

A PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL WAS HELD 7.00PM MONDAY 30 JULY 2013 AT GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER

Present

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT DISCRETION OF CHAIR

There a member of the public who wished to speak regarding item 7 on the agenda. Councillors Knapman and Bunting at this point declared their interest in relation to item 7 (see below) and expressed their wish to be allowed to speak as members of the public as well.

1. Andy Mann (of Rope Walk): Following a letter from Churchill he felt they had still not tried to solve any of the issues that had been raised at the public meeting. He wanted it noted that this was not a brownfield site as the applicant claimed and is mostly garden land which is protected by government legislation, and "garden grabbing" should be avoided. The site also has 3 large family homes, which are sought after in Alcester, and would be a loss if they were lost. Priory Road is a busy thoroughfare and bus route, especially important as Alcester is gaining festival status which makes Priory Road an essential road when the High Street is closed. Highways advice seems to have been ignored, in relation to visibility splays, public transport and traffic surveys, and the services parking in the street is unacceptable. Street scene elevations have still not been provided in the plans therefore height comparisons cannot be accurately made. They have not taken the historic setting into consideration. He asked ATC to uphold their objections and questioned if Churchill's response was adequate.
2. John Bunting (resident of Seggs Lane and ATC Councillor): Stated that this proposed building will be very tall and will overlook into Seggs lane. Questioned Alcester's need for such a development especially with the recent Great Alne development. He considers the parking on site to be inadequate, stating that the residents will need cars in order to reach all the facilities in Alcester (especially with shopping), also with his own experience of carers he considers the parking for this necessary service to be inadequate.
3. Nina Knapman (resident of Priory Road and ATC Councillor): In reference to Churchill's letter, she considered their suggestion for on-street parking to be unacceptable, and their comment that others should just wait to let mobility buggies past is degrading. According to the SDC CS the development should be complementary to the residential area and design of the location, which she felt it is not, especially as about 70% of the neighbouring properties are listed buildings. She also stated that she had been in contact with English Heritage who had not been consulted by the applicant even though a development of this size should have required a consultation from English Heritage, English Heritage were to contact SDC.

1. Apologies

Y Hine, Y Morrison.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Knapman – item 7 – resident on Priory Road and will be directly affected by the proposed development.

Cllr Bunting – item 7 – 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

- a) **13/01642/TREE** - Proposed: T1: Cherry – fell. At: Lord Nelson, 69 Priory Road, Alcester, B49 5EA for: Mrs Rachel Danks (Comments by 2 August)

SUPPORT – ATC would like to see trees retained wherever possible but in this instance, for the benefit of the business in Alcester, we can accept that this particular tree is not in an ideal location. ATC would however like to suggest the condition that a similar flowering tree be planted elsewhere to replace the felled one.

As an additional note ATC Councillors would like it noted that there was inadequate information supplied with this application and it was only their local knowledge of the location which enabled them to make their decision.

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ATC do not feel it is necessary to attend a SDC Planning committee meeting regarding this application unless any objections are raised.

- b) **13/01606/FUL** - Proposed: Demolition of existing buildings and canopy and erection of two dwellings. At: Bridge Garage Services, Stratford Road, Alcester, B49 6PG for: Mr Donald Shearer (Comments by 2 August)

SUPPORT – ATC would like to say that this is one of the better and more appropriate designs they have seen for this site and appreciate how the developer appears to be accommodating the local residents' views and is using the latest technologies to improve sustainability.

However we have no note there is no design and access statement or flood risk assessment submitted as part of the application, which ATC would like to see especially as there could be a possible surface water issue being in a run-off zone.

Also there is concern regarding the bordering hedge line, which has not been maintained in the past (ownership assumed to be WCC) so we would like to see the condition that the developer will assist in its tidying as well as to be careful not to damage any roots, especially as one of the buildings is particularly close to the boundary edge.

To support the local residents we would also like to see the usual condition enforced that the demolition of the existing building be done within working hours of the working week. ATC do not feel it is necessary to attend a SDC Planning committee meeting regarding this application unless any objections are raised or discussion regarding conditions is requested.

