

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 24 November 2021 at 5.30 pm in West Stand, AFC Telford United, Watling Street, Wellington, Telford, TF1 2TU

Present: Councillors G H Cook, N A Dugmore, I T W Fletcher, J Jones, K Middleton, K S Sahota (as substitute for R Mehta), P J Scott and C F Smith (Chair)

In Attendance: K Denmark (Principal Planning Officer), I Ross (Legal Adviser) and M Turner (Area Team Planning Manager - East)

Apologies: Councillors J Loveridge and R Mehta

PC215 Declarations of Interest

Councillor G Cook declared an interest in planning applications TWC/2021/0594 and TWC/2021/0595 because he was a member of Wellington Town Council and had been present during the Committee's consideration of the applications and indicated that he would withdraw from the meeting during determination thereof.

In respect of planning application TWC/2016/0816, Councillor P Scott advised that he was a member of Newport Town Council but had not been involved in any discussions on this application.

PC216 Deferred/Withdrawn Applications

None.

PC217 Site Visits

It was **RESOLVED** – that the following site visits take place:

TWC/2021/0871 – Holy Trinity Academy
TWC/2020/1056 = Land at The Hem, Nedge lane
TWC/2021/0637 - Former Builders Yard, Barrack Lane, Lilleshall
TWC/2021/0796 land at Station Road Newport
TWC/2021/0879 - 25 Pinewoods, Church Aston.

It was advised that the site visits be split over two days.

PC218 Planning Applications for Determination

Members had received a schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Committee and fully considered each report and the supplementary information tabled at the meeting regarding [each planning application] [planning applications REFERENCE and REFERENCE].

**PC219 TWC/2016/0816 - Royal Victoria Hotel, St Marys Street - 16/17
Water Lane, Newport, Shropshire**

This application was for a Deed of Variation to the S106 Agreement in connection with the 2016 planning application for the conversion of the hotel into 7no. Apartments, two and three storey rear extension to hotel, erection of 21no. terraced dwellings with associated parking and landscaping at the Royal Victoria Hotel, St Marys Street/16 & 17 Water Lane, Newport, Shropshire and the demolition of 16 and 17 Water Lane.

It sought to remove an obligation to pay commuted sums in respect of education sum of £72,070 and a sum of £16,800 towards recreation. In support of their application, viability assessment information had been provided previously to confirm that bringing this site forward would not be viable and that the requirement to pay the sums should be removed.

Viability information had been submitted and had been assessed by the Council's independent viability consultant, CBRE. Were the commuted sums to be paid, the return to the developer would not accord with that set out in the NPPF. The development had been hampered by constraints including the need to deal with the Grade Two listed building façade. It was therefore concluded that the provision of the commuted sums was not viable.

The Planning Officer referred to a late consultation response from Newport Town Council which made points including: that the Section 106 agreement was initiated at the time of the first application in 2016/17 and these costs were always going to part of the ongoing costs of the development and it was disingenuous to now reduce these very modest contributions which were for community benefit. Secondly, why should the developer be absolved from its responsibility bearing in mind the impact of the development together with the impact on local infrastructure, schools and recreation and thirdly, that this could set an unwelcome precedent for future development. The Town Council's representation also referred to the setbacks suffered by this development and that it was a continuing eyesore and dangerous structure which could result in a possible fatality and the destruction of the façade. The Town Council stressed the need for urgent action, enforcement if necessary and consideration of compulsory purchase as an option. The Town Council made reference to a dangerous structure notice on one section of the façade and the lengthy process required should a compulsory purchase order be required after service of an urgent works notice. The Planning Officer confirmed Officers' view that the benefits of the development coming forward would significantly and demonstrably outweigh harm arising out of the loss of the funding. The recommendation was put to members to approve the proposed variation of the s106 agreement.

