



TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

Wednesday 31st August 2022

Present: Cllrs. J Raywood, H Bowman, R Gurney, P Jones and Mr R Maggs

Also present: 2 members of the public

MINUTES

- P.22/23.126 Welcome.**
The chairman welcomed all present and introductions were made. The meeting started at 7.35pm
- P.22/23.127 To receive apologies for absence**
Cllr. S Raywood (likely to be very late) and Mr R Carey
- P.22/23.128 To receive declarations of interest**
None
- P.22/23.129 To receive and consider requests for dispensations**
None
- P.22/23.130 Public participation** *(to provide members of the public/press with the opportunity to comment on items on the agenda or raise items for future consideration. In accordance with Standing Orders this will not exceed 12 minutes in total and 3 minutes per person)*
None
- P.22/23.131 To approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 17th August 2022**
Proposed by Cllr Gurney and seconded by Cllr Jones
It was resolved to **approve** the minutes.
- P.22/23.132 To receive updates on matters arising from the minutes – for information only**
None, that are not covered elsewhere in this agenda

P.22/23.133 To note correspondence

Following on from the document supplied by the Civic Society (and shared with this committee) regarding properties in the three main streets which had been subject to unauthorised works, JR was invited to, and attended a meeting with the Civic Society and officers of the Borough Council. The Borough Council has expressed an interest in this committee using its public engagement strategy to host a series of surgeries/seminars on applying for Listed Building Control. Committee members are in favour of this.

P.22/23.134 Outline planning application for the erection of up to 250 dwellings, community sports pavilion and outdoor sports pitches, as well as associated highway, drainage and green infrastructure including trim trail, outdoor play and community orchard. All matters reserved except for access.

Planning Application

Land To The South-east Of Bluebell Road And East Of Rudgeway Lane, Wheatpieces, Tewkesbury.

Ref. No: 22/00834/OUT

Observations:

Tewkesbury Town is a neighbouring civil parish to Ashchurch Rural Parish, within which the proposed development is sited. However, the site is situated within Tewkesbury Abbey's ecclesiastical parish boundary and therefore its neighbours and potential residents are very much a part of Tewkesbury's wider community. For that reason, the comments below are largely, but not exclusively, restricted to the perceived potential impacts on our civil parish.

The Town Council notes that the site of the proposed development is not identified in the Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan but that the reports accompanying this application suggest that the land in question has limited value for any use other than housing. However, it wishes to make the following observations:

Access to local footpaths and bridleways – there is already concern about access to local public footpaths and bridleways around the Wheatpieces Estate and this is significant, due to the relatively high population of local horses. The Town Council wishes to emphasise the need to ensure safe routes for the significant local population of horses and their riders, and also for walkers. The Town Council considers that the footpaths and cycle path alongside Jubilee Way are in a poor state and unfit for the current level of usage. This important because children will be using these in order to get to school.

Green infrastructure – the accompanying reports, particularly the landscape and visual impact assessment and the ecological survey, suggest that there's so little to celebrate on this site at present, that development would constitute an improvement. It appears that the proposed site does not provide very much in the way of habitat but that species do pass through the area. Particular attention should be paid to linkages with existing trails in other local developments. It is noted that most of the ecological surveys are already two years old and, in view of the unusual summer of 2022, may not show things as they are now. The Town Council notes that the requirement to demonstrate 10% biodiversity net gain under the Environment Act 2021 doesn't become active until November 2023 but believes that sites which are likely to be developed after this date should be designed with this requirement in mind.

The ecological assessment categorises trees and hedgerows in terms of their 'importance'. The Town Council is aware that the hedgerows along Rudgeway Lane

are ancient but notes that their age and historical significance do not come into this assessment. It wishes to make the point that the loss of ancient hedgerows and trees should be avoided.

Topography - Given the flatness of the land, the site is likely to be easily seen from quite a distance. The top of Tewkesbury Abbey Tower can be seen from the site, so it's logical to assume that this proposed development will be seen from the top of the tower. It will also be seen from the A38. The A38 road from Gloucester is the only gateway into the town that doesn't give the visitor an impression of being surrounded by encroaching development. Screening in the form of trees and hedges is necessary in order to maintain that current impression.

Archaeology – this is yet another site of the many that are proposed to be developed in this area during the next decade or so. Although the site is considered to be a greenfield site, it is known that there was Roman and pre-Roman activity in this area and any artefacts that are discovered will need to be properly cared for. It should be noted that future storage of archaeological finds needs to be considered by all developers in this area, as the local depository is almost at capacity and other depositories within the County are full.

Flood prevention - Although reports suggest that the site itself is at low risk of flooding, it drains into watercourses that then flow towards Tewkesbury, via the Swilgate. It is not clear whether or not consideration has been given to the potential impact of this development on the Tirlbrook and its tributary, the Fidd, which is already a matter for concern to residents in the Newtown ward of our parish. Rigorous measures are needed to ensure that development on this site does not adversely affect residents downstream. It is extremely important that surface water from the site should not arrive in the vicinity of the floodplain any more quickly than it does now, as this would adversely affect existing properties within the neighbouring parish of Tewkesbury Town. To this end, it is important that the management of SUDs on the site should be proactively managed and that the responsibility for SUDs management is very clearly allocated and defined.

