

**PLANNING
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18th June 2026

Planning Application 25/00454/FUL

Full planning application for the development of 53 no. retirement apartments (Use class C3) including vehicular access, car parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure

Kingfisher Car Park 7, Church Road, Redditch, B97 4AB

**Applicant: McCarthy and Stone
Ward: Central Ward**

The case officer of this application is Steven Edden, Principal Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 548474 Email: steve.edden@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Site Description

The site measures 0.48 hectares in area and is a redundant parcel of previously developed land. Its former use was as a multi-storey car park ('Kingfisher Car Park 7').

The site presents a significant levels difference with land to the north of the site 7m higher than the land to the south. The site has multiple existing retaining walls which results in the majority of the site being flat with the area inside these walls having just a 2-metre level difference.

The site is bound to the north by Church Road, to the south and east by Adelaide Street, and to the west by the Redditch Ringway (B4160). The site lies within Redditch town centre and is surrounded by typical town centre uses. In the immediate vicinity there is a medical cluster, including various medical facilities including surgeries and a pharmacy. There is also a former bus depot to the north of the site.

Vehicular access to the multi-storey car park was previously provided along Church Road on the northern side of the site, with a separate pedestrian access point located on the southern side of the site from Adelaide Street, with both now removed from use following the demolition of the multi-storey car park.

The site lies to the immediate west of and beyond the edge of the Church Green Conservation Area and forms part of the Church Road / North-West Quadrant as set out under Policy 31 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan, January 2017.

Proposal Description

The proposals are for a retirement living complex (C3 class planning use) for residents aged 60 and above. 53 self-contained retirement apartments are proposed comprised of a mix of 16 no. 2-bed apartments and 37 no. 1-bed apartments.

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22 no. parking spaces including two disabled / accessible spaces are proposed together with a combined buggy and cycle store and a bin store. An outdoor communal garden space is proposed for residents together with enhanced planting around the site.

The apartments would be accommodated within an 'L' shaped flat roofed 4 storey building.

Vehicular access would be via Adelaide Street (6m width with a 5.5m radii).

Relevant Policies:

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4

- Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy 2: Settlement Hierarchy
- Policy 3: Development Strategy
- Policy 4: Housing Provision
- Policy 5: Effective and Efficient use of Land
- Policy 6: Affordable Housing
- Policy 12: Open Space Provision
- Policy 15: Climate Change
- Policy 16: Natural Environment
- Policy 18: Sustainable water Management
- Policy 19: Sustainable travel and Accessibility
- Policy 20: Transport Requirements for New Development
- Policy 30: Town Centre and Retail hierarchy
- Policy 31: Regeneration for Town Centre
- Policy 36: Historic Environment
- Policy 38: Conservation Areas
- Policy 39: Built Environment
- Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

Others

- Redditch High Quality Design SPD
- National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

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Relevant Planning History

21/01075/DEM	Proposed Demolition of Buildings In respect of Car Park 7 Kingfisher Centre: application under Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as Amended)	Prior approval not required	29.07.2021
2007/338/OUT	New medical centre and car park, with demolition of existing car park, together with retail pharmacy and cafe	Refused Dismissed at appeal	07.11.2007

Consultations

WCC Highway Authority

No objections

Comments summarised as follows:

The development proposal is for 53 (market housing) retirement apartments (37 1-bedrooms and 16 2-bedrooms) including vehicular access, with 22 car parking spaces (including 2 disabled parking spaces)

Pedestrian accessibility and connectivity

The Applicant is proposing one 1.5m wide footway along the western side of the access road. The Applicant comments that the 1.5m wide footway is suitable to support pedestrian access in and out of the proposed development, aligns with section 4.2 in the Department for Transport (DfT) 'Inclusive Mobility' document (December 2021), aligns with paragraph 6.3.23 of Manual for Streets (MfS), and is appropriate in this instance due to site constraints and local considerations. The Highway Authority accepts the Applicants justification.

Access arrangements

Swept Path Analysis provided by the Applicant demonstrates that fire and refuse vehicles can enter and exit the site, with all vehicles required to turn left in and left out. The Highway Authority accepts this.

Visibility splays

The Applicant has provided additional visibility splays information and the measured 85th percentile speed. The Highway Authority accepts this.

Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) Brief

A RSA1 brief was provided by the Applicant. This has been approved by WCC Highways.

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Stage 1 Road Safety Audit

A Stage 1 RSA has been completed by an external auditor. The Applicant provided the RSA and Designers response. The Highway Authority accepts this.

Personal Injury Collision (PIC) Data

The Applicant has acquired Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data from WCC for the period (01/01/2019 – 31/12/2023). The Highway Authority accepts this.

Swept Path analysis and internal layout

The Applicant provided additional swept path analysis information, including measurements. The additional information demonstrates that a fire tender can get within 13m of the stairwell and that a WCC refuse vehicle can access the site to get within 8m of the refuse store. The Highway Authority accepts this.

Parking Provision

The Applicant has confirmed how parking spaces will be assigned and managed. The Highway Authority accepts this.

Staffing numbers

The Applicant has confirmed staffing numbers, this being that there would only be 1 full time member of staff – the House Manager. There would be other members of staff including cleaners and maintenance staff; however, they would only visit the site on an ad hoc occasional basis. The Highway Authority accepts this.

