

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 6.00 pm in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors S J Reynolds (Chair), G H Cook, F Doran, A R H England, A S Jhawar, J Jones, P J Scott, K T Blundell (as substitute for T L B Janke) and S Bentley (as substitute for N A Dugmore)

In Attendance: A Lowe (Director: Policy & Governance), V Hulme (Development Management Service Delivery Manager), A Gittins (Area Team Planning Manager - West), B Holloway (Biodiversity Technician), M Turner (Area Team Planning Manager - East), K Craddock (Principal Planning Officer), S Dunlop (Ecology and Green Infrastructure Specialist), J Clarke (Senior Democracy Officer (Democracy)) and C Edgington (Planning Officer)

Apologies: Councillors G Luter, N A Dugmore and T L B Janke

PC1 Declarations of Interest

None.

PC2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4 September 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

PC3 Deferred/Withdrawn Applications

None.

PC4 Site Visits

None.

PC5 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/2024/0612 and TWC/2024/0633.

PC6 TWC/2024/0605 - 34 Avon Close, Little Dawley, Telford, Shropshire, TF4 3HP

This was an application for change of use from dwelling house (use class C3) to Residential Institution (use class C2) at 34 Avon Close, Little Dawley, Telford, Shropshire, TF4 3HP.

This application had been referred to Planning Committee as the proposal had received a notable number of objections.

Mr Blair, member of the public, spoke against the application on behalf of the local community and neighbours. He raised concerns in relation to the impact on the close-knit community and older people in the cul-de-sac, traffic, parking, the nearby pool, noise and impact on amenity. Further concerns were raised in relation to the Deed which had been signed by all local residents that no trade or business would be undertaken in the private dwelling that would cause nuisance or annoyance to any adjoining houses. He suggested other areas may be more suitable for this application.

Mr Wiatt, applicant, spoke in favour of the application and following on from comments from the previous speaker he felt that this was the perfect place for the care home. The application complied with planning legislation and would be a family-like setting for two children. Hours of operation would be 24-7 and would have three staff on site at any given point as set out in the staff operational plan. High safety perimeters and fencing panels, together with vegetation would decrease any impact on the local community. Ofsted regulations would also set out mitigation measures required but the home would work as a loving home for children to give them a stable family life and would fill the gap left by the lack of foster families.

The Planning Officer informed Members that an amended site plan had been received showing three parking spaces, together with additional information in relation to staff shift patterns. The application site was in the built-up area of Telford where the principle of development was considered acceptable and was within an existing dwelling. There would be no external alteration but internal conversion to allow for a third bedroom/office for staff. The scale and design would not be altered or have an impact on the street scene and was considered acceptable for the type and level of care proposed. Policy HO7 stated that this specialist housing need required Use Class 2 and the Specialist Housing Team supported the proposal. Care would be provided by two support workers, a senior officer and a manager with staff changeover every 48 hours but staggered to limit disruption. A maximum of three staff to be present at any one time with the manager on call. It was considered that visits from other professionals would be infrequent. Staff meetings and training would not take place on site. A balanced approach had been taken and a temporary two year planning consent put forward to ascertain if the use can be undertaken without detriment to the locality and the site managed successfully.

During the debate, some Members noted that the Parish Council had not commented on the application. There was a need for this type of care and there would be conditions and agencies to deal with any difficulties and due to the minimal risk and they were happy to support the application. Other Members echoed these comments and as corporate parents all children should be given opportunities to provide the best start in life, be welcomed into local communities and society. Clarification was sought on whether the property was a semi-detached or detached house and concerns raised regarding noise impact on a semi-detached property. A suggestion came forward that additional insulation be installed between the property as a noise mitigation measure. Some concerns were raised regarding parking during staff changeover, transport to and from school and additional car journeys associated with the care home. A question was raised in relation to the Deeds stating that no business could operate at the properties and how this affected the care home's operation.