- c) **13/01587/FUL** - Proposed: Demolition of existing garage. Erection of single storey side extension, front porch and single garage. Render finish to new and existing brickwork. At: 7 Tibbets Close, Meeting Lane, Alcester, B49 5QU for: Mr And Mrs David Wade (Comments by 2 August)

SUPPORT – This building is currently being renovated and the extension will only add to the improvements of this home in a superb location.

However ATC have to note that no ecological and bat survey has been carried out and would like this to be carried out before work commences.

ATC do not feel it is necessary to attend a SDC Planning committee meeting regarding this application unless any objections are raised or discussion regarding conditions is requested.

- d) **13/01699/FUL**- Proposed: Two storey side extension. At: 110 Hertford Road, Alcester, B49 6AR. For: Mr Peter Richardson (Comments by 12 August 2013)

SUPPORT – ATC support this application as suitable extensions to improve family homes in the town are welcomed.

ATC do not feel it is necessary to attend a SDC Planning committee meeting regarding this application unless any objections are raised from neighbours.

- e) **13/01645/FUL**- Proposed: Single storey front extension. At: 14 Chantry Crescent, Alcester, B49 5BT. For: Mrs P Rodrigues (Comments by 12 August 2013)

SUPPORT - ATC support this application as suitable extensions to improve family homes in the town are welcomed.

ATC do not feel it is necessary to attend a SDC Planning committee meeting regarding this application unless any objections are raised.

5. Planning Application Amendments

- a) **13/01140/FUL - The description of development has been amended.** Proposed: Restoration, conversion and extension of Oversley Castle and its associated outbuildings (including some rebuilding and extension of the outbuildings) into 14 dwellings, new access and associated road onto road serving Oversley Castle (road off the Wixford Road) and blocking up of existing access, associated change of use of agricultural land and associated works. At: Oversley Castle, Wixford, Alcester, B49 6DH for: Mr Paul Harvey (Additional comments direct to case officer)

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ATC did not feel it was necessary to make any additional comments to their submitted response.

6. Notice of Decision

- a) **13/01240/LBC – Consent granted with conditions** - Proposed: Affix two sizes of memorial plaques to inside of boundary wall. At: St Nicholas Church, Butter Street, Alcester, B49 5AL for: St Nicholas Parochial Church Council - *Noted*
- b) **12/02922/ADV – Consent granted with conditions** – Replacement of various signage at Lloyds Bank TSB Plc, Stratford Road, Alcester, B49 5AX - *Noted*
- c) **13/01038 - Consent granted with conditions** – Proposed secondary glazing to existing windows at 59 Priory Road, Alcester, B49 5EA - *Noted*
- d) **13/01070/FUL** – Permission with Conditions – replacement chimney to front elevation at 30 Henley Street, Alcester, B49 5QY - *Noted*
- e) **13/01069/LBC - Consent granted with conditions** - replacement chimney to front elevation, repairs to gables, roof strengthening and tying rear gable at 30 Henley Street, Alcester, B49 5QY - *Noted*
- f) **13/01164/VARY – Permission** – vary conditions 7 & 8 of 12/01437/FUL in relation to glazing to rear and rooflight. At 2 Plover Close, Alcester, B49 6AF - *Noted*
- g) **13/01177/LDP – Certificate of Lawful Proposed Use or Development** – infill of existing carport, demolition of garage and laying of block paving to front of property. At 26 Seymour Road, Alcester, B49 6JY - *Noted*
- h) **13/01288/FUL- Consent granted with conditions** – Extension to front to form entrance porch. At 22 Roebuck Park, Alcester, B49 5EF - *Noted*

7. 13/01588/FUL - At: 2-6 Priory Road, Alcester, B49 5DY, For: Churchill Retirement Living

- a) Councillors considered the content of the letter from Planning Issues rec'd 15/07/13 which had been circulated
- b) Councillors received a report from the Clerk relating to Older persons housing needs in Alcester and its Local District following a meeting with WCC
*These, as well as the information from the public participation, added some additional comments to the proposed ATC response to this application (see **Appendix 1**) which was submitted 31/07/13*

8. SDC Licencing

- a) Councillors were informed that the licence application for 59 High Street had been granted.