Having undertaken a robust assessment of this planning application, the Highway Authority have concluded that there would not be a severe impact subject to conditions. The Highway Authority also request a financial contribution of £1,503.00 towards community transport.

RBC Conservation Officer

Comments summarised as follows:

The site is located immediately adjacent to the west of the Church Green Conservation Area. It is currently a vacant site. The car park which was previously on the site was demolished between August 2021 and May 2022. The site is within the setting of the Conservation Area, as well as a number of other heritage assets including St Stephen's Church (Grade II), where there is some intervisibility, with views of the Church from the site and partial views back again along Adelaide Street/William Street.

The proposal is to erect a four-storey retirement apartment development with associated parking and landscaping, constructed in red brick.

The site is located on the edge of the ring road, but from the site there are views of the Spire of St Stephen's and the edge of the Church Green Conservation Area. There are also limited views of the site from the edge of the CA, notably from Church Road and William Street, close to Adelaide Street. Due to the topography of the area, parts of the site are significantly lower than the CA. The site does not contribute to the setting of the

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CA, and could be described as have a negative impact on the setting, although this is reduced by the minimal intervisibility. The redevelopment of the site is welcomed.

NHS Acute Hospitals Worcestershire

Comments summarised as follows:

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust has assessed the impact caused by the proposed development on local acute healthcare infrastructure and is requesting the developer to mitigate the impact by way of a S106 contribution towards healthcare infrastructure. A developer contribution of £38,179.00 has been calculated in this instance.

The Acute Hospitals NHS Trust requests that this sum be secured through a planning obligation linked to any grant of planning permission.

NHS Herefordshire & Worcestershire Integrated Care Board

Comments summarised as follows:

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) have identified that the development will give rise to a need for additional primary healthcare provision to mitigate impacts arising from the development. The proposed development would be likely to have an impact on the services of 2 GP practices. Affected practices which are a member of the Primary Care Network (PCN): Nightingales PCN, Kingfisher PCN.

A developer contribution will be required to mitigate the impacts of this proposal. The ICB calculates the level of contribution required in this instance to be £19,200.00.

The ICB requests that this sum be secured through a planning obligation linked to any grant of planning permission.

North Worcestershire Water Management

Comments summarised as follows:

The proposed development site is situated in the catchment of the Batchley Brook and Hewell Stream. The site falls within flood zone 1 and it is not considered that there is any significant fluvial flood risk to the site. The EA's flood mapping also indicates that there is minimal low-risk surface water flood risk to the site. Based on the available information I feel there is no reason to withhold approval of this application on flood risk grounds.

A 'Flood Risk & Drainage Impact Assessment' has been provided with this application and having reviewed this I can see that a lot of the considerations we would usually expect to see have been included. This includes, a proposed surface water and foul drainage strategy, with attenuation and calculations provided. There are limited details on communal assets and their maintenance. Additionally, if connecting to a public sewer/s, then evidence should be submitted of an in-principle approval from Severn Trent Water for these connections.

No objections are raised subject to the imposition of a surface water drainage strategy (condition) being imposed to any consent.

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RBC Arboricultural Officer

Comments summarised as follows:

I have viewed the application and the Arboricultural Impact Assessment submitted and hold no overall objections to the proposals. The majority of the trees on site are of low quality.

I would not object to the removal of the single tree within G2 to facilitate the new retaining wall. There will be works with the RPA's of retained trees however as shown in the report this will be minimal.

The proposed new planting is welcome however I would request that species are identified to ensure that they are acceptable for the location. A suitable condition is recommended.

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeological Service

Comments summarised as follows:

Demolition of the site (21/01075/DEM) incorporated demolition of all buildings and structures and full clearance of the site including removal of slab, hard standing and entry road and breaking up of foundations. I also note that the car park was constructed with a split-level arrangement within an area where significant variation in the external ground levels was present and therefore some of the lower floors were located below ground with retaining walls to the rear and side walls.

Given the extent of the demolition works, survival of any significant archaeological features and deposits is likely to be very low. As such, there is no archaeological objection and should this progress through planning there will be no recommendation for archaeological investigation by condition.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services – Contaminated Land

Comments summarised as follows:

WRS have examined the submitted Phase 1 and Phase 2 reports and agree with the methodology and findings. WRS recommend the imposition of conditions regarding the reporting of unexpected contamination in the case of planning permission being granted.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services - Noise

Comments summarised as follows:

The revised noise impact assessment is acceptable. The noise mitigation recommendations relating to the building construction (Sections 8.4.1 & 8.4.2) should be implemented. When the applicant has decided which glazing and alternative ventilation products they wish to install, they should submit their sound reduction / level difference specifications for approval. A nuisance management plan should be submitted (via condition) to minimise any impacts upon nearby occupiers.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services - Air Quality

No adverse comments

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Community Safety Officer

Comments summarised as follows:

The knee-high railing boundary treatment to the west and southern sides should be strengthened by the use of dense defensive planting ensuring that attention is paid to the locks serving ground floor windows. I anticipate that all door sets and windows will comply with Building Regulations Approved Document Q and be certified to PAS24:2024 or equivalent.

Public Consultation Response

The application has been publicised by writing to adjacent occupiers, by press notice and by site notice.