The Planning Officer confirmed that the property was semi-detached and that the applicant would need to meet building regulations but that insulation could not be included as a condition. In relation to handover and car journeys, two staff work on a 'two days on two days off' basis and staff changes were staggered so there would be no more than three cars on site at any one time. No information had been supplied in relation to pool cars and staff would use their own cars for school journeys.

The Development Management Service Delivery Manager advised Members that as a mitigation measure against noise the application had been conditioned for two years in order this could be monitored and if any issues were raised the applicants would need to re-submit the application on the expiration of the permission.

In relation to the Deeds, the Legal Advisor informed Members that this was a personal matter for the homeowners and was not a material planning consideration. In relation to noise additional conditions could be looked into.

It was proposed and seconded that an additional condition in relation to noise be sought. This was unanimously agreed.

On being put to the vote it was, unanimously:

RESOLVED – that delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant Planning Permission (with the authority to finalise any matter including conditions, legal agreement terms, or any later variations) subject to conditions (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager) and informatives set out in the report.

**PC7 TWC/2024/0612 - Land north/east of Greenways Farm Shop,
Off Church Street, St Georges, Telford, Shropshire**

This application was an outline application for the erection of up to 100no. dwellings with associated infrastructure and landscaping works on land north of St Georges Bypass, St Georges, Telford, TF2 9LF.

The Application had been brought before Planning Committee due to the significant level of public objection.

An update report was tabled at the meeting and detailed a correction to the committee report in relation to it incorrectly stating "Grant Full Planning Permission." The application before Members was to consider granting outline planning permission. It also gave details of further representations received.

Councillor A Harrison, St Georges & Priorslee Parish Council spoke on behalf of local residents who had given significant opposition at three Parish meetings. There was a need for new homes but this was not a suitable site for them. Although it was noted that there had been a reduction in dwellings from 120 to 100 it was considered that this had not gone far enough and it was asked that the numbers reduce further. There would be a negative impact on the biodiversity and this was one of the few remaining large green spaces within St Georges & Priorslee. It would significantly impact local infrastructure, schools, residents, doctors and dentists. There were no public transport links to this site.

Councillor T Nelson read out a statement on behalf of Councillor R Tyrrell, adjoining Ward Councillor, who was unable to attend at the meeting. Over 300 objections had been received on this application and a previous application on this site had been withdrawn on 29 January 2024. The application did not form part of the allocation within the Local Plan and there was no identified need for the development. The drainage had not been addressed and there was a site of historical interest with a Roman moat immediately adjacent to the site. A desk-based report had taken place rather than site inspections. The Local Plan 2018 acknowledged its own limitations. Other concerns were lack of play facilities, overdevelopment, lack of parking and the impact on local roads. The block of flats was not in keeping with the village style and the application was silent on the property type. Highway safety in relation to the new junction on A5 Telford Way and the busy road at Limekiln roundabout and traffic would use alternative local roads. Priorslee was very busy from development and the rebuild of the secondary school and traffic concerns in relation to this had proved correct. There would be loss of amenity and green space, flora, fauna and wildlife. Quality affordable housing was required but this did not satisfy the need. It was important to protect the green space and heritage.

Mr A Whittle, Member of the Public, spoke against the application and raised concerns in relation to the NPPF and the proposed reforms. He felt the application should be based on current national policy. There had been a

huge number of objections and the sentiment was evidence that there a real risk that this development would take place and the perception was that it would be development at any cost impacting long term physical and mental health of residents. It would impact neighbour amenity and privacy as it would back on to neighbouring houses and look directly in. Concerns were raised that the financial contributions would run out quickly and there would be a large demand for services after the pot was empty. The application should be assessed on its individual merits and flaws and to build several hundred homes and shops on a busy arterial road on which large articulated vehicles travelled was overdevelopment. The traffic assessment was from a period that reduced the level of risk and failed to include collision data and was also out of date. In relation to Policy NE1 and net biodiversity gain, there was a shortfall of habitat, and the off-site habitat would not benefit St Georges. The travel plan set out the plan for sustainable travel and Policy C1 promoted alternative travel but it was considered that by providing parking for 250 did not encourage alternative travel. The junction would double the road width to accommodate it. The crossing would cause a bottle neck and a risk to both drivers and pedestrians. It was the last remaining ancient farmland in the area. Archaeological interpretation is favoured but this application would be likely to remove or heavily truncate the archaeological features within its footprint.

