

# **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**10th February 2021**

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**Planning Application 20/01215/FUL**

**Change of Use to a Police ABE suite facility**

**Coppice Childcare, The Bungalow, Clifton Close, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 0HF**

**Applicant: Worcestershire County Council**  
**Ward: Matchborough Ward**

**(see additional papers for site plan)**

The case officer of this application is Mr Anthony Young, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 881234 Email: [anthony.young@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:anthony.young@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) for more information.

## **Site Description**

This single storey detached property is in a predominantly residential area and adjacent to the access road to The Kingfisher School and grounds, which is to the east of the site. Opposite the application building, across from the school access road, is a Community Church building, which has its own private parking access. The nearest residential properties are on the opposite side of Clifton Close road, west of the site.

## **Proposal Description**

The proposal is to change the use of this single storey former children's nursery into a Police ABE facility for West Mercia Police. ABE stands for Achieving Best Evidence. The facility is for video-recorded witness interviews.

The existing building will be refurbished internally to create new interview rooms, waiting room areas and welfare facilities. Interviews are conducted for vulnerable and intimidated victims and witnesses, including children, usually connected to the most serious of crimes. Therefore, discretion is paramount for the use of the building and the residential location is intentional to provide a softer and more reassuring experience for the witnesses, with a more homely environment.

Officers attending will be in unmarked cars and access is limited to use only by those conducting interviews. It will not be a Police out station.

The facility will need to be available 24 hours a day seven days a week and the use of the premises will be primarily between 8am and 8pm, as these times are usually the most appropriate to interview witnesses. On occasion there may be a need to interview outside of the times, but these will be very much the exception, with perhaps less than a handful over a 12-month period. The suites are used frequently during the day but not constantly.

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The hardstanding area in front of the building would remain providing 4 car park spaces.

## **Relevant Policies :**

### **Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4**

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 2: Settlement Hierarchy

Policy 19: Sustainable travel and Accessibility

Policy 20: Transport Requirements for New Development

### **Others**

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

NPPG National Planning Practice Guidance

## **Relevant Planning History**

2003/235/FUL	Change Of Use From Residential To Day Nursery	Approved	13.08.2003
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## **Consultations**

### **Cllr Brunner**

No Comments received to date.

### **Cllr Fisher**

No Comments received to date.

### **Highways Redditch**

No objection subject to provision of an electric vehicle charging point.

### **Crime Risk Manager**

No objection.

### **Community Safety Project Officer Community Safety**

There is no information within the application that identifies how the crime prevention and safety requirements of local and national planning policy are satisfied and accordingly recommend that the development is required to achieve Secured by Design accreditation and where possible this is made subject of condition.

## **Public Consultation Response**

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No representations received.

### **Assessment of Proposal**

The application site is in the Redditch urban area, and being within the Main Settlement, is Policy 2 Settlement Hierarchy compliant.

The applicant has advised that there would be no noise issues associated with this proposal and that it is an intentionally discreet venue which will not be associated with any sirens etc, unless in response to an incident which would be the same as any other premises. The application site at its nearest point to the boundary of the nearest dwelling on Clifton Close would be some 9.5m and, similarly, the separation between the application building and the nearest physical dwelling would be some 25m. I am satisfied that the proposal would not have any undue impact upon the residential amenity of the area.

Community Safety set out a range of issues, of which the applicant is aware. The applicant has been in discussion with the Community Safety Projects Officer about these, and who acknowledges that not all the recommendations can be met, but has indicated that they would be happy to engage in a discussion nearer the time once the crime prevention suggestions have been reviewed and proposals can be firmed up. A planning condition is therefore proposed to facilitate this process.

Given the above considerations, I consider the application in all respects to be acceptable, subject to the recommended planning conditions.

For the reasons set out in this report, it is considered that the proposal complies with the Local Plan and is sustainable development and should therefore be approved without delay.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions and informatives below:**

### **Conditions:**

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To conform with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

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- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plan: Block Plan - LO1; Proposed Plan PL002.

Reason: To define the permission.

- 3) The development hereby approved shall not be opened to the public until 1 electric vehicle charging space has been provided in accordance with a specification which shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such space and power point shall be kept available and maintained for the use of electric vehicles as approved.

Reason: To encourage sustainable travel and healthy communities.

- 4) Prior to commencement of use hereby approved details of crime prevention and safety measures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and implemented in accordance with the approved details and to remain as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of crime prevention.

### **Informatives**

#### **Statement of Positive and Proactive Working**

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.

#### **No Drainage to Discharge to Highway**

The Highway Authority has advised that drainage arrangements should 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 should be allowed to discharge into any highway drain or over any part of the public highway.

#### **Community Safety**

Community Safety set out a range of issues of which the applicant is already aware and will be the subject of further discussion in connection with Condition 4.

#### **Procedural matters**

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the applicant is Worcestershire County Council. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.