One letter has been received in objection to the application. Comments are summarised as follows:

- The original car park (former car park 7) provided parking to attend existing surgeries present in this area. Currently you have to park in the shopping centre and walk from there. The space would have been better used as a 'super surgery' with parking for staff and patients rather than for housing

Background

As set out above, planning permission for a new medical centre with retail pharmacy and café was sought in 2007 and refused planning permission, the Council considering that the proposal would lead to a loss of parking provision in the town centre which would have a detrimental impact of the economic vitality and viability of the town centre. At the subsequent appeal, the Planning Inspector agreed with the Council and dismissed the appeal.

More recently, Car Park 7 was demolished and the site cleared following the decision made on application reference 21/01075/DEM set out above. It is understood that demolition works took place in late 2021.

Assessment of Proposal

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations (including the NPPF) indicate otherwise.

The development plan for the site comprises the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 (January 2017).

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Other material considerations include in this case the Councils High-Quality Design SPD (Adopted June 2019) and the Redditch Town Centre Development Sites Final Report (Adopted September 2019).

The main issues and considerations in the determination of this application are set out below:

Principle of development

The site falls within the Town Centre boundary as defined within the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 and is also listed as a strategic site where Policy 31: Regeneration of the Town Centre applies. Five guiding principles in order to shape the future town contribute to realising the vision for Redditch Town Centre. One of the principles set out in Policy 31.6 is to *“increase residential accommodation”*.

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government’s commitment to the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF is clear that development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan should be approved without delay (paragraph 11c).

The site comprises a former car park within the town centre boundary, thereby constituting previously developed land (PDL) and an excellent opportunity to redevelop vacant land in a sustainable location where services and public transport connections are easily accessible. This is a key priority in the NPPF which states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in a way that: *“... makes as much use as possible of previously developed or ‘brownfield’ land”* (paragraph 124).

Paragraph 125 further states that planning policies and decisions should, inter alia: *“... give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs.”*

These principles are echoed through the entirety of the Local Plan and specifically in Policy 5. The policy supports development on PDL, subject to in the case of residential development, achieving a density of c.70 dwellings per hectare in or adjacent to the town centre. 5.2 iii states that higher densities will be sought in locations close to public transport interchanges. The proposed development would deliver 53 dwellings on a 0.48 hectare parcel of land equating to over 100 dwellings per hectare net density in a highly sustainable location and would align with Policy 5 and the NPPF.

The site is within the defined town centre boundary on the Policies Map and Policy 31 applies. It states that one of the guiding principles for securing regeneration is increasing residential development in the town centre.

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Policy 31.9 requires development to adhere to the following principles:

- i Incorporate a mix of uses including residential, employment (B1), retail and leisure;
- ii Promote excellent accessibility by a range of sustainable transport modes, incorporating any necessary infrastructure improvements;
- iii Include safe and well-designed buildings and places, incorporate any relevant guidance contained within Supplementary Planning Documents, for example Designing for Community Safety and Encouraging Good Design; and
- iv Supporting heritage-led regeneration in the Town Centre that enhances the existing historic environment through high quality development that is sensitive to its context.

While point (i) requires development to incorporate a mix of uses, the site's limited size is considered to constrain its ability to deliver a viable mixed-use scheme. The proposed development would activate a previously vacant, brownfield site, generating both direct and indirect employment opportunities in the area.

It is noted that the site (former car park 7), is referred to (paragraph 31.15) as being located within the Church Road/North-West Quadrant, and the policy states that this is the preferred location for convenience and comparison retail as part of a mixed-use development. However, the Redditch Town Centre Development Sites (RTCDS) Final Report for the Church Road Sites, which proposes mostly commercial and residential uses, does not include the proposed development site within the masterplan for these sites.

Notwithstanding the position indicated within the RTCDS report, it is also noted that the suitability of the site was investigated as part of the sequential site assessment that was prepared in respect of a full planning application by Lidl for a new store at Battens Drive, Redditch (Planning Ref. 18/01049/FUL). The site was ultimately discounted as being suitable to accommodate the required foodstore, drawing upon earlier viability evidence that had been prepared for the Council in respect of another planning application (Ref. 2014/036/FUL: ASDA store, Jinnah Rd). Noting the site gradients, amongst other issues, the development costs associated with a foodstore development were found to be prohibitive and that a format requiring underground car parking would not appeal to an end-user. The Council ultimately accepted the evidence presented in respect of the Lidl application in granting planning permission for the development on 21st December 2020.

The applicant states that regard should also be had to the substantial number of retail units existing in the town centre, which are considered to adequately serve the current population. The rise of online shopping further reduces the demand for physical retail spaces, making new retail developments less viable. In contrast, the proposed retirement living facility would address the growing need for residential options tailored to an aging population.

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Notwithstanding the above, the Councils Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) notes that by 2040, the town will require an additional 303 age-exclusive housing units, 753 specialist units, and 463 care home bed spaces, with 49% of these requiring nursing support. The proposed development would make a significant contribution to the identified need. An additional benefit of increasing the provision of retirement apartments is that this reduces pressure on the wider open housing market by freeing up housing, particularly larger housing that is often suitable for families. The proposal would therefore indirectly contribute to the wider objectives of the Local Plan and meet the need identified in the HEDNA to provide family housing.