Mr PJ Triplow, Applicant's Agent, spoke in favour of the application and confirmed that they were fully behind the progressive emerging Local Plan which formed a straightforward and uncomplicated opportunity to deliver housing targets. The site lay within the urban boundary and was not part of the green network and this was acceptable in principle. There were no objections from statutory consultees and he was confident that work could be undertaken to ensure that the reserved matters application was workable. The planning process would bring improvements in healthcare and there had been a positive response, together with an opportunity to upgrade school sports pitches, the local doctor's surgery and housing. The Local Highway Authority supported the controlled crossing on the A5 as this had not previously been in situ and this would make for safer use of the public right of way. He understood it as tough to accept change but outline planning permission gave the flexibility required to shape the application that worked best on the site. Density had been reduced to 100 dwellings and in relation to the moat, the development would be away from the moat as shown in the plans submitted. The applicant would continue to listen to the public and evolve the application as necessary.

The Planning Officer informed Members that this was an outline planning application and they were asked to consider whether the principle of development was acceptable with all remaining matters, including layout, scale, appearance and landscape coming forward later under a reserved matters application should this application be approved. St Georges was in the urban boundary where the principle of development is supported through the Local Plan. The application was not in an allocated housing site, but this was not a reason to refuse in itself. Housing policies allowed for windfall sites

which sometimes came forward and these are relied on to deliver the housing targets set for the Council set by the government. There had been a large number of objections and officers recognised the sentiments and strength of feeling. The land is privately owned and not green belt. There is a public right of way accessible across the site and this would be retained as part of the application. The remainder of the site did not represent publicly owned land and therefore could be fenced off either side of the public right of way up to 2m in height around the boundaries if the landowner was minded. The right of way formed a direct link to the public open space known as The Flash. The development brought forward a signalised pedestrian crossing enabling pedestrians to find a safe and continuous route, together with a reduction in the speed limit. Bus and cycle links would also be enhanced. Ecology and Highways raised no objections subject to a Section 106 agreement and conditions relating installation of litterbins and footpath improvements at The Flash and contributions towards Telford Road Strategy. The applicant had agreed the S106 contributions in full.

During the debate, some Members raised concerns that, although this was the first application that had put forward money towards local health services, it would only make surgeries larger and not provide more doctors. It was asked that going forward every application of 50 houses and above engaged with the Integrated Care Board to secure money into the local health service. Further concerns were raised that the application site was not allocated in the Local Plan, the impact on the highway and parking, overdevelopment, drainage, density and the impact on the archaeological site. Other Members felt that as this was an outline application and further details would come forward in the reserved matters application that there was no material reason to refuse.

The Planning Officer confirmed to Members that Severn Trent had issued standing guidance that if they had not replied to an application within 21 days that they had no objections.

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

RESOLVED – that the application not be approved.

The Chair then sought a proposal outlining the reasons for refusal. Following a debate in relation to the reasons for refusal, it was proposed that an adjournment be taken so that legal advice could be taken and the meeting adjourned for a short period of time.

Upon the re-start of the meeting, the Chair, following legal advice, put forward that the application be deferred.

Councillor Scott proposed that the application be deferred in order for the applicant to consider the density when taken as a whole within the wider locality and come back with a more acceptable proposal. It was also an opportunity to address the other issues discussed during the meeting.

The Legal Advisor set out that the deferral had been proposed that the application be deferred in order for officers to have discussion with the applicant in relation to the density on the surrounding area. This was confirmed by Members and seconded.

Upon being put to the vote it was, unanimously:

RESOLVED – that the application be deferred in order for discussion to take place with the applicant in relation to the density on the surrounding area.