9. Stratford Road Land

Work is still continuing on the posts and rails for the site, footboards still to come and trees will be considered in the autumn.

Councillors discussed the possibility to use the site as a temporary car park to licenced users for particular events as a way of generating some income. However it is still the intension of the committee to obtain some sort of planning permission for the site, Councillors were informed (through the chair from Mr Mann) that when the guide/Scout carried out their feasibility study they found gas pipes which run across the site, causing potential problems for future building. This will be investigated further as well as the flood risk assessment which is to be done.

10. Housing Needs Survey

There were no further updates at this time

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11. Neighbourhood Plan

The designated area application had been circulated to the planning committee and it was agreed to put it forward as a proposal to full Council.

12. Correspondence

- a) Councillors were informed of an appeal decision which had been received regarding the Globe Hotel for its conversion to 8 flats.
- b) Councillors were also informed about notification that the Allimore (North) application had gone to appeal. Councillors discussed the necessity to now state the council's support of the figure produced in SDC's draft core strategy. This will also be brought to Full Council's attention.

13. Propositions to full Council

The following proposition was approved by the committee having been proposed by Cllr Neal-Sturgess and seconded by Cllr Cargill:

'To consider for approval the Designated Area Application for the Alcester Neighbourhood Plan'

14. Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 13 August at 7pm

Appendix 1

OBJECT – Notwithstanding the additional explanation given in a letter from the applicants, ATC have to object to this application, for the following reasons:

1. The proposed application will have a detrimental effect on the visual quality and the character of the area. The size of the proposed building on the location of a raised base will be much higher than any of the surrounding buildings and therefore will dominate the appearance along the road which is an important thoroughfare in the town and it is felt this will take away from the character of the other buildings on the road. According to the SDC CS 10 (e) the development should be a continuity of key design features that establishes the identity of the place including appropriate densities. Although other buildings along Priory Road are three Storeys they are introduced in discrete steps up from neighbouring buildings (Alcester Conservation Area Character Appraisal 7.85). The site is not a brownfield site as the applicant claims and is currently mostly garden land, this proposed application will result in a considerable loss of garden land, and this is against government legislation which protects garden land (PPS 3). This goes against the policy from SDC which states that, especially for older people the provision of recreational and leisure opportunities should be a key consideration.

2. The proposed application will have a negative effect on the conservation area, in particular relation to the design of the building, which is a mixture of several styles. The conservation area runs along the front of the site, and although the proposed building will not be within the conservation area, it will nonetheless have an influence on the setting and overall character (ACACA 7.104). The applicant will be retaining the trees along the front of the site (which are under preservation orders) but the scale of the proposed building will be so large that it cannot be screened by greenery and will therefore still form an overwhelming backdrop to the conservation area. As this proposed development is of such a considerable

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size an assessment by English Heritage should have been carried out, and has not been carried out by the applicants.

3. The proposed application has poor vehicular access, no account for highway safety has been made and the potential congestion issues have not been properly addressed. Firstly the visibility splay on the proposed access is not wide enough, the applicant's appear to be aware of this serious flaw but have done nothing to solve the problem. Alcester is becoming a festival town and as part of its many events the High Street in the town is often closed, when it is Priory Road then becomes the main road through the town and exceptionally busy. As many of the old and listed buildings along Priory road were built with no room for parking, the residents have to park along the road. Any additional pressure on this road will undoubtedly increase the risk of accidents. The applicants have offered no help to the potential elderly residents to be able to cross the road safely or indeed travel on the pavements safely, which are particularly narrow, the applicant's suggestion that they should wait to pass on the footpath is inappropriate. In addition it would appear from the plans that there is inadequate access for service vehicles, delivery vans and emergency services, with no apparent turning space provided on site, any suggestion to reverse into the road or indeed park on the road is unacceptable and not in accordance with SDC CS 10 (h), which states all developments should be capable of being reached by a range of transport modes and service vehicles. All of these issues make the application unsustainable.