Your officers have concluded that the nature of the proposal is in accordance with Policy 4 and 31 which relates to the site's existing designation. The principle of developing a brownfield site in a highly sustainable location is also a key objective of the NPPF and the Local Plan and to conclude, the principle of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.

Housing Land Supply

The Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land within the Borough (as required in the NPPF). The 5 year housing land supply is currently 3.11 years where 5 is required.

Government policy, set out in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF is that where there is a lack of 5 yr HLS, the most important policies for determining the application are out-of-date and that planning permission should be granted unless, firstly, (i) the application of policies in the Framework protecting areas of particular importance (set out in footnote 7) provides a strong reason for refusing the development or secondly, (ii) by granting permission, any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

In this case, part (i) does not apply. In terms of part (ii) no adverse impacts have been identified that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of this scheme.

Significant weight should be afforded to the fact that the scheme would make a meaningful contribution to the Councils housing figures in a highly sustainable location.

Financial viability

The size of the proposed development is above the policy threshold for requiring contributions which would normally be sought via a planning obligation. In this case, contributions payable to RBC towards:

*The provision of on-site affordable housing

*Public Open Space provision

*Refuse and re-cycling bin provision on site

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*Public Realm enhancements

Would normally be sought.

In this case WCC Highways and the NHS have also sought financial contributions.

Planning Obligations to secure such financial contributions are secured by legal agreements that are signed before planning permission is issued. Obligations can secure infrastructure physically on-site and secure financial contributions for provision off-site to mitigate the harm upon infrastructure caused by new developments.

There is a legal basis for requesting and securing infrastructure and there are three legal Tests: a) necessary to makes the development acceptable in planning terms b) directly related to the development and c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

S106 planning agreements are designed to target obligations directly related to the impact of development. Contributions should not be a general tariff or tax on the development.

The applicant argues that the scheme would not be viable based on the financial contributions requested by the Council in respect to community infrastructure and affordable housing and have submitted a viability report to support their claims.

Viability is referred to under Paragraph 59 of the NPPF and within the Governments Viability Planning Practice Guidance.

Paragraph 008 of the Governments Viability Planning Practice Guidance comments that it is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. It comments that *Such circumstances could include, for example where development is proposed on unallocated sites of a wholly different type to those used in viability assessment that informed the plan; where further information on infrastructure or site costs is required; where particular types of development are proposed which may significantly vary from standard models of development for sale (for example build to rent or housing for older people); or where a recession or similar significant economic changes have occurred since the plan was brought into force.*

It is the applicant's position that the site is unallocated and proposes housing for older people.

Policy 6 of the Local Plan requires new residential schemes of 11 dwellings or more to provide a 30% contribution towards to the provision of affordable homes. The proposed development, if approved, would deliver above 11 dwellings.

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Policy 6 later states however that:

“In exceptional circumstances, where the economic viability of affordable housing contribution is questionable, and this can be fully demonstrated against the Affordable Housing Viability Assessment Toolkit, the Borough Council may negotiate a more appropriate level of affordable housing provision, or deferred payment scheme where appropriate, with the applicant”.

The applicant argues that typical retirement living development will include a greater level of communal space and on-site facilities, such that individual units might equate to a reduced total floorspace. As such, a significant proportion of space from which value is generated is lost. They continue by stating that higher construction and fit out-costs are likely as schemes need to achieve higher accessibility requirements and often include lifts, specially adapted bathrooms etc.

A Financial Viability Assessment (FVA), prepared by Alder King Property Consultants on behalf of the applicant, forms part of the application submission. The Assessment provides detail of the individual unit floorspaces, construction costs and other factors affecting developers' return for risk and profit. It concludes that after accounting for anticipated gross sales receipts and all reasonable aspects of the outlay necessary, there is no financial headroom available for any financial obligations in this case.

Notwithstanding the above, the applicant comments that the development would benefit from Homes England grant funding. Consequently, the applicant states that apartments can be made available through a shared ownership tenure that enables residents to purchase apartments for a cost that is 25% lower than its market value. The applicant states that they are committed to broadening the affordability of the retirement living market.

Your officers have used specialist consultants (Aspinal Verdi) to act on behalf of the Council to independently critique the findings of the FVA who have concluded that the scheme would not be viable based on the payment of any of the contributions requested, including the provision of affordable dwellings in accordance with Policy 6.

After very careful consideration of the submitted Aspinal Verdi report, your officers are not seeking a planning obligation in this case.

Your officers are aware that the site has been vacant for a considerable period of time and are mindful that sites should be deliverable and that sites should not be subject to such a scale of obligations that their ability to be developed viably is threatened. To ensure viability, the costs of any requirements likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking account of the normal cost of development and mitigation, provide competitive returns to a willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.

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Scale, layout, and design

BORLP4 Policy 5 (Effective and Efficient Use of Land) advises that there remains a need for prudent reuse of previously developed (brownfield) land within the Borough which has the potential to contribute towards meeting Redditch's development needs. In relation to residential development, Paragraph 5.2(i.) states that the reuse and regeneration of Previously Developed Land (PDL) will be actively encouraged.

This proposal presents an opportunity to repurpose vacant brownfield land, thus reducing the pressure for development on greenfield sites and maximising the use of existing infrastructure.

Policy 5 supports the efficient use of land, including the re-use and regeneration of brownfield land, at an appropriate density. The scale of a four-storey building is considered acceptable in this case having regard to the level differences which exist within the site taking account of the sites immediate context. Your officers have concluded that the building sits comfortably within the surrounding environment.

