

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

3rd July 2013

PLANNING APPLICATION 2013/130/RC3

**PUBLIC ART PIECE TO CELEBRATE THE REDDITCH SPRINGS AND
WIREFORM INDUSTRY**

**GRASSED AREA NEXT TO TOWN HALL, WALTER STRANZ SQUARE,
REDDITCH**

**APPLICANT: LEISURE AND CULTURE, REDDITCH BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

EXPIRY DATE: 18TH JULY 2013

WARD: ABBEY

(See additional papers for Site Plan)

The author of this report is Sharron Williams, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on extension 3206 (e-mail: sharron.williams@ bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) for more information.

Site Description

The site is a linear area of grassed land, outside the Town Hall, to the west of Walter Stranz Square. Young tree planting exists close to where the sculpture would be located. Benches and streetlighting are also close to the application site. The rest of the Square beyond the grassed area is predominantly hardsurfacing, although another linear area of grass exists opposite the application site and includes the traditional lamp post from Auxerre.

Proposal Description

The proposal comprises of a sculpture that would be an open box turned upside down with springs cascading out of the box. Overall the sculpture would be approximately 2.5 x 2.5 metres by 2.5 metres in height. It would be built in mild steel but have a galvanised finish. The box would be distressed to imitate cardboard, and finer details such as crinkling on the lid of the box would be provided to create an authentic corrugated section. The springs would be made from mild steel and would be fully joined whilst still providing a random appearance. This will help form a structural support for the sculpture without the need for structural girders. The sculpture will be secured to the ground via a concrete base.

Relevant Key Policies

All planning applications must be considered in terms of the planning policy framework and all other relevant material considerations (as set out in the legislative framework). The planning policies noted below can be found on the following websites:

PLANNING COMMITTEE

3rd July 2013

www.communities.gov.uk
www.redditchbc.gov.uk

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Para. 58 of the NPPF encourages development to establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create an attractive place to live, work and visit. It also encourages development to respond to local character, history and reflect the identity of local surroundings.

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

R.1 Primarily Open Space
E(TCR).1 Vitality and Viability of the Town Centre
B(BE).13 Qualities of Good Design
B(BE).20 Public Art

Supplementary Planning Guidance / Supplementary Planning Documents

Redditch Borough Council Supplementary Planning Document - Designing for Community Safety

Other relevant corporate plans and strategies

Town Centre Strategy (TCS)

Relevant Site Planning History

None

Public Consultation Responses

No comments at the time of drafting the report.

Consultee Responses

Town Centre Co-ordinator

No comments at the time of drafting the report.

Community Safety

No comments at the time of drafting the report.

Severn Trent Water

No objection to the proposal.

Assessment of Proposal

The documentation that has been submitted with the application clarifies that this was an idea initiated by a local Councillor to celebrate the heritage of the springs and wireform industry in Redditch as it was felt at the time that public awareness of the significance of the industry was very low. A steering group was set up that included local spring businesses, NEW college representatives as well as RBC staff, and the then Portfolio Holder for Leisure

PLANNING COMMITTEE

3rd July 2013

and Culture. 35 students from the college entered a competition to create artistic concepts to celebrate the industry. Two concepts were shortlisted, and following press releases, and a public consultation that took place in Redditch Library, the public voted for the proposed sculpture that forms part of this application.

Redditch has a long history of mass producing springs (100 years approx.). The spring industry was an off shoot of the needle industry which was a major consumer of wire. Whilst the needle industry has diminished in Redditch, spring manufacturing remains in this area with 80 local businesses dedicated to the manufacture of springs and wireform in one form or another. It is important to note that the first spring ever made was in premises in Peakman Street, hence the intention of providing the sculpture close to this street and within the Town Centre.

The key issues for consideration in this case are:-

Principle

The site is within an area that is designated as Primarily Open Space in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 and comprises of a small area of grass that is surrounded by a hard landscaped pedestrianised area. Policy R.1 of the Local Plan would apply which discourages the total or partial loss of Primarily Open Space. However, it also states that proposals for development that contributes to the nature and purpose of the open space may be deemed acceptable. It is considered that the provision of public art in this open space area would visually enhance this civic location and as such would comply with this policy.

B(BE).20 of Local Plan No. 3 would also apply and seeks the provision of public art that contributes to the improvement of public outdoor space, legibility and the creation of landmarks. Any proposals should be sited and designed to improve the quality of public outdoor space, and enhance local distinctiveness. The proposed sculpture would comply with this policy as it would enhance the quality and visual appearance of this open space location. Also, the location for the sculpture is close to where the first spring was made in Redditch, therefore, there would be historical links to providing the sculpture outside the Town Hall and as such would enhance local distinctiveness and raise awareness of local history in this location.

Design and layout

The design has been shortlisted by the steering group and the final option was voted for by members of the public as a result of a public consultation that took place in Redditch Library. The sculpture would be a sufficient size to provide a presence without being overbearing on the rest of the open space area. In addition the proposal would not detract from other features that exist within this area such as the traditional lamp post from Auxerre, and other hard / soft landscaping features nearby. The design of the sculpture is considered

PLANNING COMMITTEE

3rd July 2013

to be acceptable in this location and would generally enhance the streetscene.

Trees

Whilst there are young trees close to the application site, the sculpture would not have a detrimental impact on the health and safety of these trees.

Other issues

Comments are still awaited from the Town Centre Co-ordinator and Community Safety. Any further comments from consultees or other parties will be provided in the Update Report.

Conclusion

The proposal would be in keeping with the area and would comply with policies in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 and guidance set out in the NPPF.

Recommendation

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations it is recommended that permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

- 1 Development to commence within 3 years.

Informatives

- 1 Reason for approval.
- 2 Positive and proactive informative

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.