

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Roger Bennett (Chair), Councillor Simon Farmer (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Brandon Clayton, Andrew Fry and Ian Woodall

Officers:

Helena Plant and Amar Hussain

Democratic Services Officers:

Gavin Day

14. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bill Hartnett, William Boyd and Wanda King.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 28th May 2026 were presented to Members and it was:

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 18th June 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

17. UPDATE REPORTS

The Chair announced that there was an update report in relation to Agenda Items 5 (minute No18), 6 (minute No19) and 8 (minute No21). The Update Reports were published prior to the commencement of the meeting and a copy of which was before Members.

Members indicated that they had sufficient time to read the reports and were happy to proceed with the meeting.

Chair

18. 25/01276/FUL - 15 NEIGHBROOK CLOSE, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B97 5YA

The application was reported to the Planning Committee because the number of objections received exceeded that which can be considered by Officers, as such the application fell outside of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

Officers presented the report and in doing so, drew Members' attention to the presentation slides on pages 5 to 12 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

The application was for 15 Neighbrook Close, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 5YA and sought the Change of Use from a Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a Children's Care Home (Use Class C2).

The proposed Children's Care Home would be for Children between 8 and 17 years of age who would be identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties or other specific needs. It was further detailed that no more than 3 children would be resident at any one time which would be secured under Condition 3.

There would also be 24-hour caregivers working on site who would be working in a shift pattern. It was detailed that there would be 3 caregivers on site for 1-2-1 care and a manager during the day.

There would be a further 2 parking spaces provided by the development, no other alterations would be made to the structure or external appearance of the property. It was further clarified that the main consideration for Members was the Change of Use from C3 to C2.

No objections had been received from consultees, which included Worcestershire County Council, Highways (County Highways).

At the invitation of the Chair the following addressed the committee under the public speaking section of the meeting

- Matt Bluck, Local Resident in opposition (4 minutes)
- John Williams, Local Resident in opposition (4 minutes)
- Statement against the application read out on behalf of Adam Joseph, Local resident, by Officers (2 minutes)
- Bradley Hartles, Applicant's Agent and Issha Barr, Children's Care Home Manager in support (10 minutes shared)

The following was then clarified by Officers after questions from Members.

- That 24 letters were sent to nearby properties as part of the consultation process which was above the statutory requirement of only informing adjacent properties.
- That 4 parking spaces would be provided. It was recognised that there would be handover periods where there may be more carers on site. However, this was deemed not to be a suitable reason to refuse the application.
- There was expected to be no impact on local wildlife which included bats. Compliance with the wildlife and countryside act would fall to the developer and an informative could be added to this effect. No protected species report was required as part of the application
- The 24-hour caregivers were expected to be waking night shifts as detailed on page 16 of the main agenda pack

Members then debated the application which officers had recommended for approval.

Although Members sympathised with the residents and the impact that they would experience as part of the development, they saw no material planning reason to refuse the application. Members expressed the opinion that although they may not entirely agree with the application, without a valid objection from suitable Consultees such as the County Highways, nor a material planning reason to refuse, they should support the application. Therefore, on being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that

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

considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to the Conditions as outlined on page 21 of the Public Reports pack and subject to an informative highlighting applicant's responsibilities under the Wildlife and Countryside Act

19. 26/00113/FUL- KINGFISHER SCHOOL, CLIFTON CLOSE, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B98 0HF

The application was reported to the Planning Committee because the site was owned by Worcestershire County 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 13 to 18 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

The application was for Kingfisher School, Clifton Close, Redditch, Worcestershire and sought a new single storey building and access off Clifton Close.

Officers detailed that the building was to serve as a vocational training centre for post-16 students with special educational needs. No new staff or pupils would be generated via the development and it would enhance the kingfisher school.

The proposed site plans and building layout were detailed as shown in the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

Following a response from the Highways authority which had no objection subject to Suitable Conditions and Informatives, supplementary Conditions/Informatives were included in the Update Reports pack.

Members were in support of the application and the enhanced facilities it would provide to the educational establishment.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED that

having had regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to

- **Conditions 1 to 7 and Informatives 1 to 3 as outlined on pages 27 to 32 of the Public Reports pack.**
- **Conditions 8 to 13 and Informatives 4 to 5 as outlined on pages 6 and 7 of the Update Reports pack**

20. 26/00373/PIP - WALNUT TREE FARM, DARK LANE, ASTWOOD BANK, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE

The application was reported to the Planning Committee because the number of objections received exceeded that which can be considered by Officers, as such the application fell outside of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

Officers presented the report and in doing so, drew Members' attention to the presentation slides on pages 19 to 22 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack. Officers also corrected the report at the bottom of page 33 and 38, to confirm the proposal was for six dwellings not one.

The application was for Walnut Tree Farm, Dark Lane, Astwood Bank, Redditch, Worcestershire and sought Planning Permission in

Principle (PIP) for up to 6 dwellings, garages and the associated access drive.

Officers detailed that the application before Member was a PIP application and therefore there was only 3 matters for consideration:

1. Location
2. Land use and;
3. Amount of development

All other matters would be considered via a further Technical Details application. Both a PIP and technical Details application would be required before Planning permission was granted.

No objection was received from consultees at the PIP stage of the application, however, Worcestershire County Council Highways (County Highways) and North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM) noted that there were concerns which would need to be addressed at the appropriate stage of the application.