The layout of the new retirement living development has been dictated by the existing site constraints and the shape of the available plot and is similarly considered to be appropriate.

The site is located immediately adjacent to the west of the Church Green Conservation Area and is therefore within the setting of the Conservation Area, as well as a number of other heritage assets including St Stephen's Church (Grade II), where there is obvious intervisibility, with views of the Church from the site and back again along Adelaide Street/William Street.

Due to the topography of the area, parts of the site are significantly lower than that of the start of the Conservation Area further to the East. The site does not necessarily contribute to the setting of the CA, and could be described as have a negative impact on the setting. The application has been accompanied by a heritage statement and this has been used to inform the nature of the building, which your officers consider to be sympathetic to the character of the sites immediate setting including designated and non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity. Important views into the heart of the Conservation Area would be protected and the development proposals would not be considered to result in a negative impact on the setting of the Conservation Area.

The proposed design is considered to comply with the aims of BORLP4 Policy 40 with its use of material choice, and a siting and scale that respects that of its neighbours. The building would be considered to enhance the streetscape seeking to connect to the town centre through long distance visual presence.

BORLP4 Policy 39 (Built Environment) states that all development in the Borough should contribute positively to the local character of the area, responding to and integrating with the distinctive features of the surrounding environment, particularly if located within a

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historic setting. The appearance of the proposed building looks to provide a contemporary design approach whilst respecting the surrounding vernacular.

The elevations would feature a contrasting mix of two-tone brickwork, which would help to articulate the building frontages. There is proposed to be a buff band between the contrasting red/orange brick and red or orange in fills between windows, adding architectural interest to the facades and respond to the surrounding context along Adelaide Street. The horizontal and vertical banding is further emphasised within the protruding bay elements. A full brick window reveal provides articulation and depth to the façades.

In short, the proposals are considered to represent a simple but contemporary aesthetic which would contribute positively to the area's built environment. The buildings proposed flat roof would enable Photo Voltaic (PV) panels to be installed which would contribute to meeting the building's energy needs.

Residential amenity considerations and response to public comments

Your officers are satisfied that no loss of residential amenity would result from granting permission and that the scheme would provide occupiers of the development with a good standard of amenity with future residents benefiting from a communal landscaped area.

All of the proposed apartments would meet the Governments Technical Housing Standards: Nationally described space standards in terms of minimum floor space for the flats.

Two accessible parking spaces have been provided in close proximity to the main entrance and level access has been provided from the car park to the front door and into the ground floor of the building. A lift services each of the four floors, enabling wheelchair and ambulant access throughout the building. A mobility buggy store is positioned on the gable end of the building, with convenient access to the pedestrian network.

Despite the extensive publicity, only one representation has been received raising concerns. It is suggested by the objector that a medical centre use would be more suited to the site. Members will have noted through the planning history associated with the site that such a use was previously refused by the Council and dismissed at appeal. A residential use is considered to be acceptable for the reasons stated earlier in this report, particularly so given the Councils current lack of 5 year housing land supply.

Highway safety and parking considerations

The site is in a highly sustainable location and benefits from excellent pedestrian connectivity and public transport links. Due to the town centre location, the site benefits from being within walking distance of numerous amenities with excellent pedestrian infrastructure in place to support movement to these facilities.

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Worcestershire County Council as the Highway Authority confirm that the single vehicular access and egress to the site is safe and that the required visibility spays can be achieved. Servicing, having regards to swept path analysis submitted with the application is deemed to be acceptable.

In relation to transport issues, Chapter 9 (Promoting sustainable transport) of the NPPF requires that:

“Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health”

Policy 19 of the Local Plan (Sustainable Travel and Accessibility) focuses on the need to reduce private car use and increase the use of public transport.

The applicant has clarified that there would only be 1 full time member of staff – the House Manager. There would be other members of staff including cleaners and maintenance staff; however, they would only visit the site on an ad hoc occasional basis.

WCC Highways comment that the 22 car parking spaces proposed would be sufficient to serve the development and that a suitable level of car parking provision would be provided which is akin to similar McCarthy and Stone approved schemes.

Biodiversity and landscaping

In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is now mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). This is a way of ensuring that development has a measurable positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there. Legislation currently requires developers to deliver a BNG (uplift) of 10%.

This application is accompanied by a Biodiversity Statement & Metric Assessment, which concludes that the proposal will deliver a net % change well above the required 10% at 66.21% as an on-site net unit percentage change. The development is therefore acceptable in this regard and the pre-commencement condition is set out within the informative section.

The proposals represent a notable enhancement to biodiversity and meet the objectives of local policy to improve the amount and connectivity of Green Infrastructure.

Any planning permission would be granted subject to a pre-commencement condition for a Biodiversity Gain Plan to be submitted, setting out how the uplift would be achieved and on this basis, the application is considered acceptable with respect to biodiversity.

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The landscape design, boundary treatment and planting of new trees along the site boundary would soften the development and associated parking from the public highway, neighbouring developments and surrounding public open spaces. The existing woodland along the eastern boundary and scrub on the northern boundary would be retained and enhanced. Trees in this area are to be selectively thinned and areas of invasive and non-native groundcover to be removed and supplemented with additional native species mix planting. A detailed landscaping scheme condition is recommended below should members be minded to grant permission.

