP4). The proposal would be located within the designated Civic Open Space in the Town Centre as defined in LP4.

Proposal Description

A shelter for 6 bicycles is proposed to be erected to the west of Walter Stranz Square close to the entrance of Fountain Passage and adjacent to the Town Hall building. The overall dimensions of the shelter will be approximately 2.6 x 2.8m with an overall height of 2.5m. The shelter will have a transparent curved roof and the supports for the shelter will be of a similar colour finish to match the existing windows of the Town Hall.

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

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 13: Primarily Open Space

Policy 30: Town Centre and Retail Hierarchy

Policy 31: Regeneration for Town Centre

Policy 39: Built Environment

Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

Others

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance

Redditch High Quality Design SPD

National Design Guide

Relevant Planning History

1979/137/OUT	Construction Of Civic Offices & Commercial Offices	Approved	17.05.1979
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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

26th July 2023

1979/588/FUL	Construction Of Civic Offices & Commercial Offices	Approved	29.01.1980
2013/130/RC3	Public art piece to celebrate the Redditch Springs and Wireform Industry on grassed area next to town hall	Approved	26.09.2013
22/01325/FUL	Application for full planning permission to form of a new public entrance at ground floor level and localised landscaping works at the Town Hall, Redditch.	Approved	09.12.2022
23/00537/FUL	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.	Pending	

Consultations**Highways Redditch**

No objection.

Public Consultation Response

Site Notice posted 30 June 2023 expired 24 July 2023

Neighbour consultation letters sent out on 30 June 2023 expired 24 July 2023

To date no comments have been received.

Assessment of Proposal

Members will be aware that planning permission has been granted for an entrance for the new NHS facilities at the Town Hall under planning permission 22/01325/FUL.

Permission was granted subject to a number of conditions including condition 4) below:-

- 4) Prior to their first installation, details of cycle parking provision shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented on site prior to the first occupation of the development.

Members will be aware that work for the entrance is currently taking place on site. The applicant is willing to provide cycle parking facilities (as required under condition 4). However, having reconsidered the minor revisions to the NHS entrance (NMA application considered at Planning Committee on 12 July 2023), and taking into consideration the proposed tree planting, benches and existing art sculpture, the intended location for the cycle facilities is likely to result in a cluttered streetscene.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th July 2023

To resolve this problem and to ensure the cycle parking facilities be provided, the applicant has requested that the position of the cycle shelter be located to a more accessible location which is just a short distance from its intended position.

It is proposed that the cycle shelter be located just outside the entrance to Fountains Passage, to the west of Walter Stranz Square. The site is within the Civic Open Space as defined in Local Plan No. 4 (LP4).

Policy 13 of LP4 requires open space areas to be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced to improve quality, value, multifunctionality and accessibility. In order to maintain the levels of open space provision in the Borough, proposals which would result in the total or partial loss of Primarily Open Space will not normally be granted planning permission unless it can be demonstrated that the need for development outweighs the value of the land as an open area.

A criteria is set out in the Policy and should be applied when assessing applications for development in open space areas:-

- i. the environmental and amenity value of the area;
- ii. the recreational, conservation, wildlife, historical, visual and community amenity value of the site;
- iii. the merits of retaining the land in its existing open use, and, the contribution or potential contribution the site makes to the Green Infrastructure Network, character and appearance of the area;
- iv. the merits of protecting the site for alternative open space uses;
- v. the location, size and environmental quality of the site;
- vi. the relationship of the site to other open space areas in the locality and similar uses within the wider area;
- vii. whether the site provides a link between other open areas or as a buffer between incompatible uses;
- viii. that it can be demonstrated that there is a surplus of open space and that alternative provision of equivalent or greater community benefit will be provided in the area at an appropriate, accessible locality; and
- ix. the merits of the proposed development to the local area or the Borough generally.

Whilst the site is located within the Civic Open Space as annotated in the LP4, due to the location of the cycle shelter (adjoining the Town Hall building), it is considered unlikely that the proposal would conflict with the above criteria set out in Policy 13. In addition, the proposal would not hinder the use of the Square for open space purposes. Policy 13.8 of LP4 supports this view as it sets out that where a building is already located on land that is designated as Primarily Open Space, proposed development within its curtilage or immediate surroundings may be acceptable subject to the proposal complying with other relevant planning policies and material considerations.

It is considered that the revised positioning of the cycle shelter is an improvement to that originally proposed as it will be positioned in a highly accessible location, ideal for those

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

visiting the town and needing somewhere to secure their bicycle before using the facilities within the Kingfisher Shopping Centre. The proposed location of the cycle shelter is acceptable and would be in accordance with Policies 39 and 40 of the LP4.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development complies with the provisions of the development plan and would be acceptable.

As the cycle parking facilities are required in association with the NHS entrance application Ref: 22/01325/FUL, a Unilateral Undertaking will be required to sufficiently ensure that the facilities be provided in the revised location as opposed to the location defined under planning application 22/01325/FUL.

Given that the cycle parking provision will need to be provided prior to the first occupation of the development (new entrance), it is considered reasonable that this permission be valid for 1 year only rather than 3 years as normally imposed.

RECOMMENDATION:

That having 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:-

- a) **The satisfactory completion of a Unilateral Undertaking ensuring that:**
- 1. cycle facilities be 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.**

And

- b) **Conditions as summarised below:**

Conditions:

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of one year 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 plans and drawings to be defined.

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

Procedural matters

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**26th July 2023

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the application requires a Unilateral Undertaking and Redditch Borough Council are the landowners. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.

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