



# Planning Committee

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Wednesday, 9 September 2020

## MINUTES

**Present:**

Councillor Gemma Monaco (Chair), Councillor Salman Akbar (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Tom Baker-Price, Roger Bennett, Michael Chalk, Julian Grubb, Bill Hartnett, Mark Shurmer and Yvonne Smith

**Also Present:**

**Officers:**

Helena Plant, Paul Lester, Amar Hussain, David Edmonds, Sharron Williams and Pauline Ross

**Democratic Services Officer:**

Sarah Sellers

**17. CHAIRS WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed the Committee members and officers to the virtual Planning Committee meeting being held via Skype. The Chair explained that the meeting was being live streamed on the Council's YouTube channel to enable members of the public to observe the committee.

**18. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jennifer Wheeler and Andrew Fry. Councillor Mark Shurmer attend as substitute for Councillor Wheeler and Councillor Yvonne Smith attended as substitute for Councillor Fry.

**19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

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Chair

**20. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19TH AUGUST 2020**

RESOLVED that

The Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2020 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**21. UPDATE REPORTS**

It was noted that there was no update report.

**22. APPLICATION 20/00044/FUL - CHURCH HILL MEDICAL CENTRE TANHOUSE LANE REDDITCH B98 9AA - MR AND MRS IAN YOUNG**

Change of use of former medical centre, including first and second floor extensions to 19 no residential apartments

Officers outlined the application and the intended conversion of the existing building into an apartment block of 19 units. This would be achieved by re-modelling the existing structure and extending the first floor area and adding a second floor. The exterior of the building would be finished with areas of cladding and render to give a more modern appearance.

It was noted that the site was located within the Church Hill District Centre and Members were referred to policy 30 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan. Officers had assessed the scheme and found it to be compliant under policy 30. The site was in a sustainable location close to public transport links and local amenities.

With regard to affordable housing, the applicant had submitted a Viability Statement suggesting that such an obligation would make the scheme unviable. The applicant's statement had been assessed by the Council's Viability Advisor who had agreed with the argument put forward, and for that reason no contribution towards affordable housing was being sought.

The application was recommended for approval.

In responding to questions from Members officers confirmed that all 19 units would be for market sale and that there might be a second phase on the area of land marked in blue on the plan on page 5 of the Site Plans and Presentations Pack. County Highways had not sought a section 106 contribution for buses and the improvements they intended to apply the transport contribution to were set out at paragraph 5 on page 12 of the agenda.

In debating the application concerns were expressed that an opportunity had been lost to secure affordable housing through the scheme and that this should be re-visited before the application was determined.

Officers responded by re-iterating the comments about the Viability Statement and explaining that due to the government policy on vacant building credit the scheme would only have yielded 1.7 affordable units had this been pursued. The Council's Viability Advisor had endorsed the approach for this site and there needed to be a balance between securing affordable housing and allowing dis-used sites to be brought forward to provide housing.

Views were expressed in support of the scheme noting the suitability of the location of the site, the opportunity to re-use an empty and unattractive building, the positive impact improving the site would have on the area and the fact that 19 dwellings would be provided for the District.

A motion to defer the application for officers to have further discussions with the applicant about the provision of affordable housing was defeated.

### **RESOLVED 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 suitable legal mechanism ensuring that:**
  - 1. Contributions are paid to the Borough Council in respect to off-site open space and equipped play and sport provision in accordance with the Council's adopted SPD.**
  - 2. Contributions are paid to the Borough Council towards the provision of domestic and recycling bins for the new development in accordance with the County's Waste Strategy.**
  - 3. Contributions are paid towards Town Centre enhancement in accordance with the Town Centre Strategy.**
  - 4. Contribution to be paid to the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (WAHT) to be used to provide services needed by the occupants of the new homes and the community at large. Agreement of a final sum to be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services (subject to verifying any deductions based on services already provided by the WAHT).**

5. Contribution to be paid to County Highways to be used towards improvement to local walking and cycling infrastructure, Community transport and footway improvement.
6. A Section 106 monitoring fee (as of 1 September 2019, revised Regulation were issued to allow the Council to include a provision for monitoring fees in Section 106 Agreements to ensure the obligations set down in the Agreement are met)

And

- b. The conditions and informatives set out in pages 12 to 16 of the main agenda.

**23. APPLICATION 20/00400/FUL - LAND AT MOORS LANE  
FECKENHAM - MR R EOST**

Conversion of barn (kennels) into a 3-bedroomed dwelling including partial demolition and associated works

Officers outlined the application which was for the conversion of a single storey barn used as kennels into a three bedroomed residential dwelling with additional of domestic curtilage and associated landscaping works.

With regard to principle of development Members were directed to the relevant criteria set out in Policy 9 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan no 4 (Open Countryside) namely the sustainable re-use of rural buildings, where such buildings are capable of re-use without major or complete reconstruction. It was noted that a structural survey submitted by the applicant indicated that the building could be converted without substantial rebuilding. However, the issue of whether the re-use of the building could be classed as “sustainable” still needed to be addressed.