During the debate, some Members raised concerns that the site was an eyesore and that everyone in Newport wanted it resolved, caution was needed to ensure that approval of this application did not open up opportunities for other developers to renege on an already-agreed S106 package, the building was vulnerable to falling down and that this needed to

be guarded against, the developer was holding the Council to ransom to an extent and that a 21 dwelling development should have helped with viability and reducing the commuted sums would increase the viability. Other Members felt that completing the development would help open up the public right of way which ran through the site which was important to many residents of Newport.

The Planning Officers confirmed that removal of the commuted sums would increase the return to developer to bring it more into line with margin allowed for profit under the NPPF and put them in a better position to move forward with the development. Alternative legislation could be used to lead to a compulsory purchase order if required. In terms of setting a bad precedent, Officers confirmed that this would not happen because a full viability assessment would be required in respect of each individual application and each assessment would be independently scrutinised.

Upon being put to the vote it was, unanimously:-

RESOLVED – that all required commuted sums to the Deed of Variation to the S106 Agreement be approved.

PC220 TWC/2020/0670 - Land adjacent 44 Wombridge Road, Wombridge, Telford, Shropshire

This application was for the erection of 1no. dwelling and relocation/reconfiguration of the existing stables and hay store on land adjacent, 44 Wombridge Road, Wombridge, Telford, Shropshire

The Planning officer confirmed that the site's existing use of a paddock for horses would be retained albeit repositioned and in terms of the principle of development, the site was located within the built up area of the borough where the principle of development was acceptable. With regards to the siting, design, scale and massing, the dwelling was considered to be an appropriate addition to the street scene and would be in-keeping with the adjacent properties. The current application responded more positively to the character of the area and was a significantly improved design when compared to one which was refused in 2020. The Applicant had worked to overcome the concerns initially raised by the Coal Authority and the Council's Drainage and Tree Officers due to the constraints on site. Amendments were submitted for consideration and there were no technical objections. The proposal remained subject to Condition(s) being imposed.

The legal advisor read out a written statement from Councillor S Reynolds in which he and local residents raised concerns predominantly related to coal mining, drainage (including flood risk), proximity to trees on site and in relation to archaeology and the proximity to St Leonards Priory (Wombridge) and the former burial ground. The land had a "brown land" classification and was deemed not to allow permission for dwellings.

The Planning Officer confirmed that although a restrictive covenant had been

referred to, Members were reminded that this was not a relevant planning consideration. Officers' view that there were no grounds to object to the principle of the development and the recommendation to Committee was to grant full planning permission.

During the debate some Members raised concerns regarding the restrictive covenant, archaeology, working hours during construction and the impact on the value of neighbouring properties. Other Members felt that a dwelling may improve the street scene it was difficult to find a reason to refuse the application.

Upon being put to the vote it was, unanimously:-

RESOLVED – that delegated authority be granted to the Service Delivery Manager to grant full planning permission (with the authority to finalise any matter including conditions) subject to the conditions contained in the report.

PC221 TWC/2021/0594 - Former New College, Telford, King Street, Wellington, Telford

This application was for a full planning application and change of use of the former college (use class F1(a)) into supported accommodation consisting of 28no. self-contained units with associated staff facilities (use class sui generis) with associated internal and external alterations, including insertion of 2no. roof lights, 1no. window to rear elevation, replacement of existing boarding, installation of new disabled access ramp and handrails together with alteration to existing access on the Former New College Telford, King Street, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

This application had been referred to the Planning Committee as the Council are the landowner.

Councillor G Cook withdrew from the meeting room during the committee's consideration and determination of this application.

The Planning Officer explained that this application related to the change of use and conversion of the former New College building to short term supported accommodation for young people. She clarified that New College was designated as a grade II listed building in 2020 and that all of the buildings over the wider site had been demolished with a scheme for that area being considered by the Council. She added that the proposed conversion would be used by homeless people and would be supported by the YMCA who would be operating the facility. The proposal would enable the young people to have some stability in their life, take on the responsibility of being required to look after a property and pay rent and assist them with getting credit ratings to be able to move into the housing market. A number of communal facilities would be available, such as a training room, laundry, cycle storage, charging points and garden areas.

