

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 24 April 2024 at 6.00 pm in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG**

**Present:** Councillors S J Reynolds (Chair), G Luter (Vice-Chair), S Bentley, N A Dugmore, G L Offland, P J Scott and A S Jhavar (as substitute for J Jones)

**In Attendance:** V Hulme (Development Management Service Delivery Manager), A Gittins (Area Team Planning Manager - West), P Stephan (Principal Planning Officer), C Edgington (Planning Officer), S Hardwick (Lead Lawyer: Litigation & Regulatory) and J Clarke (Senior Democracy Officer (Democracy))

**Apologies:** Councillors G H Cook, T L B Janke and J Jones

#### **PC49 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr S Bentley declared that he knew the Applicant in relation to planning applications TWC/2021/0356 and TWC/2021/0358 and would abstain at the vote.

#### **PC50 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13 December 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

#### **PC51 Deferred/Withdrawn Applications**

None.

#### **PC52 Site Visits**

None.

#### **PC53 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 planning applications TWC/2021/0356 and TWC/2021/0358.

#### **PC54 TWC/2021/0356 - Site of AGA Rayburn, Coalbrookdale Works, Wellington Road, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire**

This application was for the development of 101no. dwellings with associated access, infrastructure and demolition (to include the rebuilding of 1no listed

building and conversion of 1no. listed building, to provide 3no dwellings), and the creation of an open watercourse, and publically-accessible historic interpretation zone (Full Planning Application) on the site of AGA Rayburn, Coalbrookdale Works, Wellington Road, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire.

A site visit had taken place on the afternoon prior to the Committee Meeting.

This application was before Planning Committee as the application had been validated as A Non-Determination Appeal by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and it was necessary for the Planning Committee to confirm to PINS their likely determination had the application been presented to them with a recommendation.

Planning Officers considered that the level and nature of representations on this application would have warranted a Committee decision.

Planning Applications TWC/2021/0356 and TWC/2021/0358 would be heard together but the vote on the recommendations for each application would be taken individually.

Councillor C Healy, Ward Member, spoke against the likely determination be approval of the application due to the potential harm caused to the World Heritage Site. She considered that there had been a downplaying of the harm and the perceived benefits overstated and referred to the concerns raised by the International Council on Monuments & Sites (ICOMOS) in relation to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Site Status. It was requested that the north west four storey apartment block be removed and this area be left as open fields and the archaeology remain untouched which would reduce the density. Whilst it was recognised the site needed to be developed, further revisions should be sought to make the scheme acceptable and, in this regard, she would have suggested the application be refused.

Councillor M Bragg, the Gorge Parish Council, spoke against the application on behalf of local residents who raised concerns regarding the impact on the local community and the risk to the World Heritage Status. Key concerns were the density of the site, particularly in relation to the apartment block, the level of viability, single bedroom units being more appropriate for a town centre, non-adherence to planning guidance, separations standards not being met, flood risks with no betterment to the existing scheme and parking and highway issues along the Wellington Road.

Ms M Blockley, a member of the public, spoke against the application as a resident and as the Chair of the WHS Steering Group. She raised concerns regarding the significant harm to the universal site, buried archaeology, the potential damage from the proposed concrete rafts at 3m depth with buildings from the Darby era being at 1.5m deep, the application was contrary to the NPPF.

Mr A Sheldon, Applicant, spoke in favour of the likely determination and informed Members that in relation to the archaeological depths, following the

investigations, this could be conditioned. As the site was currently derelict it needed to be brought back into use as it was an eyesore. The scheme was of an exceptionally high quality and was sympathetic to the local area. Extensive investigations had been undertaken and the scheme designed to bring benefits to the local community. There were no technical reasons why the site could not be developed. ICOMOS did not fully understand the situation and a large number of objections to the application was not unusual and did not mean the proposals should be refused. He asked that Members consider the quality of the proposal, together with its associated benefits, and that the likely determination be to approve the application.

