

A PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL WAS HELD 7.00PM MONDAY 16 JULY 2013 AT GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER

Present

Cllrs C Neal-Sturgess (Chair), M Cargill, Y Hine, J Bunting, Y Morrison, N Knapman, J Styles, L Cumberbatch, C Wright (Town Clerk), K Wright (Clerk to the Planning Committee)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT DISCRETION OF CHAIR

There was a large turnout of members of the public who wished to speak regarding item 4h on the agenda, at the discretion of the chair all those who wished to speak were allowed the maximum time of 3 minutes each. Councillors Knapman and Bunting at this point declared their interest in relation to item 4h (see below) and expressed their wish to be allowed to speak as members of the public as well.

1. Andy Mann (of Rope Walk): Information available is sparse and the important aspects not addressed. Highways advice seems to have been ignored, in relation to visibility splays, public transport and traffic surveys. Questioned whether proposed parking is adequate, with no disabled parking provision, safety issues for buggies and the service vehicles parking in Priory Road. Street scene elevations have not been provided in the plans, however it appears they have not taken the historic setting into consideration with ridge heights not taken into account and balconies overlooking gardens.
2. Lynn Bowring (Previous district councillor of Great Alne): Has similar experiences of a retirement development being built in Great Alne, where the same arguments of "need" were used by the developers there, however he noted that the statistics used were not relevant to the exact location, only to the district. Parking provision was inadequate for visitors and staff, questions where in the town they are supposed to park. Scale inappropriate, will dominate a conservation area.
3. Susan Juned (District Cllr for Alcester): Now that the District Core Strategy is public it carries more weight therefore some of its material considerations can be used. P53 cs10 – in relation to design, it is expected to be of high standard, reflect character of surrounding and be sustainable. Cs19 in relation to specialised accommodation and schemes for the vulnerable, should meet district need and be in a suitable location within easy access to facilities (not a 35 min walk to doctors). Cs21 in relation to the housing mix and type should be a balance of all types of housing stock which relates well in scale and proportion to Alcester and contribute to sustainability.
4. Angela O'Dell (of Priory Road): Concerns about flooding, especially for the properties in Priory Road with cellars. Would like to see an independent investigation to see how the large foot print and height will affect flooding in the immediate area.
5. Peter O'Shern (of Priory Road): Concerned over height, new development will exceed the height of existing buildings on all sides of the road, including nearby listed buildings.
6. John Bunting (of Seggs Lane and Town Councillor): Also concerned over height especially as his property backs onto the back of the proposed development. Parking inadequate especially in relation for provision for care givers, having had experience of "helping hands" he knows the nurses need nearby parking and access at any time of the day and night. This is a current problem at other existing similar sites and should be addressed for future developments.
7. Gillian Hughes (of Bleachfield Street): Questions if there are enough facilities in the town, in particular the town would benefit from a swimming pool, especially for an increase of elderly residents. The Doctors is a long way from the proposed development and it is currently difficult to get an appointment, an increase in elderly residents will make this worse. Also has concerns about the potential for increased parked vehicles in Bleachfield Street which currently has problems and the lack of parking provision will make this worse too.
8. Lawrence Haines (of Seggs Lane): Considers the proposed development to be a monstrosity not in keeping with Priory Road or Alcester as a whole. As its base is higher than other buildings it will dwarf the existing housing and overlook onto neighbouring gardens. The surrounding railing will make it look like a prison and not in keeping with the conservation area it is in. The over 80's still drive therefore a parking provision of 35-40 spaces would be far more appropriate for this development. Priory road is a busy road and dangerous to cross and the plans do not include any proposed crossings. The additional elderly population will add to the existing problems at the doctors. There are existing problems with the drains and sewerage system in Priory Road and concerned this development will make them worse.
9. John Hill (of Priory Road): Would like it noted that he too had all of the concerns raised so far.
10. Nina Knapman (of Priory Road and Town Councillor): Stated that the development would mean the loss of 3 sound homes and homes with large gardens are of demand in Alcester. The plans omit the fact that Priory Road becomes the main highway when the High Street is closed, therefore the Highways surveys should consider this. The likely cost of these homes and the associated service

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charges will prohibit most Alcester residents from living there, and the developers advertisements in the national papers proves there is no immediate need in Alcester. The developers had also submitted the wrong planning statement into Stratford District Council, when this was pointed out to SDC, the document that then appeared, but looked as if it had been copied and pasted, which shows the applicants lack of consideration for Alcester.

1. Apologies

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2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Knapman – item 4h – resident on Priory Road and will be directly affected by the proposed development.

Cllr Bunting – item 4h – resident of Seggs Lane and will be directly affected by the proposed development.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of Planning Committee meeting of 17 June 2013, having been circulated, were approved and signed.

