



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Northampton Local Area Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Northampton Local Area Planning Committee held at on Tuesday 7 September 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair)

Councillor Muna Cali
Councillor Imran Ahmed Chowdhury BEM
Councillor Paul Clark
Councillor Raymond Connolly
Councillor Dennis Meredith
Councillor Cathrine Russell
Councillor Zoe Smith

Apologies for
Absence: Councillor Nazim Choudary

Officers: Hannah Weston (Principal Planning Officer)
Adam Smith (Principal Planning Officer)
Theresa Boyd (Planning Solicitor)
Ed Bostock (Democratic Services)

21. Apologies for Absence and Appointment of Substitute Members

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Choudary.

22. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Russell advised of a predetermination in respect of item 8e and stated that she would address the Committee and leave the room whilst the item was under discussion.

Councillor Clark declared an interest in respect of item 8a as a Ward Councillor for Billing and Rectory Farm.

Councillor Connolly advised of a predetermination in respect of items 8e and 8f and stated that he would leave the room whilst these items were under discussion.

23. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 1st June and 3rd August were agreed and signed by the Chair.

24. **Chair's Announcements**

None.

25. **Deputations/Public Addresses**

RESOLVED:

That under the following items, the members of the public and Ward Councillors listed below were granted leave to address the Committee:

N/2020/1516 & N/2020/1517

Andy Lord

N/2021/0031

Alex Jelley

N/2021/0084

Ali Ay
Jabeer Miah

N/2021/0372

Councillor E Roberts
Ali Ay
Jabeer Miah

WNN/2021/0185

Jane Birch
Pat Dooley

WNN/2021/0222

Pat Dooley

WNN/2021/0258

Tom Lambshead

WNN/2021/0281

Pat Dooley

WNN/2021/0429

Ali Ay

26. **Proposed Pre-Committee Site Visits**

Site visits were not taking place at present.

27. **List of Current Appeals/Inquiries**

The Chair advised of 2 recent appeal decisions; both had been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate. It was advised that appeals would be presented at the next planning committee.

Councillor Clark left the meeting.

28. **Planning Applications**

29. **N/2020/1516 & N/2020/1517**

**Conversion and extension of existing building to 26no flats, with the provision of bin store areas and car parking
Former Pearce Leather Works, Wellingborough Road**

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for planning and listed building consent for the conversion and extension of the building to provide 26 flats, with the provision of bin storage and car parking. Members' attention was drawn to the Addendum which included one additional neighbour objection. The site was subject to a number of previous approvals, the most recent being approved by Planning Committee on 19th May 2020. The applications before the Committee today were almost identical; the flats had been reconfigured internally to allow for 6 more. A large cross to the front of the building proposed on the original submission had been removed and windows would be slightly rearranged. Parking was above that required for the development. It was advised that the principle of the development had been established within previous approvals, and that the amended design, impact on the listed building, and impact upon neighbouring amenity was considered acceptable. With regards to obligations, it was advised that a viability appraisal had been submitted with the application and a independent viability assessment concluded that the scheme would be unviable should any affordable housing or other contributions be included. With the need to secure the long-term retention of the listed building and with the viability assessment concluding the scheme would be unviable with any contributions, the non-provision of affordable housing and financial contributions was accepted.

Andy Lord, the agent on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that whilst the proposed development was on the same footprint as previously approved, the internal space had been better used to create additional flats. Details remained the same and 26 EV charging points would be included as part of the development.

In response to questions, Andy Lord confirmed that conditions were included to ensure the effective investigation and remediation of contaminated land sites and that the site was historically a head office for the leatherworks.

Councillor Chowdhury left the meeting.

Councillor Clark re - joined the meeting but did not participate in the discussion or vote.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the 2 applications be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

30. **N/2021/0031**
Change of use from 4 occupants House in multiple occupation to a 5 occupants House in multiple occupation.
35 Hood Street

The Planning Team Leader submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a change of use from a HMO for 4 occupants in the Boot and Shoe Quarter Conservation Area to a HMO for 5 occupants. Since the property already had permission as a HMO, area concentration was not a material consideration, and Private Sector Housing had advised that the facilities were acceptable for 5 occupants. A condition was included to ensure that the basement would not be used as habitable accommodation and to limit the number of occupiers of the property.

Alex Jelley, the agent on behalf of the applicant, commented that the Officer had covered all of the points that he intended to raise.

In response to questions, the Committee heard that the living room at the front of the property would be retained for communal use and that the site occupies a sustainable location, close to public transport links and shopping facilities.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **DEFERRED** to the next meeting.

31. **N/2021/0084**
Conversion of single dwelling into 2no residential units, with internal alterations.
51 Hunter Street

The Planning Team Leader submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for the conversion of a single dwelling into 2 flats. It was highlighted that both flats would accord with the Nationally Described Space Standards, with the ground floor flat comprising the larger of the two flats and benefiting from a small rear garden.

