

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Michael Chalk (Chair), Councillor Timothy Pearman (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Salman Akbar, Imran Altaf, Brandon Clayton, Andrew Fry and Juma Begum

In attendance:

Councillors Joe Baker and Emma Marshall

Officers:

Helena Plant, Amar Hussain (on Microsoft Teams), Ryan Keyte, Sarah Hazlewood and Karen Hanchett (Worcestershire County Council Highways)

Democratic Services Officer:

Gavin Day

75. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bill Hartnett with Councillor Juma Begum in attendance as substitute.

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

77. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 1st March 2023 and 29th March 2023 were approved as a true and accurate records and signed by the Chair.

78. UPDATE REPORTS

At the request of Members, the meeting stood adjourned from 19:01 hours to 19:05 hours to enable Members sufficient time to read the Update Reports.

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Chair

Having reconvened, Members indicated they were happy to proceed with the meeting.

79. 21/00447/OUT - THE ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL, WOODROW DRIVE, REDDITCH, WORCESTERSHIRE, B98 7UB

This application was being reported to the Planning Committee as the application required a Section 106 Agreement. 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 5 to 12 of the Update Report 1 pack.

The application was for The Alexandra Hospital, Woodrow Drive, Redditch, B98 7UB and sought outline planning permission for the removal of the existing carpark and apartment buildings to make way for a new residential development of up to 92 homes, with all matters reserved except for access.

Officers drew Members' attention to the three Update Reports:

1. An updated Officer presentation.
2. Additional information with regard to consultations and representations.
3. Details of a further objection received.

Officers clarified to Members that the application before them was to decide on the principle of the development and that all plans, with the exception of those showing the proposed access, were indicative.

Officers clarified the location of the proposed development as detailed on pages 6 and 7 of Update Report 1 Pack. Officers compared the location to the Local Plan and highlighted that part of the development fell under the allocation for health facilities, however, the NHS trust had assessed the land as surplus to requirements and had made the decision to release the land for development and to reinvest the money into the hospital.

The apartment buildings to be removed due to the development were former nurses' accommodation, however, these buildings had not been in use since 2015. Due to the demolition of the abandoned buildings, the site would be eligible for vacant building credit which would allow some of the affordable housing requirement to be offset.

Officers further detailed the improvements to the access off Quinney's lane as part of the development which involved the widening of the road to 5.5m and the footpaths to 2m on either side.

At the invitation of the Chair Councillor Joe Baker spoke in objection to the application, Mr Andeep Gill, Agent for the applicant, spoke in support of the development.

Officers clarified the following points after questions from Members:

- That any Legal Covenant with regard to the land would not be a Planning consideration but a civil matter.
- The affordable housing allocation of 20% had been permitted due to the vacant building credit. Officers further clarified that this was a very specific circumstance relevant to this application and was not a general departure from the Local Plan.
- There would be no impact on the number of parking spaces across the site due to the development, all spaces were allocated for staff and would be relocated prior to the development commencing.
- Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Highways did not deem the impact of the increased traffic to the network to be severe. Modelling and surveys undertaken estimated the peak time increase to the traffic network to be approximately +1%.
- The access to the hospital from Nine Days Lane would be retained through the development.
- To mitigate building/construction noise and disruption, an Environmental Management Plan was proposed under Condition 18, as detailed on page 32 of the Public Reports pack.
- That the proposed play equipment provision on the site needed to be completed prior to first occupancy, as detailed under Condition 28 on page 35 of the Public Reports pack.

Members then debated the application.

Members commented that they believed the land had been donated for the purposes of the hospital development and requested that Officers investigated whether there was a legal covenant on the site. Members were also unhappy with the findings from WCC Highways and wanted additional information regarding the assessment. In consideration of the preamble above an Alternative Recommendation was proposed by Councillor Altaf to defer the application pending additional information. The Alternative Recommendation was seconded by Councillor Begum.

The Committee's Legal Officer highlighted to Members that the presence or absence of a legal covenant on the land was not a material planning consideration and would be a civil matter and therefore advised the Committee against deferring the application on that basis alone.

WCC Highways detailed that the surveys were conducted pre-covid, over a 24hour period and avoided any quiet “neutral” months which included Aug/Dec/Jan/Feb and had taken into account school holidays. Highways further detailed that the data was scaled up with their internal software to reflect the expected traffic in 2026 and presented a robust model used to predict traffic impact. The modelling and survey data showed that there would be an estimated +40 vehicle increase to AM peak and +45 to PM peak traffic, this had not met the criteria for WCC Highways to raise an objection to the application. Finally, WCC Highways detailed that in their opinion there would be nothing more they could add to the consultation response should Members be minded to defer the application.

Members were not satisfied with the Officers responses and proceeded with the vote on the Alternative Recommendation to defer the application.

On being put to a vote it was

RESOLVED that

having had regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, the application be deferred pending further information to be supplied by Officers to the Committee, as detailed in the preamble above.

80. 23/00252/FUL - 1 TYSOE CLOSE, IPSLEY, REDDITCH, B98 0TB

The application was being reported to the Planning Committee because the land subject to the application was currently 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 Public Reports pack.

The application was for 1 Tysoe Close, Redditch, B98 0TB and sought the change of use of highways land to a private residential garden.

Officers drew Members’ attention to pages 14 and 15 of the Public Reports pack and highlighted the land in question. Officers further detailed that the land had been designated incidental open space and that the application was retrospective in nature.

Officers clarified the following points after questions from Members:

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- The building on site would be immune to enforcement matters due to the passage of time being over 4 years since construction.
- WCC Highways had no objections to the application, the visibility splays were deemed acceptable for the speed of the road and junction.

Members then debated the application.

Members were displeased that the application was retrospective in nature and that the work had been carried out over a number of years prior. However, Members saw no material reason to refuse the application, on being put to a 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 outlined on page 39 of the Public Reports Pack.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.15 pm