Sustainability - The Town Council is pleased to see the proposals for rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling. It is also pleased to see the proposal to provide infrastructure for EV charging points and Solar PV across the development, plus heat recovery.

Education - The nearest primary school is already over-subscribed and subsequent development has left little scope for expansion on that site. Where will the children go? Access to other primary schools would not be safe either on foot or by bicycle so they will be dependent on car use. Although, in theory, Queen Margaret School is a walkable or cyclable distance away for older children, it's a long way for infants, the route is not straightforward, and it involves crossing a major road at Jubilee Way. Parents may well be tempted to use the car instead.

Transport – Bluebell Road is a single carriageway road of width 6.75m. In practice, this road tends to be the site of significant on-street parking, which reduces its capacity for the additional traffic that this new development would generate. It is therefore not surprising that most drivers adhere to the speed limit along this route as the road is effectively narrower than it was designed to be and also it is not currently a through road. There is a concern that drivers of emergency vehicles and bin lorries will find the site difficult to access because of the parking. Although it was theoretically designed to accommodate bus movements these will be difficult to achieve unless suitable alternative parking can be found. Since all access to and from this site will be via Bluebell Road, access to the wider network from this development will be difficult. It

is noted that, although it was intended that there should be a bus route along Bluebell Road it hasn't happened yet.

The Transport Assessment mentions Starling Road as a potential alternative access route for cars, but in practice this would not be the preferred choice of most drivers, since it is a good deal less direct than Bluebell Road.

Access to the wider network is via Jubilee Way. This road is sometimes subject to flooding at the Ashchurch Road end and access to Ashchurch Road may be restricted on such occasions. It is important that development on this site exacerbates neither the potential for increased flooding or increased traffic congestion which, along Ashchurch Road, is already a greater problem than the reports would suggest, with local junctions being already at, or close to, capacity. Whenever an incident occurs locally on the M5 Jubilee Way, Ashchurch Road and Gloucester Road become gridlocked. This happens quite frequently. On such occasions, access onto Jubilee Way may become very difficult due to the weight of traffic on the other two arms of the roundabout.

Conditions on Bluebell Road are likely to become difficult for residents during the construction of this proposed development. The Town Council requests that movements of traffic generated by the construction should be timed to avoid commuting hours, both to and from school and to and from work.

Access to the nearest Railway Station via public transport is, in practical terms, less favourable than the report suggests. The walking route between the no. 71 bus stop and the station is along a road with frequently heavy, noisy, slow-moving traffic. Having to change buses (42 and 41) is also arduous and is likely to encourage the use of cars to access the station instead. There is limited parking at the station.

The suggestion in the Transport Assessment is that cyclists will use the carriageways within the proposed estate. It would be better to have designated cycle paths as, increasingly, cyclists seem to consider the roads too dangerous and use the footpaths instead, thus making it more difficult for pedestrians, especially children and the elderly.

Considering all the points made regarding active and sustainable transport measures, the Town Council does not believe that potential residents in this location will consider that they can manage without a car.

P.22/23.134 Removal of existing wooden panel and aluminium louvre from ground floor north elevation window and installation of aluminium louvre (mill finish to match existing louvres) fixed to the window frame, and removal of wooden panel from ground floor south elevation window and installation of aluminium louvre (mill finish to match existing louvres) fixed to the window frame

Planning Application

Telephone Exchange Station Road Tewkesbury Gloucestershire GL20 5DL

Ref. No: 22/00787/FUL

Observations:

No objection

Councillor S Raywood arrived in the meeting at this point (8.00pm).

P.22/23.135 Propose to change the shop sign.

Planning Application

Nice Tea 154 High Street Tewkesbury Gloucestershire GL20 5JP

Ref. No: 22/00442/LBC

When this committee responded to this application we concurred with the opinion of the Conservation officer, who wanted further information. We have now been informed that he has received that further information and is happy to permit. (He has confirmed that to the Town Clerk)

Observations:

The Town Council notes that the Conservation Officer is now content with the applicant's proposal and we are happy to defer to his opinion.

P.22/23.136 To note any additional applications on the Planning Portal which will expire before 14th September 2022 and agree further actions

None

P.22/23.137 To note any additional information on the Planning Portal regarding applications to which this committee has already responded, and agree further actions

None

P.22/23.138 To note information regarding Tewkesbury Borough Council's change of approach regarding planning notices.

The Town Clerk has received the following email from the Borough Planning Officer who is dealing with 22/00760/FUL - 1 Rosefield Crescent, in reply to this committee's concern at lack of planning notices in evidence nowadays.

"Thank you for your comments on the above application.

In regard to the part of the comment which relates to the lack of site notice displayed, I can confirm that for this application neighbour notifications were sent out to the surrounding properties. This is a new system that we have switched to for the past few months."

Noted.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.36pm.

The chairman would like it to be noted that, although the Planning Portal was not working this evening, the meeting was able to go ahead as planned. This was because of the diligence of committee members in being so thoroughly prepared for discussion of the contents of the agenda.

Chairman's signature

14th September 2022