

**Redditch Borough Council Planning Policy comments on the Foxlydiat Hotel,  
Birchfield Road, Redditch  
Planning Application (19/00615/OUT)**

## **1. Background**

1.1 Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) has received a Planning Application for the Foxlydiat Hotel site (Application number 19/00615/OUT). The Outline Application is to establish the principle for the demolition of the existing building on site and the erection of up to 46 houses and 24 apartments, a children's play area, landscaping and circulation space. The site is on the edge of Redditch and lies in the administrative area of Bromsgrove.

1.2 This response has been prepared as Redditch Borough Council (RBC) is a consultee to the Planning Application received by BDC. The purpose of these comments is not to consider the merits of the application or provide a determination of that application. It is to provide BDC with a view from RBC on the Application being determined by them.

## **2. The Site**

2.1 Whilst the application site is located within Bromsgrove District, the development is intended to serve the development needs of Redditch (which is discussed further below).

2.2 The site is located to the west of Redditch Town, adjacent to the Webheath area. It is bounded by residential development at Webheath to the east, Birchfield Road to the North and Bromsgrove Green Belt to the west and south. It is located in the Tardebigge Ward of Bromsgrove and within the Bentley Paucefoot Parish Council area.

2.3 The Site lies within an allocated housing site in the Bromsgrove District Plan 2011- 2030 (Adopted 2017).

## **3. Planning Policy**

3.1 The Foxlydiat site is designated within the Bromsgrove Local Plan (2011 – 2030) as a housing allocation to meet some of the development needs of Redditch Borough. The Bromsgrove District Plan (BDP) was adopted in January 2017; at this point the Foxlydiat site was removed from the Green Belt and became an allocation for housing development. Policy RCBD1 'Redditch Cross Boundary Development' allocates the whole Foxlydiat site (of which this application site is part of) for up to 2,800 dwellings, a Local Centre, a First School and associated community infrastructure.

3.2 Policy RCBD1 is included in the BDP and as an appendix to the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 2011- 2030 (BORLP4) and states that Redditch needs to deliver 6,400 up to 2030. Around 3,000 dwellings are to be accommodated within Redditch Borough and therefore approximately 3,400 dwellings are to be accommodated at the Foxlydiat site and as an extension to the existing Brockhill site. Both sites are crucial to enable the delivery of the housing strategy for Redditch over the plan period.

3.3 It is essential that the proposed development is in accordance with the all of the Policies contained within the BDP, in particular Policy RCBD1 which details the principles that the site must achieve to be sustainable. This policy was jointly prepared with RBC.

3.4 It is worth noting at this point that it has been determined that BORLP4 and the BDP are fully in accordance with the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).

#### **4. Foxlydiat Hotel Planning Application**

4.1 As stated above it is not the intention of RBC to consider the merits of the application with a view to its determination, however as the site is adjacent to the administrative boundary of Redditch, and falls within an area that is designated to meet the housing needs of Redditch; there are some aspects of the application RBC considers the need to comment upon.

4.2 RBC considers the building a non-designated heritage asset, this importance has also been acknowledged by BDC (see comments submitted by Bromsgrove and Redditch Conservation Officer in relation to this application) that the building is of local importance, and thus would be considered as a candidate for the Bromsgrove Local Heritage List and is being treated as a non-designated heritage asset. The two heritage assets include the pub and hotel building, and the large walled garden which was part of Foxlydiat House. The building as a community and a heritage asset will be considered in turn below.

4.3 To deal with the community asset consideration first. RBC feels that the applicant has gone some way to justify the loss of the Public House due to viability reasons. It is considered that the future of a community asset such as this is likely to change with the allocation of a significant housing site in close proximity. RBC recognise that the Public House is a community facility and as such would be considered against Policy BDP12 'Sustainable Communities' of the Bromsgrove District Plan (Adopted January 2017). In particular point c) i) should be carefully considered, as the future prospects of the Public House are likely to be considered favourable in light of the allocation and therefore the viability issues may not be a concern long term.

4.4 RBC agree the need for housing and considers that if BDC accept the loss of the community asset this should not give automatic rise to the heritage asset being lost. There are opportunities to explore the potential of the conversion of the Foxlydiat Pub and Hotel to provide a portion of the housing need for the larger Foxlydiat site. This building is considered by RBC to be an example of a landmark, distinctive historical asset which provides an opportunity for high quality conversion; making the building a desirable place to live, rather than being considered a constraint in need of demolition. Its designation provides an opportunity to design a distinctive, unique place to live, which should be maximised. Opportunities could be explored to utilise the grounds of the Hotel for housing development, while still respecting the character of the Hotel. It is considered that the walled garden could also be utilised as a feature of the design and layout of the development. It does not appear that the applicants have done anything to suggest or dismiss using the historic nature of the building as an advantage in any way.

4.5 The Planning Application site is located on the northern edge of the Foxlydiat site and therefore is the interface between the wider Foxlydiat development site and the Redditch urban area. It is

considered that the layout of the scheme could do more to link the two areas. The site should not be considered in isolation from the wider area both in design or connectivity terms.

## **5. Conclusion**

5.1 The principle of housing on this site is in accordance with both the BDP and BORLP4. For clarity this site is not within the Green Belt and forms part of the Foxlydiate development site in accordance with Policy RCBD1 'Redditch Cross Boundary Development'. However, the application would result in the loss of a non-designated heritage asset and a community facility. This loss does not appear to have any reasoned justification, as the converted building could provide an element of the much needed housing.

5.2 It is fundamental that the Application is in accordance with all of the policies set out within the BDP, RBC is supportive of all of the policies contained within the BDP and would wish to see them implemented to a high standard. In conclusion, Redditch Borough Council does not support the principle of the demolition portion of the planning application for the above mentioned development.