The Planning Officer gave Members a brief overview of the application and suggestions made by ICOMOS and ICOMOS-UK who were not formally objecting to the application and advised that these had been taken into consideration. The site had been redesigned taking account of the retained heritage assets and the industrial character of the site. This was a bespoke and unique design and involved substantial costs to make it viable. A Historic Interpretation Area would seek to provide a narrative of the stories of its industrial past via public art provisions. Archaeology would be recorded and left in situ with the Applicant having to provide an Archaeological Management Plan which had been accepted by Shropshire Archaeology and raft foundations utilised where necessary. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF balanced harm against public benefit and it was considered that this site provided significant public benefit. Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) wrote to the Local Planning Authority to advise of the risk that the World Heritage Site could be severely compromised if ICOMOS concerns were not fully addressed but the Officers advised Members that the ICOMOS concerns had little recognition of the site constraints and viability. The proposal was the best and most viable solution to the site and no further amendments could be made to overcome the ICOMOS concerns. With regard to increased traffic, the Local Highways Authority had reviewed the application and raised no objection; the site has an over-provision of parking and there would be no loss of existing parking along Wellington Road. A 1 bedroom housing need had been identified in the Local Plan and the feature apartment block which houses these units replicated a former three storey building in the same location. The site was brownfield and there was a vast betterment in relation to drainage by achieving greenfield rates and also with the daylighting of the culvert (which involved the removal of old pipework and a slower rate of discharge further downstream). Consideration had been given to the comments made by ICOMOS, and these have been addressed where feasible and considered in the planning balance. However, the risk to the loss of the WHS status, is not a material planning consideration. On balance the site constraints have a level of harm which was considered to be less than substantial and brought forward a variety of public benefits which weighed in its favour. The application was therefore considered compliant with policy contained within the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan and NPPF.

During the debate, some Members raised serious concerns regarding the loss of the World Heritage Site (WHS). They acknowledged that the site was in a poor condition and some buildings required urgent attention. Although the

proposals were sympathetic to the area a balance was required to consider the threat to the WHS. Other Members considered that the archaeology needed retaining as this was key to the local area and its history; and more needed to be done to mitigate the impact on local amenities and highway issues needed to be reconsidered, particularly in relation to parking and the impact on Cherry Tree Hill.

Members asked it be noted that whatever decision was made that the Planning Committee unanimously expressed their concerns over the loss of the World Heritage Site and this must be considered as part of the decision.

On being put to the vote it was, by a majority:

**RESOLVED – that a formal recommendation would have been made to the Planning Committee it would have set out a recommendation to:**

- a) **Delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant full planning permission subject to conditions, informatives and the applicant entering in to a S106 agreement, as set out in the report;**
- b) **delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant Listed Building Consent subject to conditions, informatives as set out in the report and set out under application TWC/2021/0358; and**
- c) **the report should be read in conjunction with the Listed Building Consent Application (TWC/2021/0358), which covered all material planning and Listed Building matters.**

**PC55      TWC/2021/0358 - Site of AGA Rayburn, Coalbrookdale Works, Wellington Road, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire**

This application was for works to facilitate the conversion of the former compressor house and reconstruction of the former pattern shop to provide 3no. dwellings – in association with the redevelopment of the former AGA site (Listed Building Consent Application) on the site of AGA Rayburn, Coalbrookdale Works, Wellington Road, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire.

A site visit had taken place on the afternoon prior to the Committee Meeting.

This application was before Planning Committee as the application had been validated as A Non-Determination Appeal by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and it was necessary for the Planning Committee to confirm to PINS their likely determination had the application been presented to them with a recommendation.

Planning Officers considered that the level and nature of representations on this application would have warranted a Committee decision.

Planning Applications TWC/2021/0356 and TWC/2021/0358 would be heard together but the vote on the recommendations for each application would be taken individually.

Ms M Blockley, a member of the public, spoke against the application as a resident and as the Chair of the WHS Steering Group. She raised concerns the setting of the Listed Building, scale and size of the apartment block, the design reference to the textile mills. Further concerns were raised regarding the concrete raft adjacent to the listed building and the overwhelming geological risk management due to land stability and warping and that piles should be used as an alternative.

Mr A Sheldon, Applicant, spoke in favour of the likely determination and informed Members that in relation to the design, scale and nature of the apartment block this scale of the buildings were not any greater that what was already in place. Discussions had taken place with Historic England in relation to the best development in order to recognise the past history of the site.