4. Planning Applications

h) Due to large turnout of public in relation to item 4h this item was moved up the agenda to be considered first:

13/01588/FUL - Proposed: Redevelopment to form 36 sheltered apartments for the elderly, including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping At: 2-6 Priory Road, Alcester, B49 5DY, For: Churchill Retirement Living.

Councillor Comments:

Cllr Hine was concerned regarding size, scale and height in relation to surrounding properties. Also concerns regarding the parking and health facilities in the town.

Cllr Morrison was concerned about traffic onto priory road and the narrow footpaths and no safe crossings for pedestrians.

Cllr Cumberbatch mentioned that certain parts of the Draft Core Strategy document should be used, particularly cs10 – design/style doesn't fit with the surroundings and cs21 – housing type not in keeping with the document. He also stated we should be careful when commenting about the health centre being able to cope as it was only recently built to cope with the current population and the increasing elderly population. He also was concerned that there was no "need" for this type of housing in Alcester with so many similar facilities already existing in the area, stating that our neighbourhood plan will prove this. The high cost of these homes is contrary to the need for low cost affordable housing for the elderly.

Cllr Cargill also was concerned about the physical size of the proposed building and the fact it overlooked surrounding properties. He commented that although the property itself was unlikely to flood he was concerned over plans to put a tank under the car park directly into the sewers. He was also concerned about the wellbeing of the likely residents with no amenities such as "sheds" available, poor community facilities and condescending comments from the developers such as "old people love a fish & chip supper". He also reiterated what Cllr Cumberbatch had said about how the development was inappropriate for Alcester as it was not affordable and in a different category to what Alcester needs, and stated that we need exact figures for the specific housing needs of Alcester.

Cllr Styles agreed with all the comments stated so far but also wanted to add her concerns over no provision of disabled parking, inadequate parking for carers, that the footpaths were too narrow, public transport is inadequate and was concerned about possible isolation issues, under cs19, as there will be no integration especially with not being able to have a car to travel places.

Cllr Cargill added that the parking did comply with the 0.3 per dwelling, however the additional parking for visitors and especially carers was needed and was not sustainable without it, and questioned the access for ambulances to the site.

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Cllr Cumberbatch added that the scale was excessive and the material perspective taking into consideration ground level and location did not fit in with the surroundings. He also commented that the inadequate provision of parking on site will result in on street parking issues and congestion for Priory Road, adding that it does get worse during festival times and Alcester is looking to develop itself as a festival town which will make this worse so adequate parking is necessary.

Cllr Neal-Sturgess commented that it looks like the developers have tried to address all the concerns raised at their public consultation, however they also had a consultation with SDC who had raised additional concerns which don't seem to have been addressed. These included impact on the conservation area, lack of regard of immediate area and listed buildings, gaps between the buildings without it looking cluttered, and the height which will have an adverse effect to the rear properties.

Councillors took a vote and unanimously agreed to reject the application and went through their checklist of material considerations.

OBJECT – ATC have to object to this application, for the following reasons:

- **Effect on visual quality of area and the character of the area**
- **Effect on conservation area, particularly the design of building**
- **Vehicular access, highway safety and congestion**
- **Car parking provision**
- **Effect on neighbours in terms of overlooking and overbearing**
- **Access for people with disabilities**
- **Flooding and surface water drainage**
- **Local need for provision of affordable housing**
- **Effect on site of ecological value**
- **Loss of views from private properties**
- **Commercial competition**

Also there are supporting statements from the NPPF and the District Draft Core Strategy Document in relation to:

- **Design and sustainability**
- **Housing type and need**
- **Wellbeing of residents**

- a) **13/01286/FUL** - Proposed: Erection of new forestry workshop building At: Sweet Acre, Exhall, Alcester, B49 6EA For: Mr A Read - (Comments by 23 July)
SUPPORT – Although this application is not in Alcester Parish, ATC had previously mentioned on the earlier VARY application for this site, and again ATC would like to add our support to the comments made by Cllr Hobbs in 2009 that conditions should be strict to prevent its conversion to a residential property.
- b) **13/01617/TREE** - Proposed: T1: Rubinia – fell. At: 4 High Street, Alcester, For: Mrs Karen Buxton (Turks Head). (Comments by 29 July)
SUPPORT - ATC Cllrs noted that this tree is actually dead and poses a potential risk to surrounding properties if it falls, therefore we support the application to have the tree removed and hope it is processed quickly in light of the current extreme weather.
- c) **13/01316/FUL** - Proposed: Change of use from 2 no. flats to a single dwelling. At: 8C High Street, Alcester, B49 5AD, For: Ms Pauline Sands. (Comments by 30 July)
SUPPORT – ATC support this application as it is just internal alterations and will return the building to its previous state with no adverse effect on the surroundings
- d) **13/01454/LBC** - Proposed: Removal of kitchen to first floor and make good floor and walls. Removal of internal ground floor brick fire separating wall. Construct two internal plasterboard walls to form bedroom and wc. At: 8C High Street, Alcester, B49 5AD, For: Ms Pauline Sands. (Comments by 30 July)