Community Safety matters

Your officers are satisfied that issues of crime prevention have been appropriately assessed and the configuration of the building is designed to maintain natural surveillance.

As set out above, planning conditions are recommended to provide appropriate landscaping species and external lighting proposals which are expected to include lighting for the parking court and external motion activated lights to be provided at the entrance to the buildings would be secured by condition.

Planning Conditions

Sections 100ZA (4-6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires the applicant's written agreement to the terms of a pre-commencement condition. Written agreement to the terms of relevant recommended conditions has been sought and agreed by the applicant.

Conclusion

The site is considered appropriate for residential development and is within a comfortable walking distance of both the train and bus station. The site is optimally positioned for the wide range of facilities within the Town Centre. The application benefits from the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development and complies with Local Plan Policy 5 in respect to high density development, as well as providing a meaningful contribution towards the Council's 5 year supply of housing.

The scale, layout and design of the development would respect the character and appearance of its surroundings and subject to suitable conditions the application is considered to be a policy compliant form of development. No issues including highway safety impacts have been identified which would make this application unacceptable in planning terms and therefore the application can be supported.

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RECOMMENDATION:

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations,

- a) **Planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions and informatives,**

AND

- b) **Delegated powers be GRANTED to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to determine any subsequent Non-Material Amendment (NMA) associated with the Implementation of the permission**

Conditions:

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

Boundary treatment plan EVS3017-CWA-ARC-XX DR-A-0107 P02 dated 17 April 2025

Buggy & bin store plan EVS3017-CWA-ARC-XX DR-A-0108 P02 dated 17 April 2025

Proposed ground floor plan EVS3017-CWA-ARC-00 DR-A-0104 P02 dated 17 April 2025

Proposed upper floor plans EVS3017-CWA-ARC-ZZ DR-A-0105 P02 dated 17 April 2025

Landscape masterplan R-2825-1 dated 17 April 2025

Lighting plan 54692 P02 dated 17 April 2025

Environmental Noise Assessment 11163/SL REV B dated 03 June 2025

Location plan EVS3017-CWA-ARC-XX DR-A-0100 P03 dated 17 April 2025

North & west elevations EVS3017-CWA-ARC-XX DR-A-0120 P02 dated 17 April 2025

South & east elevations EVS3017-CWA-ARC-XX DR-A-0121 P02 dated 17 April 2025

Proposed impermeable area plan EVS3017-GGP-CIV-XX DR-C-102 P02 dated 17 April 2025

Proposed kerbing plans EVS3017-GGP-CIV-XX DR-C-107 P02 dated 17 April 2025
Proposed levels plan EVS3017-GGP-CIV-XX DR-C-109 P02 dated 17 April 2025
Proposed site plan EVS3017-CWA-ARC-00 DR-A-0102 P06 dated 17 April 2025
Proposed site section a-a and b-b EVS3017-CWA-ARC-XX DR-A-0130 P02 dated 17 April 2025
Proposed streetscapes EVS3017-CWA-ARC-XX DR-A-0122 P02 dated 17 April 2025
Proposed surface water drainage plans dated 17 April 2025
Proposed roof plan EVS3017-CWA-ARC-RF DR-A-0106 P02 dated 17 April 2025
Site access assessment 500-0057-0001- p04 (amended) dated 22 Aug 2025
Swept path analysis fire and rescue 500-0057-0003- p04 (amended) dated 22 Aug 2025
Proposed pedestrian crossing 500-0057-0004- p01 dated 22 Aug 2025
Air quality assessment EVS3017-FOC-XXX-XX RP-O-0001 V1 dated 17 April 2025
Arboricultural impact assessment RT-MME-180751-03 Rev A dated 17 April 2025
Arboricultural method statement RT-MME-180751-04 Rev A dated 17 April 2025
Drainage impact assessment P93396 02 dated 17 April 2025
Biodiversity statement & metric assessment RT-MME-180751-05 Rev A dated 17 April 2025
Financial viability assessment TJ/RJM/100910 dated 17 April 2025
Heritage statement EVS3017-RPS-HIA-XX-RP-O-0001 dated 17 April 2025
Phase 1 and phase 2 site appraisal EVS3017-PPC-SI1-XX RP-G-0001 and EVS3017-PPC-SI2-XX RP-G-0002 dated 17 April 2025
Typical details 1 of 2 and 2 of 2 EVS3017-GGP-CIV-XX DR-C-112 and EVS3017-GGP-CIV-XX DR-C-111 P02 dated 17 April 2025
Preliminary ecological appraisal RT-MME-180751-02 dated 17 April 2025
Transport statement EV3017-HIG-00-RP-H 0001 dated 17 April 2025

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

- 3) Prior to their first installation, details of the form, colour and finish of the materials to be used externally on the walls and roofs shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance, to safeguard the visual amenities of the area

- 4) No works in connection with site drainage shall commence until a scheme for a surface water drainage strategy for the proposed development has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall include details of surface water drainage measures, including for hardstanding areas, and shall include the results of an assessment into the potential of

disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system (SuDS). If a connection to a sewer system is proposed, then evidence shall be submitted of the in principal approval of Severn Trent water for this connection. The scheme should include run off treatment proposals for surface water drainage. Where the scheme includes communal surface water drainage assets proposals for dealing with the future maintenance of these assets should be included. The scheme should include proposals for informing future owners or occupiers of the arrangements for maintenance of communal surface water drainage assets. The approved surface water drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first use of the development and thereafter maintained in accordance with the agreed scheme.