The Planning Officer gave Members a brief overview of the application and suggestions made by ICOMOS and ICOMOS-UK who were not formally objecting to the application and advised that these had been taken into consideration. The site had been redesigned taking account of the retained heritage assets and the industrial character of the site. This was a bespoke and unique design and involved substantial costs to make it viable. A Historic Interpretation Area would seek to provide a narrative of the stories of its industrial past via public art provisions. Archaeology would be recorded and left in situ with the Applicant having to provide an Archaeological Management Plan which had been accepted by Shropshire Archaeology and raft foundations utilised where necessary. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF balanced harm against public benefit and it was considered that this site provided significant public benefit. Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) wrote to the Local Planning Authority to advise of the risk that the World Heritage Site could be severely compromised if ICOMOS concerns were not fully addressed but the Officers advised Members that the ICOMOS concerns had little recognition of the site constraints and viability. The proposal was the best and most viable solution to the site and no further amendments could be made to overcome the ICOMOS concerns. With regard to increased traffic, the Local Highways Authority had reviewed the application and raised no objection; the site has an over-provision of parking and there would be no loss of existing parking along Wellington Road. A 1 bedroom housing need had been identified in the Local Plan and the feature apartment block which houses these units replicated a former three storey building in the same location. The site was brownfield and there was a vast betterment in relation to drainage by achieving greenfield rates and also with the daylighting of the culvert (which involved the removal of old pipework and a slower rate of discharge further downstream). Consideration had been given to the comments made by ICOMOS, and these have been addressed where feasible and considered in the planning balance. However, the risk to the loss of the WHS status, is not a material planning consideration. On

balance the site constraints have a level of harm which was considered to be less than substantial and brought forward a variety of public benefits which weighed in its favour. The application was therefore considered compliant with policy contained within the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan and NPPF.

During the debate, some Members raised serious concerns regarding the loss of the World Heritage Site (WHS). They acknowledged that the site was in a poor condition and some buildings required urgent attention. Although the proposals were sympathetic to the area a balance was required to consider the threat to the WHS. Other Members considered that the archaeology needed retaining as this was key to the local area and its history; and more needed to be done to mitigate the impact on local amenities and highway issues needed to be reconsidered, particularly in relation to parking and the impact on Cherry Tree Hill.

Members asked it be noted that whatever decision was made that the Planning Committee unanimously expressed their concerns over the loss of the World Heritage Site and this must be considered as part of the decision.

On being put to the vote it was, by a majority:

**RESOLVED – that should a formal recommendation have been made to the Planning Committee it would have set out a recommendation that:**

- a) **Delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant full planning permission subject to conditions, informatives and the applicant entering into a S106 agreement, as detailed in the recommendation set out in the report of TWC/2021/0356;**
- b) **Delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant Listed Building Consent subject to conditions, informatives as set out in the report; and**
- c) **the report should be read in conjunction with the Full Application (TWC/2021/0356), which would cover all material planning and Listed Building matters.**

**PC56      TWC/2023/0481 - Site of Haven Boarding Kennels & Cattery, The Ridges, 1 Lightmoor Road, Lightmoor, Telford, Shropshire**

This application was for the demolition of existing buildings (including 1no. dwelling) and erection of 9no. dwellings on the site of Haven Boarding Kennels & Cattery, The Ridges, 1 Lightmoor Road, Lightmoor, Telford, Shropshire.

The application had been referred to Planning Committee at the request of Dawley Hamlets Parish Council.

A site visit had taken place on the afternoon prior to the meeting.

Councillor K Barnes spoke against the application on behalf of Dawley Hamlets Parish Council and raised concerns regarding highway safety for local residents, lack of streetlights, pavements and traffic calming and the ecological impact in relation to great crested newts and three Local Nature Reserves. She raised further concerns regarding the speed limit and the difficulty for pedestrians to be seen by cars on the blind bend. It was asked that the application be deferred until such time as pedestrian safety was addressed.