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[Same as above]

- e) **13/01489/FUL** - Proposed: Removal of substation, new boundary treatment, installation of new sculptural flagpole and signage and revision to the layout of the front car park. At: Minerva Mill Innovation Centre, Station Road, Alcester. For: Impetus Ltd. (Comments by 31 July)

OBJECT – ATC would support this application as the sculpture will add an attractive feature at the gateway into the town’s conservation area and welcome the addition to the boundary wall after the removal of the unattractive substation. However Councillors did perform an inspection of the large Lime tree as they have reservations of the necessity to remove any existing tree, especially when it is so prominent on the access into the town. After consultation with the case officer we await the necessary application for the tree’s removal after which time we would be in a better position to reconsider this current application.

- f) **13/01490/LBC** - Removal of substation, new boundary treatment, installation of new sculptural flagpole and signage and revision to the layout of the front car park. At: Minerva Mill Innovation Centre, Station Road, Alcester. For: Impetus Ltd. (Comments by 31 July)

[Same comment as above]

- g) **13/01605/ADV** - Proposed: 2no. new appendages to existing freestanding totem At: McDonalds, Oversley Mill Services, Alcester Bypass, Alcester B49 6PQ For: McDonald's Restaurant Ltd (Comments by 31 July)

SUPPORT – As this is just a replacement of the signage on an existing feature, ATC support the application.

5. Planning Application Amendments

- a) **13/01126/FUL** Proposed: Change of use from car sales garage (sui generis) to hair and beauty salon (A1) At: Priory Garage, Priory Road, Alcester, B49 5DY For: Ms S Charlton Additional consultation with WCC Highways (Comments by 22 July)

Cllrs want their reservations about the proposed access to be noted, especially as it could open up the potential for a “Rat Run” and the problems this could bring and have already been experienced in Crossroad. ATC wish to have formal confirmation from Warwickshire Highways on this amended proposed access.

6. Notice of Decision

- a) **13/01206/TREE – CONSENT WITH CONDITIONS** – T1 Cherry – crown lift to 2.5m over driveway and lift over adjacent conifer. T2 – Gleditsia – reduce crown by one-third.
- b) **13/00910/FUL – PERMISSION WITH CONDITIONS** – Installation of a one storey timber clad cabin to provide an enclosure for a biomass boiler including an external flue. At Cherry Trees Care Home, Stratford Road, Oversley Green, Alcester, B49 6LN.
- c) **10/01029/LBC – CONSENT GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS** – Change of use from training rooms and office to residential accommodation for trainees in connection with existing home care training facility. At Arrow House, 8 Church Street, Alcester, B49 5AJ.
- d) **10/01027/FUL – PERMISSION WITH CONDITIONS** - Change of use from training rooms and office to residential accommodation for trainees in connection with existing home care training facility. At Arrow House, 8 Church Street, Alcester, B49 5AJ.
- e) **13/00010/LBC – CONSENT GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS** – Replacement of various signs at Lloyds Bank TSB Plc, Stratford Road, Alcester, B49 5AX

7. SDC West Area Planning Committee meetings

- a) **13/01199/ADV – POSSIBLE REFUSAL** – Double sided illuminated M, McDonalds and Open 24 Hours signs – concerns over height and location - ATC will attend (no date as yet)

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b) There were no updates regarding other SDC West Planning Committee meetings, in particular the deferred Allimore application meeting, which has no set date as yet.

8. SDC Licencing

Following the letter to SDC regarding the application at 59 High Street, licencing department sent a form which should be submitted, and has been.

9. Stratford Road Land

The clerk informed Cllrs that the barrier construction had been paid for, the installation is still to come, plus the footboards around the rest of the perimeter will need to be paid for. After this any money left over from the £1000 will go towards trees for the site.

The Mayor put it to Cllrs that they should be looking for future use of this site with possible planning permission, so that the sale of the land could generate funds for other projects the Town Council are working on. This previously has been looked into and a flood risk assessment of the site is now necessary before the previous plans can be reviewed and a way forward decided.

10. Neighbourhood Plan

The provisional steering committee (made up of members of the planning committee) had met and discussed bringing in more people to get involved. After speaking to various groups, there were concerns about the work load involved. There were also questions about some clearer simpler information to be made available about the neighbourhood plan, looking to Stratford Town who are ahead with their neighbourhood plan. Cllr Styles had drawn up a project timescale for the neighbourhood plan and it was discussed that an end deadline of October 2014 should be aimed for and dates for the important milestones to be determined.

The Planning Committee are to look at the designated area application for the neighbourhood plan with the view to making the proposition to the next Full Council.

11. Housing Needs Survey

There were no further updates at this time

12. Correspondence

None to date

13. Propositions to full Council

There were no propositions at this time

14. Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 30 July at 7pm (Full Council Tuesday 6 August)