Reason: In order to ensure satisfactory drainage conditions that will not create or exacerbate flood risk on site or within the surrounding local area.

- 5) In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. The applicant is advised to immediately seek the advice of an independent geo-environmental consultant experienced in contaminated land risk assessment, including intrusive investigations and remediation.

No further works should be undertaken in the areas of suspected contamination, other than that work required to be carried out as part of an approved remediation scheme, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority, until requirements 1 to 4 below have been complied with:

1. Detailed site investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons in accordance with the Environment Agency's 'Land Contamination: Risk Management' guidance and a written report of the findings produced. The risk assessment must be designed to assess the nature and extent of suspected contamination and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any further development taking place.

2. Where identified as necessary, a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to identified receptors must be prepared and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority in advance of undertaking. The remediation scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as Contaminated Land under Part 2A Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

3. The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the re-commencement of any site works in the areas of suspected contamination, other than that work required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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4. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any buildings on site.

Reason:

To ensure that the risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property, and ecosystems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

- 6) Prior to their first installation, details of specific glazing and ventilation products to be used shall be submitted for the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. The agreed details shall be implemented in perpetuity unless any variations are first agreed with the LPA. The noise mitigation recommendations relating to the building construction (Sections 8.4.1 & 8.4.2) set out in submitted documents accompanying this application are expected to be implemented in full.

Reason - In the interests of sound reduction and to safeguard residential amenities

- 7) The Development hereby approved shall not commence until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include but not be limited to the following:-
- o Measures to ensure that vehicles leaving the site do not deposit mud or other detritus on the public highway;
 - o Details of site operative parking areas, material storage areas and the location of site operatives' facilities (offices, toilets etc);
 - o The hours that delivery vehicles will be permitted to arrive and depart, and arrangements for unloading and manoeuvring;
 - o Details of any temporary construction accesses and their reinstatement; and
 - o A highway condition survey, timescale for re-inspections, and details of any reinstatement.
 - o Details of the measures that will be taken to reduce and manage the emission of noise, vibration and dust during the construction phase of the development (a nuisance management plan)

The measures set out in the approved plan shall be carried out and complied with in full during the construction of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate on-site facilities, in the interests of highway safety and to safeguard residential amenities

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- 8) The Development hereby approved shall not be first occupied until the vehicular access is provided as per the Local Highway Authority requirements or as otherwise agreed with the Local Highway Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety

- 9) The Development hereby approved shall not be first occupied until the visibility splays are provided within WCC Highways-controlled land as per the Local Highway Authority requirements.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety

- 10) The Development hereby approved shall not commence until a Stage 2 Road Safety Audit report, together with the Designer's Response, for the detailed design of the highway improvement works, including the site access arrangements and also including pedestrian and cyclist routes to the site, have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 11) Upon completion of the new developments vehicular access hereby approved, a Stage 3 Road Safety Audit report, together with the Designer's Response, for the construction of the scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 21 days of the official opening date.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 12) Details of any streetlighting to serve the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). prior to the any works being carried out in connection to the site access. This Street Lighting Assessment report shall be submitted to the LPA for discussion with the Local Highway Authority. The agreed scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details (unless the Local Planning Authority gives prior written approval to any subsequent variations) prior to first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be retained in that form.

Reason: To ensure the adequate provision of street lighting in the interests of highway safety.

- 13) The Development hereby approved shall not be occupied until a residential Travel Welcome Pack promoting sustainable forms of access to the development has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The pack shall be provided to each dwelling prior to first occupation.

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Reason: To ensure residents of the development site are offered a genuine choice of sustainable travel modes and to promote sustainable access to the development site.

- 14) The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until a full Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall include but not be limited to:

- o undertaking a travel survey within 6 months of 50% occupation.
- o the mechanisms for monitoring and review;
- o the mechanisms for reporting;
- o the remedial measures to be applied in the event that targets are not met;
- o mechanisms to secure variations to the Travel Plan following monitoring and reviews; and
- o appointment and contact details of a travel plan coordinator.

Thereafter the Travel Plan shall be implemented, monitored and reviewed in line with the approved details for a minimum period of five years following occupation.

Reason: To reduce single occupancy car travel and provide a genuine alternative for travel by active and sustainable modes of transport.

- 15) No development above foundation level shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include hard surfacing materials, new planting, trees and shrubs to be retained, together with measures to be taken for their protection while building works are in progress.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area

- 16) All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar sizes or species unless the local planning authority gives written approval to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area

- 17) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, a scheme for the provision of bat roost opportunities and bird nest boxes within the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented by suitably qualified personnel to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to the first use of the development approved.

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Reason: In the interests of biodiversity and in accordance with the provisions of National Planning Policy Framework

- 18) Occupation of the apartments (excluding any on-site staff) shall be restricted at all times to people of 60 years of age and above, or those of at least 55 years of age and living with a spouse or partner of 60 years or above.

To ensure that the development is occupied only by persons for whom the retirement accommodation has been specifically designed, in the interests of proper planning and to accord with the approved scheme.