Ali Ay, agent on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Committee and commented that the Officer had covered all of the points he intended to raise.

Jabeer Miah, representing the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that the proposed flats were of a generous size, the ground floor flat would benefit from an outdoor area. He noted that the applicant was a letting agent who felt that flats provided better accommodation than HMOs.

In response to questions, the Committee heard that the applicant had no plans to extend the property in the future.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

32. **N/2021/0372**

**Single storey front extension forming new frontage and access to upper floor. Single storey rear extension. Conversion of upper floor into 2 no flats. Sub-division of ground floor shop into two units forming one retail unit (class E) and one cafe/restaurant with take away use (sui generis). Installation of extraction flue to rear side.
14 - 16 St Leonards Road**

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a single storey extension forming a new frontage and access to the upper floor, single storey rear extension, conversion of upper floor to 2 flats, sub-division of the ground floor shop into 2 units forming 1 retail unit (class E) and one café/restaurant with takeaway and installation of an extraction flue to the rear. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained one additional neighbour objection. It was outlined that the site was in a sustainable location and was currently vacant. The principle of the development was accepted as there are examples of residential accommodation at first floor within the area and the ground floor uses would bring a vacant unit back into use, contributing towards the vitality and viability of the local centre. It was not considered that the design of the extensions would harm the appearance of the area. The application site was located within a sustainable location close to public transport links and shopping facilities and as such the nil provision of car parking was accepted. Waste storage and cycle storage were proposed to the front and rear of the property and within the proposed flats.

Councillor E Roberts, in her capacity as a Ward Councillor for Delapre & Briar Hill, spoke against the application and expressed concern around waste and parking issues. She noted that restaurants were not prevalent on this side of the street and stated that the flat roof was concerning, noting that the area suffered regularly with flooding. She stated that the Planning Department needed to start working more closely with Highways and the Local Flood Authority and Highways could not continue not accepting parking surveys. Councillor Roberts did not agree that the uses would improve the vitality and viability of the area.

Ali Ay, the agent on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that the development would bring a long-time empty building back into use, and the applicant had worked with planning to ensure the application was acceptable.

Jabeer Miah, representing the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that the applicant proposed to sell healthy food from the premises. The upstairs dwellings were not HMOs and the location was considered sustainable. Mr Miah advised that the shop had been empty since October 2020 and there had been no interest in it since. It was advised that there are a lot of shops closing and there is a need to keep the street working with viable uses.

In response to questions, the Committee heard from Mr Miah that the extension did not warrant additional drainage works as it was a small extension and the existing building is a shop.

In response to questions, the Principal Planning Officer advised that fire protection was the remit of Building Control and so not a consideration for the Planning Committee for a development of this size. It was advised that it would be unreasonable to require parking for this development due to its highly sustainable location, and that Planning Inspectors are consistently advising that development in sustainable locations do not require parking, as people choose the area due to its sustainable location where they can walk or cycle into the town centre and local services.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

33. **WNN/2021/0185**
Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis) for 13no occupants
3 Langham Place

Councillor Connolly left the meeting, having declared a predetermination in respect of the following 2 items.

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a change of use from dwellinghouse to HMO for 13 occupants. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained additional objections from neighbours and a councillor, and letters of support from a third party. The Principal Planning Officer advised that the site was currently vacant and had become overgrown. Should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 4.5%, well below the 10% limit. All of the proposed bedrooms exceeded minimum space requirements and the facilities provided within the building also exceeded the requirements of the Council's HiMO SPD. Whilst no additional parking would be provided, the location was considered sustainable, situated close to public transport links and shopping facilities. It was proposed that the lightwells be increased in size to allow for more light to enter the basement bedrooms and it was not considered that this would have a negative impact on the conservation area. The development would bring an unused building back into use.

Councillor Russell spoke against the application and commented that the application was an overdevelopment. Cllr Russell expressed concern around parking and security and stated that she would prefer to see the building converted to 3 or 4 flats. Concern was raised that some landlords were not good and rubbish could be left on the street. Concern was also raised with how save the building would be during COVID.

After addressing the Committee, Councillor Russell left the room for the remainder of the item.

Jane Birch, Member of Trinity Ward and Semilong Neighbourhood Forum expressed concern around 13 unrelated households all living in close proximity as well as potential antisocial behaviour. Jane Birch stated that she would also prefer to see several flats instead of an HMO and the current scheme was overdevelopment. Concern was raised with the impact of the building on the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings, and the lack of parking provision. It was further raised that the hotel adjacent had large levels of anti-social behaviour and this use could add to this. Concern was raised about 13 unrelated people sharing facilities.