4. The proposed application provides 14 car parking spaces, which although it does conform to the standard for this type of building; no additional provision has been made for visitors and more importantly essential care providers. Care providers already experience problems with being able to park close to their patients and with their time pushed to a limit it is unsustainable to expect these essential caregivers to have to park a good distance away from the proposed development. Forcing visitors to park outside the site will exasperate the congestion issues and safety of Priory Road, especially with time restrictions on the nearest car park. The applicant's statement that people in these type of developments do not require the services of care providers or ambulances is inaccurate and it would be ATC's suggestion that there are additional reserved parking spaces provided on the site for NHS/care providers and emergency service vehicles. However it should also be taken into consideration that many elderly people are continuing to drive a lot longer now and therefore the provision as it is may still be inadequate, especially if the residents are to maintain their independence, as Churchill state they wish to promote, and as SDC CS 19 (b) also supports.

5. The proposed application will have a detrimental effect on the surrounding neighbours in terms of overlooking and overbearing. As mentioned before the height of the building and in its proposed location will tower above all the surrounding buildings. The residents behind in Seggs Lane will also have the inconvenience of being directly overlooked by the proposed balconies at the rear of the upper stories of the building, thus having a detrimental effect on the amenity facility of these properties. This will also result in a loss of views from their properties, adding to the unsustainable loss of amenity use of their houses.

6. The proposed application, being a development for elderly people, is assumed to have suitable internal/external access for people with disabilities, in accordance with SDC CS 10 (h) that developments should be accessible to all people irrespective of any disability. However there is no guarantee of this from the Churchill documentation (or with any of their other properties). In addition there is also no provision of disabled parking spaces on the site, something that should be essential for this type of development. In addition according to SDC CS 19 (b) the location of the development should be within easy access to all services and facilities, enabling residents to live independently as part of the community, Churchill wrongly state that the site is next door to a Health Centre, which is

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actually a vacant building, the Alcester Health Centre is a good 35 minute walk from the proposed development (assuming as Churchill suggest that their residents don't drive), for an elderly person this would not be the ideal location for such a development.

7. The proposed application may not actually flood itself, but the development of the site may cause additional problems to the flooding already experienced in Priory Road, particularly in the cellars, and the surrounding area. The applicant's flood risk assessment does state that there will be a significant increase in the flow of foul water into the existing combined sewers and ATC's own investigations consider this to be a risk to the existing flood defences for the town. As for the proposed plans to put a tank under the car park, this too will eventually drain out into the existing sewers adding to the combined foul sewer flood risk, unless suitable pumps are provided for the detention tank.

8. The proposed application included a document they used to prove Alcester's need for such a development, however this document was misleading and inaccurate in the figures it stated. Under their lists of existing sheltered housing stock, two locations were incorrectly stated as being in Stratford-upon-Avon and another two were missed off the list entirely. The total number of sheltered dwellings (as confirmed by Warwickshire County Council) in Alcester is 252, this equates to over 8% of the total number of dwellings in the Town. When you compare this percentage to Stratford-upon-Avon, which only has 3% of its total number of dwellings as Sheltered homes, you can see that Alcester already has well over the district average for this type of home. According to SDC CS 21 6.6 developments should contribute to the creation of balanced and sustainable communities by meeting the full range of identified local and district housing needs in terms of size and tenure, which this development does not fully do. Local need in Alcester is for the provision of affordable social housing, especially after the Government's introduction of the "bedroom tax", this application will not provide any of this need therefore is not sustainable. It is Churchill's policy to refuse (and remove) any person who develops dementia and Alzheimer's disease, this proves that this particular development will not supply any of the necessary care element which is needed.

9. The proposed application has included an ecological appraisal and bat survey which has highlighted several species currently existing on the site and has listed several recommendations for the construction, other than the inclusion of bat roosts (as was compulsory from Natural England) the applicants have made little reference to anything else and ATC would like to see more evidence of wildlife provisions in this and other developments.

10. The proposed application as mentioned before will be privately owned sheltered homes, currently in Alcester there is plenty of commercial competition with similar properties on several locations. Many of these have vacant dwellings as there is no need for this type of home in the town, this development if it is allowed to go ahead will add to the problem of vacant buildings in the town, making it unsustainable for Alcester.