Informatives

- 1) The local planning authority have 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.
- 2) The granting of this planning permission does not remove any obligations on the applicant to undertake a technical design check of the proposed highway works with the Highway Authority, nor does it confirm acceptance of the proposal by the Highway Authority until that design check process has been concluded. Upon the satisfactory completion of the technical check the design would be suitable to allow conditions imposed under this permission to be discharged but works to the public highway cannot take place until a legal agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 has been entered into and the applicant has complied with the requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

The applicant is urged to engage with the Highway Authority as early as possible to ensure that the approval process is started in a timely manner to achieve delivery of the highway works in accordance with the above-mentioned conditions.

The applicant should be aware of the term "highway works" being inclusive of, but not limited to, the proposed junction arrangement, street lighting, structures, and any necessary traffic regulation orders.

- 3) If it is the applicant's intention to request the County Council, as Highway Authority, to adopt the proposed roadworks as maintainable at the public expense, then details of the layout and alignment, widths and levels of the proposed roadworks, which shall comply with any plans approved under this planning consent unless otherwise agreed in writing, together with all necessary drainage arrangements and run off calculations shall be submitted to the County Council's Network Control Manager, Worcestershire County Council, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NP. No works on the site of the development shall be

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commenced until these details have been approved by the County Council as Highway Authority and an Agreement under Section 38 of the Highways Act, 1980, entered into.

- 4) It is expected that contractors are registered with the Considerate Constructors scheme and comply with the code of conduct in full

Constructors should give utmost consideration to their impact on neighbours and the public.

- o Informing, respecting, and showing courtesy to those affected by the work.
- o Minimising the impact of deliveries, parking, and work on the public highway.
- o Contributing to and supporting the local community and economy.
- o Working to create a positive and enduring impression and promoting the Code.

The CMP should clearly identify how the principal contractor will engage with the local community; this should be tailored to local circumstances. Contractors should also confirm how they will manage any local concerns and complaints and provide an agreed Service Level Agreement for responding to said issues.

Contractors should ensure that courtesy boards are provided, and information shared with the local community relating to the timing of operations and contact details for a site coordinator in the event of any difficulties.

This does not offer any relief to obligations under existing Legislation.

- 5) To determine the safety and requirement to light, the developer shall contact WCC Street Lighting to retrieve a feasibility report template and request existing lighting asset information. The report shall be completed, and all documents requested within the template provided to WCC for approval.

- 6) The Residential Travel Welcome Pack must be prepared in accordance with Worcestershire County Council's Guidelines for Producing Travel Welcome Packs which are available from Worcestershire County Council's Travel Planning Officer

- 7) Biodiversity Net Gain

The application is subject to statutory biodiversity net gain legislation under the Environment Act 2021, and the Biodiversity Gain Condition will be applied.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Redditch Borough Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered to apply.

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

1. The application for planning permission was made before 12 February 2024.
2. The planning permission relates to development to which section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (planning permission for development already carried out) applies.
3. The planning permission was granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and (i) the original planning permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates* was granted before 12 February 2024; or (ii) the application for the original planning permission* to which the section 73 planning permission relates was made before 12 February 2024.
4. The permission which has been granted is for development which is exempt being:
 - 4.1 Development which is not 'major development' (within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015) where:
 - i) the application for planning permission was made before 2 April 2024;
 - ii) planning permission is granted which has effect before 2 April 2024; or
 - iii) planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 where the original permission to which the section 73 permission relates* was exempt by virtue of (i) or (ii).
 - 4.2 Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
 - i) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
 - ii) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).
 - 4.3 Development which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. A "householder application" means an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse which is not an application for change of use or an application to change the number of dwellings in a building.
 - 4.4 Development of a biodiversity gain site, meaning development which is undertaken solely or mainly for the purpose of fulfilling, in whole or in part, the Biodiversity Gain Planning condition which applies in relation to another

development, (no account is to be taken of any facility for the public to access or to use the site for educational or recreational purposes, if that access or use is permitted without the payment of a fee).

4.5 Self and Custom Build Development, meaning development which:

i) consists of no more than 9 dwellings;

ii) is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares; and

iii) consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding (as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015).

4.6 Development forming part of, or ancillary to, the high speed railway transport network (High Speed 2) comprising connections between all or any of the places or parts of the transport network specified in section 1(2) of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013.

* "original planning permission means the permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates" means a planning permission which is the first in a sequence of two or more planning permissions, where the second and any subsequent planning permissions are section 73 planning permissions.

Irreplaceable habitat

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

The effect of section 73D of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

If planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (application to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) and a Biodiversity Gain Plan was approved in relation to the previous planning permission ("the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan") there are circumstances when the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan is regarded as approved for the purpose of discharging the biodiversity gain condition subject to which the section 73 planning permission is granted.

Those circumstances are that the conditions subject to which the section 73 permission is granted:

i) do not affect the post-development value of the onsite habitat as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan, and

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ii) in the case of planning permission for a development where all or any part of the onsite habitat is irreplaceable habitat the conditions do not change the effect of the development on the biodiversity of that onsite habitat (including any arrangements made to compensate for any such effect) as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan.

Procedural matters

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the application is for major development and it is recommended that planning permission is granted. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.