PC8 TWC/2024/0633 - Breffni House, Farm Lane, Horsehay, Telford, Shropshire, TF4 2NE

This application was for a change of use from Residential Dwelling (Use Class C3) to Residential Care Home (Use Class C2) at Breffni House, Farm Lane, Horsehay, Telford, Shropshire, TF4 2NE.

The application was before Planning Committee due to the notable number of objections.

An update report had been tabled at the meeting and gave details of additional neighbour representations objecting to the proposed scheme.

Mr L O'Dwyer, Applicant's Agent, spoke in favour of the application. The business had been established for 10 years and gave therapeutic childcare in a safe, nurturing and enriching environment. It puts the children's past experiences behind them and recognises their potential allowing them to leave care and gain independent jobs and become valuable members of the community. It was a specialised service and was run by a wealth of experienced professionals with a clinical director and regional manager who provided the highest levels of care. Positive outcomes had been received from Ofsted inspections. A key element of the inspections was how they engaged, supported and enhanced development and social connections of the children. The children were encouraged to exchange gifts and cards with neighbours during special occasions. It was understood that opening a children's home could create concerns and all of the homes were strategically situated in built up areas in order the children grow up within the community. Concerns are quickly alleviated and only suitable children were accommodated in the community environment. There had only been one complaint during the last three years which demonstrated the positive relationships with the community and recognised their value to the local area. There would be negligible impact on the local road network. They were an excellent and valued employer and Telford and Wrekin Council's Commissioning Team agreed that it met local needs in the borough and complied with policies in relation to specialist housing need.

The Planning Officer informed Members that the principle of development was acceptable. This was an existing six bedroomed dwelling which would be converted into a four bedroomed care home for four young people aged 7-17

years. There would be no external alteration so it would not impact the existing street scene. Some internal changes would be necessary suitable for the type and level of care. Care staff would be on site and share night shifts. The dwelling was near to Lightmoor Village Primary School and the Morrisons supermarket with a bus stop 0.3 miles from the site. The development was compliant with Policy HO7 of the Local Plan and specialist housing needs Policy C2. The Specialist Housing Team were supportive of the application and it filled local sufficiency needs. Supporting documentation had been provided in relation to staffing levels on site which would be one manager and four care staff. Two staff would be present during the day with the others throughout the night. There would be a short staff changeover period during the morning. It was felt that visitors to the site would be infrequent and staff meetings would be held off-site. The site would be operated similarly to that of a large family home and there would be no adverse impact on nearby residents. Onsite parking and car movement plans had been submitted outlining the anticipated movements and this would cause little disturbance to the surrounding highway network. The driveway and staff number levels/traffic movements did not differ from that of the existing dwelling. Access, egress and the space for manoeuvring vehicles was considered acceptable by the highway authority and was considered compliant under Policy C3 of the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan. The operation proposed was suitable subject to conditions and all material considerations had been addressed within the update report. The consultation exercise had been considered suitable in this instance with relevant neighbouring properties formally consulted and all representations had been taken into consideration. The use of sustainable locations and family homes rather than young persons being raised in institutional settings was favoured by Ofsted. A previous application on the site had been refused. This required lawful development certificate and had been submitted earlier in the year. The local planning authority assessed whether a full planning application be submitted for determination or whether the works would be lawful and for this reason the application had been refused. There were no other concerns raised and no technical reasons for refusing the application.

During the debate, some Members noted that the Parish Council had not commented on the application and there was nobody registered to speak against. There was a need for this type of care and there would be conditions and agencies to deal with any difficulties and due to the minimal risk, they were happy to support the application. Other Members echoed these comments and as corporate parents all children should have the opportunity to have the best start in life, be welcomed into local communities and society.

Upon being put to the vote it was, unanimously:

RESOLVED – that delegated authority be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to grant planning permission (with the authority to finalise any matter including conditions, legal agreement terms, or any later variations) subject to the conditions (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery

Manager) and the informatives set out in the report and the update report.

The meeting ended at 7.46 pm

Chairman:

Date: Monday 25 November 2024