Mr D Humphreys, Applicant's Agent, spoke in favour of the development. The scheme had been delayed due to ecology and highway issues which he considered were now up to date and there was no evidence to suggest roosting bats but all recommendations relating to bat boxes and lighting would be adhered to. It was a stable brownfield site with a well thought out design with well thought out space and a large amenity area. Chimneys and Dormer windows were complimentary and met prescribed housing standards. There were two parking spaces per dwelling and a good garden space. A few trees needed to be removed on the site, but the majority would be kept and maintained. Although refuse vehicles would not enter the site due to the need for an increased road width, the unadopted road would allow for a better format and access for emergency vehicles. A speed test and highway reports had been undertaken and the access for the existing two properties would be used. A proposal link footpath would be undertaken via the adjacent site and there were no objections from the local highway authority. Drainage had been agreed with the engineers and there would be no detrimental issues on neighbouring sites.

The Planning Officer informed Members that significant consideration had been given to the site and part of the proposal was that the applicant provide a foot link from the site to Lightmoor Road. In addition, resurfacing of the carriageway and any engineering to pedestrian facilities. There were adequate visibility splays and parking on site. Some additional off-site highway works were due to be completed following the development of the former concrete works including a pedestrian refuge on the A4169 bypass, the reduction of the speed limit to 30mph and painted dragons' teeth to delineate the speed limit. Improvements to the footpath along the Lightmoor Road would be undertaken including dropped kerbs.

During the debate, some Members considered the design of the site to be fair and consistent and were pleased the pathway through the woods would be closed. The footpath along the A4169 was welcomed. The development was on a brownfield site and met housing targets. Other Members felt that the highway required a signalised crossing but that nine additional houses would not have any significant additional impact.

Upon being put to the vote it was, by a majority:

**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, legal agreement terms, or any later variations) subject to conditions and informatives as set out in the report.

**PC57**      **TWC/2024/0087 - 60 Spring Meadow, Sutton Hill, Telford, Shropshire**

This application was for the conversion of 3no. existing garages to 1no. dwelling at 60 Spring Meadow, Sutton Hill, Telford, Shropshire TF7 4AG.

The application was referred to Planning Committee by Councillor Derek White.

A site visit had taken place on the afternoon prior to the meeting.

Mr P Saunders, a member of the public, spoke against the application and raised concerns regarding the freehold of the land the development would be out of place, noise and impact on residents of the flats, access, garden space and lack of maintenance on the building.

The Planning Officer informed Members that the application was in the built-up area and in principle was acceptable. It was a one-bedroom unit for one resident and complied with national space standards. The existing garden would be split into two and both amenity areas were acceptable. An integrated design approach had been taken and was not considered detrimental to the wider row of garages. Three off-road parking spaces would be provided one space for each unit plus one space for visitors. Highways considered the parking acceptable subject to conditions. No concerns had been raised by other statutory consultees. The window for the existing first floor flat was not overlooking and a condition to obscurely glaze the window and limit its opening to 100mm would be conditioned with the window opening further for emergency use only. The proposed construction works would be conditioned in relation to construction works, hours of operation and parking of onsite building personnel. Officers were satisfied the development would not result in any significant harm. In relation to ownership, land ownership was not a material consideration and was a civil matter. The proposed works were acceptable and complied with national and local planning policy.

During the debate, some Members considered the application acceptable as the garage space was limited and the use was more beneficial as a flat and there was sufficient replacement parking. Other Members raised concerns regarding the space standards and how the number of occupants would be monitored, the setting of a precedent to convert garages to flats, insufficient off-street parking, the splitting of the garden space, loss of garage space, cramped accommodation. Mitigation measures in relation to construction times would be required.



Officers noted concerns raised by members regarding the level of off-road parking available and internal space standards, but advised that the scheme does comply with the technical guidance contained within the Local Plan and the NDSS and that therefore these were not valid reasons for refusal.

Following the debate it was, by a majority:

**RESOLVED** – that delegated authority not be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant full planning permission subject to the conditions (with authority to finalise Condition(s) and provide reasons for approval).

Following further debate and on being put to a vote it was, by a majority:

**RESOLVED** – that the application for planning permission be refused on the grounds of design and impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

**REASONS:**

*The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposed scheme would fail to respect and respond positively to its context and enhance the quality of the local built and natural environment. This is by virtue of the design of the proposed scheme, which would fail to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the application site and its immediately surrounding area; which currently makes up a row of garages at ground floor. Accordingly, the proposal would fail to comply with Policy BE1 of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan and national guidance contained within the NPPF.*

The meeting ended at 7.49 pm

**Chairman:** .....

**Date:** Wednesday 22 May 2024