The site was identified as being in the Green belt as it was outside the designated residential area of Astwood Bank. Development within the Green Belt was considered inappropriate unless very special circumstances existed, Paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identified exemptions under which development within the green belt could be permitted. Officers identified two Parts which the site satisfied and therefore, an exemption would exist

- Part e (limited infilling in villages)
- Part g (redevelopment of previously developed land)

Officers further detailed that the site would also fall under the definition of grey belt land as detailed under Paragraph 155 of the NPPF. Therefore, the “location” and “Land use” considerations under a PIP application were satisfied.

Officers considered that up to 6 dwellings was acceptable when taking into consideration the existing number of dwellings and the indicative plans detailed on page 22 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack. Therefore, the “amount of development” was also deemed as acceptable.

Officers Confirmed that all other aspects of the application would be heard at the future technical details stage and that as the considerations of the location, Land use and amount of development were satisfied it was Officers recommendation to approve the PIP application.

At the invitation of the Chair the following addressed the committee under the public speaking section of the meeting

- Statement against the application read out on behalf of James Busby, Local resident, by Officers (3 minutes)
- Mark Banwell, Local Resident in opposition (3 minutes)
- Joanna Outhwaite, Local Resident in opposition (3 minutes)
- Andrew Brough, on behalf of the applicant in support (9 minutes)

The following was then clarified by Officers after questions from Members.

- That the potential location of the dwellings were indicative only and full plans would be submitted at the Technical Details stage.
- The site was 0.44 Hectares in size.
- Due to the forthcoming National Scheme of Delegation, the subsequent application for the technical details consent might not come before Committee, even with a similar number of objections. However, Officers were not able to clarify exactly as not all details for the new scheme had been announced at the time of the meeting.
- All other aspects including Drainage, Highways Concerns, access and ecology matters would be considered under the Technical Details application.

Members expressed some concern regarding accessing the development off Dark Lane, as the access was identified as a single track dirt road with restricted width for a lot of its length and was subject to the national speed limit. Members did not believe that the access to the site would be suitable which questioned the suitability of the location.

Members expressed further concern regarding if the location was suitable with the site being within the green belt and disagreed with Officers assessment with the site having exceptions under sections e and g of para 154 of the NPPF, due to the location of the site and that it would extend beyond the existing development area and into the Green Belt.

Officers clarified to Members that their assessment was that the site also fell under the definition of grey belt under Para 155 of the NPPF being previously developed land and sought clarification on Members' stance. Members expressed the opinion that they did not agree with officers' assessment in that the encroachment of the site was beyond that of the previous permission existing on the site and was within the green belt.

Therefore, it was Members opinion that very special circumstances did not exist to permit development within the Green Belt nor, via the Grey Belt policy.

Councillor Brandon Clayton Proposed an Alternative Recommendation that Permission in Principle application be refused as the site did not meet the definition of Grey Belt under para 155 of the NPPF. The Alternative Recommendation was seconded by Councillor Simon Farmer.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED that

having had regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning Permission in Principle be REFUSED for reasons as detailed in the preamble above.

21. 26/00507/FUL - 219 WALKWOOD ROAD, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B97 5NX

The application was reported to the Planning Committee because the number of objections received exceeded that which can be considered by Officers, as such the application fell outside of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

Officers presented the report and in doing so, drew Members' attention to the presentation slides on pages 23 to 33 of the Site Plans and Presentations pack.

The application was for 219 Walkwood Road, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 5NX and sought the Change of Use from a Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a Children's Care Home (Use Class C2) with the conversion of existing garage; alterations.

The proposed Children's Care Home would be for Children between 5 and 17 years of age who would be identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties and would be assessed to be low or medium risk. It was further detailed that no more than 3 children would be resident at any one time which would be secured under Condition 3.

24-hour care would be delivered on site with 3 caregivers working in a shift pattern providing 1-2-1 care. Additionally, there would be a manager on site 09:00 – 17:00 hours Monday to Friday.

Alterations were proposed to the dwelling via the conversion of the garage space to an office location which would alter the frontage of the property during the change of the garage door to windows. Internal alterations were detailed on pages 29 to 30 of the Public Reports pack.

No objections had been received from consultees, which included Worcestershire County Council, Highways (County Highways).

At the invitation of the Chair the following addressed the committee under the public speaking section of the meeting.

- Mr. Eric Lee, Local Resident in opposition (3 minutes)
- Ellen Dunham Local Resident in opposition (3 minutes)
- Tim Hodgkinson, Local resident by Officers in opposition (3 minutes)
- George Weightman, on behalf of the applicant in support (9 minutes)

Members then debated the application which officers had recommended for approval.

Members noted that the flat roof detailed in the report was a potential means of escape and was highlighted as a concern, however, they appreciated that it was an existing feature and was an operational risk of the site and would need to be monitored by the management staff.

Members noted that the concerns raised by objectors were comprehensively addressed within the report on pages 52 to 54 of the Public Reports pack.

Although Members sympathised with the residents and the impact that they would experience as part of the development, they saw no material planning reason to refuse the application. Therefore, without a Material Planning reason, nor a valid objection from suitable Consultees such as the County Highways, they did not see cause to refuse the application. On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED that

having had regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions as outlined on pages 53 to 54 of the Public Reports pack.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.35 pm