The proposals would involve a number of external alterations to the building, such as the insertion of rooflights and 4 new windows, steps and handrails and CCTV cameras and cladding to the rear elevation following the removal of a large external link extension. This would replace the temporary cladding installed after the demolition works. Internally, the building would be subdivided to create the units. In terms of impacts on the listed building, the proposals would be sympathetic to enable the retention of the historic features within the building. Ten parking spaces would be provided to the rear of the building which was considered by officers to be sufficient to meet the requirements of the residents.

No objections had been raised to the proposals by statutory consultees, the Town Council supported the scheme and it was recommended that planning permission and listed building consent be granted as set out in the agenda.

During the debate some Members mentioned that One Councillor mentioned that he had been a governor at the school for 12 years and that he welcomed the retention of the building and the conversion to this accommodation and whole heartedly commended his fellow members to support it. Other Members raised concerns that the frontage to the building was being kept and refuse lorry manoeuvres.

The Planning Officer confirmed that the whole building was listed so the frontage would remain and that there were restrictions on vehicular movements but that the refuse lorries would still operate within appropriate distances from the properties.

Upon being put to the vote it was, unanimously:

RESOLVED – that delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant Full Planning Permission (with the authority to finalise any matter including conditions, or any later variations) subject to the conditions contained within the report.

PC222 TWC/2021/0595 - Former New College Telford, King Street, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

This application was for the conversion of the former college into supported accommodation consisting of 28no. self-contained units with associated staff facilities with associated internal and external alterations, including installation of 2no. rooflights, 1no. window to rear elevation, replacement of existing boarding, installation of new disabled access ramp and handrails (Listed Building Application) on the Former New College Telford, King Street, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

This application had been referred to the Planning Committee as the Council are the landowner.

Councillor G Cook withdrew from the meeting room during the committee's consideration and determination of this application.

The Planning Officer explained that this application related to the change of use and conversion of the former New College building to short term supported accommodation for young people. She clarified that New College was designated as a grade II listed building in 2020 and that all of the buildings over the wider site had been demolished with a scheme for that area being considered by the Council. She added that the proposed conversion would be used by homeless people and would be supported by the YMCA who would be operating the facility. The proposal would enable the young people to have some stability in their life, take on the responsibility of being required to look after a property and pay rent and assist them with getting credit ratings to be able to move into the housing market. A number of communal facilities would be available, such as a training room, laundry, cycle storage, charging points and garden areas.

The proposals would involve a number of external alterations to the building, such as the insertion of rooflights and 4 new windows, steps and handrails and CCTV cameras and cladding to the rear elevation following the removal of a large external link extension. This would replace the temporary cladding installed after the demolition works. Internally, the building would be subdivided to create the units. In terms of impacts on the listed building, the proposals would be sympathetic to enable the retention of the historic features within the building. Ten parking spaces would be provided to the rear of the building which was considered by officers to be sufficient to meet the requirements of the residents.

No objections had been raised to the proposals by statutory consultees, the Town Council supported the scheme and it was recommended that planning permission and listed building consent be granted as set out in the agenda. During the debate some Members mentioned that One Councillor mentioned that he had been a governor at the school for 12 years and that he welcomed the retention of the building and the conversion to this accommodation and wholeheartedly commended his fellow members to support it. Other Members raised concerns that the frontage to the building was being kept and refuse lorry manouveres.

The Planning Officer confirmed that the whole building was listed so the frontage would remain and that there were restrictions on vehicular movements but that the refuse lorries would still operate within appropriate distances from the properties.

Upon being put to the vote it was unanimously:

RESOLVED – that delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant Listed Building Consent (with the authority to finalise any matter including conditions, or any later variations) subject to the conditions contained in the report.

The meeting ended at 6.17 pm

Chairman:

Date: Wednesday, 15 December 2021