Officers went through the proposal with reference to the plans and photos in the presentation pack, and in doing so made reference to the rural location of the site outside of the local settlement, the concerns about sustainability raised by County Highways and the objection of the Parish Council with regard to highway safety. Whilst the drawbacks of the location were acknowledged, weight had to be placed on the lack of a five year housing land supply and officers were recommending the application for approval.

At the invitation of the Chair Mr Gary Moss, agent for the applicant addressed the committee under the Council’s Public Speaking Rules.

In response to questions from members, officers clarified details of the exterior finish of the building and that there were other residential properties located on Moors Lane contributing to the use of the lane by vehicles.

In debating the application concerns were expressed regarding the isolated location and the extent to which the building would be subject to "reconstruction". Other members were supportive of the proposal on balance in light of the enhancement to open space and the opportunity to re-use the building sympathetically.

There was further discussion regarding member concerns that the wording of Condition 5 should be tightened up to ensure that the shipping container would be removed from the site before occupation.

**RESOLVED that**

**Having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be granted subject to: -**

- 1. the conditions and informatives set out on pages 25 to 28 of the agenda, and**
- 2. The rewording of condition 5 on page 26 of the agenda to read as follows: -**

**Condition 5**

**The shipping container identified to be removed from the site shall be removed upon commencement of development.**

**Reason: In order to secure a well-planned development and to ensure the enhancement of the immediate setting.**

**24. APPLICATION 20/00591/FUL - 18 CLEOBURY CLOSE  
REDDITCH B97 6TG - MR ORLIN BALL**

**First floor extension above existing garage**

Officers outlined the application and explained the proposed extension with reference to the plans and photographs in the presentation pack.

**RESOLVED that**

**Having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions and informatives set out on pages 32 to 33 of the agenda.**

**25. CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATION - 19/00615/OUT (BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL MATTER) - FOXLYDIATE HOTEL BIRCHFIELD ROAD REDDITCH B98 6PX**

Application for outline planning permission with all matters reserved, apart from details of access, layout and scale for the partial demolition of the building and former walled garden on site and the conversion of the remaining pub buildings into 12 no. apartments alongside the erection of 38 no. dwellings, children's play areas, landscaping and circulation space ( amended description)

Members were reminded of the location of the site within the administrative boundary of Bromsgrove District Council ("BDC") whose planning committee would determine the application. The site also formed part of the larger Foxlydiate "housing allocation site" which had been established in the Bromsgrove Local Plan in order to provide for some of the cross boundary housing needs of Redditch. This policy was included as an appendix in the Redditch Local Plan.

Officers outlined the proposal to members with reference to the plans and it was noted that changes had been made to the application since it had last been considered by Members at an earlier meeting in July 2019. The original application had sought to completely demolish the public house as part of the re-development. Members had been concerned at the potential loss of this building which was of local significance and regarded as a non-designated heritage asset.

It was noted that under the amended proposal the attractive front portion of the public house building which faces onto Birchfield Lane would be retained, whilst the rear section would be demolished. The retained section of the building would be converted into 12 apartments. The remainder of the site would be configured to provide the construction of 38 dwellings.

Members were also advised that another issue they had highlighted in the previous consultation regarding connectivity appeared to have been addressed, and the plans showed a footway linking the development to the wider Foxlydiate scheme.

In drafting the consultation response officers had noted the following key points:-

1. Further information had been provided by the applicant regarding the loss of the public house as a community asset, and ultimately this would be for BDC as the planning authority to determine.

2. Given that RBC considered the public house building to be a non-designated heritage asset, it was encouraging that the revised application allowed for the retention of the front section of the building. It was questionable whether sufficient steps had been taken to preserve non-designated heritage assets at the site, particularly the walled garden which under the revised proposal would not be retained.
3. The addition of the footway appeared to give an element of connectivity but linkage to the adjoining site was an element of the application that officers would wish to see further developed.

In conclusion officers were in support of the principle of housing on the site and Members were asked to endorse the Officer Appraisal as set out in Appendix 1 and summarised in points 1 to 3 on page 35 of the agenda.

In discussing the application, Members welcomed the changes that had been made to the previous proposal and in particular that the front section of the public house would be retained.

There was further discussion regarding the inclusion of social/affordable housing as part of the scheme. Officers clarified that under the cross boundary policy the residential make up would reflect the local requirements as detailed in the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment and comprise up to 40% affordable housing. The principle of affordable housing would be established at the outline permission stage.

With regard to social housing need, Members highlighted a number of points including that: -

- The housing allocation sites identified under the cross boundary policy had been established to cater for Redditch related growth.
- Whether at this stage (outline), or later on in the process, consideration would be given to how affordable housing at the site would be allocated.
- Members would wish to see provision included in the affordable housing element of the scheme to ensure that allocation was directed towards social housing need in Redditch.
- These points should be included as an additional point 4 in the officer response to BDC.

**RESOLVED that**

**The Officer appraisal summarised in points 1 to 3 on page 35 of the agenda and set out in Appendix 1 on pages 41 to 43 be**

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**endorsed and that authority be delegated to officers to add a point 4 to the recommendation to summarise the committee's comments regarding allocation of affordable housing in light of the development meeting the housing needs of Redditch under the cross boundary policy.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.04 pm  
and closed at 9.17 pm