Pat Dooley, the agent on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that the property would be completed to a very high standard which would make residents want to stay. He noted that conversion to flats would necessitate parking provision which was unfeasible on this site. The property was too large to be used as a family home and the concentration of existing HMOs was well below the Council's limit of 10% in a 50m radius. It was advised that the concern over how the site would be run was not a planning matter and there was no evidence this one would be run poorly. The site is high standard with large rooms, and it was hoped people would stay – the aim was for professional occupiers.

In response to questions Patrick Dooley advised that Committee that the HiMO use was considered the most appropriate as you do not need a vehicle. It was further advised that whilst en-suite bathrooms were desirable in HMOs, they were not a requirement, and that the opinion that high end residents would not want to live here was a personal opinion.

In response to questions the Principal Planning Officer advised that only the current scheme could be assessed, and it could not be advised if flats would be acceptable in this location.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **REFUSED** against the officer recommendation on the grounds of overdevelopment resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area and parking concerns.

34. **WNN/2021/0222**
Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple

**Occupation (Use Class C4) for 6 occupants
1 Military Road**

Councillor Russell re-joined the meeting at this juncture.

The Planning Team Leader submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a change of use from dwellinghouse to HMO for 6 occupants. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained a proposed amendment to Condition 3. In addition, it was highlighted that Highways had not objected to the application, due to parking restrictions in the area; should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 9.47%; and Private Sector Housing have advised that the facilities are acceptable for the proposed number of occupants.

Pat Dooley, the agent on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and noted that a very similar application nearby was refused by the Northampton Borough Council Planning Committee in 2020 on parking grounds and was allowed at appeal. He stated that there was scope within this property for en-suites in the future and there was substantial communal space in the property.

In response to questions, the Committee heard that a condition prevented the basement from being used as bedrooms.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report and amended Condition 3 contained in the addendum.

35. **WNN/2021/0250**
Reserved Matters Application (details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to Outline Planning Permission N/2020/1212 for Phases 1, 2 and 3 for the construction of Warehouse and Distribution Units (Use Class B8) with ancillary office accommodation, means of access, with service yards, parking, landscaping, boundary treatments and other associated infrastructure Howdens Joinery Liliput Road

Councillor Connolly re-joined the meeting at this juncture.

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a reserved matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Permission N/2020/1212 for Phases 1, 2 and 3 for the construction of Warehouse and Distribution Units (Class b8) with ancillary office accommodation, means of access, with service yards, parking, landscaping and other associated infrastructure. Outline planning permission was granted in April 2021 and the factory had now been demolished. It was advised that three units were proposed, each with their own car park, servicing, gatehouses, sprinkler systems, substations, cycle storage, and smoking shelters. Officers considered the proposed appearance, layout, scale and landscaping were acceptable.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

36. **WNN/2021/0258**

**Erection of ancillary single storey lake house building, landscaping works, provision of external staff facilities, erection of plant equipment including generator compound, works to car park and ancillary works
Barclaycard 1234 Pavilion Drive Northampton**

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for the erection of an ancillary single storey timber clad lake house building, landscaping works, the provision of external staff facilities, the erection of plant equipment including a generator compound, works to a car park and ancillary works. The Principal Planning Officer advised of an error on page 104 , paragraph 10.1, at the last sentence should not include the requirement of a S106 legal agreement as such an agreement was not needed for a development of this size. It was advised that the proposed works would enhance facilities for a major employer in Northampton and would not harm the appearance of the wider area, residential amenity, or highway safety.

Tom Lambshead, the agent on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that the proposal would improve the viability of the building and health of the staff. He advised that there was no increased flood risk or harm to trees and ecology and conditions secure this. It was advised that the applicant wishes to continue to invest in facilities.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

37. **WNN/2021/0281**

**Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for 6 occupants
111 Cecil Road**

The Planning Team Leader submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a change of use from dwellinghouse to HMO for 6 occupants. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained an additional neighbour representation. In addition, it was highlighted that should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 6.25%; Private Sector Housing had confirmed that the facilities were acceptable for the number of occupants and cycle and waste storage was proposed to the rear of the property.

Pat Dooley, the agent on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that the property was of a large size and that the concentration was well under the Council's 10% limit.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

38. **WNN/2021/0429**
Ground floor level rear side balcony terrace with garage underneath for car parking, with external alterations to rear side.
40 Gloucester Avenue

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for the construction of a ground floor level rear side balcony terrace with a garage underneath for car parking, and external alterations to the rear side. The proposal was not considered to have an adverse impact on the surrounding area.

Ali Ay, the agent on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Committee and commented that the Planning Officer had covered all of the points he wished to make.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

39. **Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting closed at 8.07 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____