



Northampton Local Area Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Northampton Local Area Planning Committee held at on Tuesday 11 January 2022 at 5.00 pm.

Present Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair)
 Councillor Anna King (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor Nazim Choudary
 Councillor Imran Ahmed Chowdhury BEM
 Councillor Paul Clark
 Councillor Raymond Connolly
 Councillor Cathrine Russell
 Councillor Zoe Smith

Apologies Councillor Muna Cali
for Councillor Dennis Meredith
Absence:

Officers: Nicky Scaife (Interim Development Manager)
 Adam Smith (Interim Development Management Team Leader)
 Adam Walker (Interim Principal Planning Officer)
 Theresa Boyd (Planning Solicitor)
 Ed Bostock (Democratic Services Officer)

75. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Connolly declared a predetermination in respect of item 7E and advised that he would leave the room whilst the item was discussed.

76. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

77. Chair's Announcements

There were no announcements on this occasion.

78. 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/2021/0318 & N/2021/0319

Councillor Stone
Andy Lord

N/2021/0474

Councillor Stone
Alex Jelley

WNN/2021/0508

Councillor Stone
Yvonne Spence
Julie Teckman
Phil Sneddon

WNN/2021/0748

Councillor Davenport
Councillor Roberts
Vikas Thapa
Marie Ryan

WNN/2021/0877

Councillor Stone
Alex Putjatins

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

An update would be brought to the next meeting.

80. **Planning Applications**

81. **N/2021/0318 & N/2021/0319 - Planning and Listed Building consent applications for - Conversion and alterations of factory premises to form 46no apartments The Hawkins Building, Overstone Road**

The Interim Development Manager submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for the conversion of part of the Hawkins Building to 46 residential units. The proposal related to both planning and listed applications. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained an amendment to the officer recommendation; an independent viability assessment concluded that the development would be unviable if it were to provide affordable housing. The proposal included plans to reduce the number of lanes on St Michaels Road to 2, to allow for on-street parking spaces. Replacement of the windows were an element of concern for a number of heritage bodies and the Conservation Officer, and it was acknowledged that it would impact upon the listed building's significance. However, it was considered that approving suitable replacement windows would assist in ensuring that impacts were less than substantial; the harm was weighed against the public benefits, including securing the optimum viable use of the building and providing much needed housing. While 5 flats fell below National Space Standards, the layout was predominantly as previously approved under the extant consent, with

the exception of 4 additional flats; it was not considered that a refusal of this application could be upheld at appeal.

Councillor Stone, in her capacity as a Ward Councillor for Castle, spoke in favour of the application; she expressed her relief that the application had come forward and looked forward to seeing the building being brought back into use.

Andy Lord, the agent on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that his client had opted to develop the building in phases in order to ensure its deliverability; this was the second of three phases, the third of which would be coming before the Planning Committee in due course. Mr Lord noted that details of window replacement was approved as part of the first phase.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That planning application N/2021/0318 and listed building application N/2021/0319 be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

82. **N/2021/0474 - Change of Use from Offices (Use Class E) to Mixed Use - Commercial (Use Class E) to ground floor front and 10no Flats (Use Class C3) to upper floors, including three storey rear extension to existing building. 65 St Giles Street**

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for the conversion of an office building to 10 apartments with commercial usage retained at the front part of the ground floor. A 3-storey rear extension was also proposed as part of the application. Northamptonshire Police had raised concerns with aspects of the scheme; the area to the western side of the development would be readily accessible and surveillance was limited. Additionally, the proposed waste and cycle storage would provide a secluded area which would be attractive to rough sleepers and had the potential to be used as an ambush point on residents accessing the flats. Bicycles would also be vulnerable to theft. Officers considered the overall design was of high quality and no objections were raised in respect of impact on heritage assets. Whilst officers recognised that town centre flats were likely to be constrained by the proximity of nearby buildings, officer opinion was that the standard of amenity for future occupants would be very poor in terms of the outlook from and natural light to the flats to the majority of rooms due to the proximity to the adjacent 3-storey building. Officer recommendation was for refusal.

Councillor Stone, in her capacity as a Ward Councillor for Castle, spoke against the application and questioned why there was such a high number of applications for single-occupancy accommodation when in her experience, family homes were needed more.

Alex Jelley, the agent on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that the original planning officer was happy with the proposal; he maintained that the issue of natural light was a matter of opinion and that the outlook from the flats would be appropriate for town centre accommodation.

Members discussed the report and considered that the economic and housing benefits of the proposal and regeneration of the town centre were important considerations.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** contrary to officer recommendation and subject to conditions to be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Assistant Director of Place and Economy. The Assistant Director of Economy and Place be given delegated authority to agree the wording of the reasons for approval in consultation with the Chair.

Councillor King joined the meeting at this juncture and advised of no declarations of interest.

83. **WNN/2021/0508 - Change of Use from Retail (Use Class E) to Takeaway (Sui Generis) and extraction flue
34 - 36 St Giles Street**

The Interim Development Management Team Leader submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a change of use from retail unit to hot food takeaway and erection of extraction flue. No other external alterations were proposed. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained an additional letter of objection and an amendment to the recommendation. Waste storage was proposed in the basement and a Waste Management Strategy would be secured by condition. It was highlighted that Conservation, Environmental Health and Highways do not object to the application, and that the proposed opening hours had been reduced to midnight during the course of the application

Councillor Stone, in her capacity as a Ward Councillor for Castle, spoke against the application and commented that a fast-food shop was not appropriate for St Giles Street and that the Council should be encouraging entrepreneurs to bring new niche retail businesses to the street instead. St Giles Street has a distinctive cultural and feel and concerned about impact of a takeaway on this.

Yvonne Spence, a local business owner, spoke against the application and commented that there were a number of fast-food takeaways in the town already, reviews for existing premises owned by the applicant were average at best, raised concerns about opening hours in the evenings, and additional parking for collections and delivery drivers would cause significant problems on the road.

Julie Teckman, a local resident, spoke against the application and voiced concern around highway issues that could be expected with the addition of delivery drivers parked on the street. She also had concerns that the late-night nature of the business may exacerbate antisocial behaviour in the area. In addition, she advised that there is presently a delicate retail balance on St Giles Street, which is the only street recognised in the town centre for independent retail.

Phil Sneddon, the agent on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and commented that his client had 80 stores nationwide with no complaints relating to delivery drivers or antisocial behaviour. The ovens used in the stores were approved by DEFRA for smokeless areas, with the fan internal and approved by Environmental Health. The immediate area is a mix of commercial and residential with a nearby bar open to 2am and is a cultural location where residents expect to be part of a busy area. The store's waste would be stored internally. A variety of businesses are needed in an area.

In response to questions, the Committee heard that the applicant had chosen this unit for its size and location on the street and hoped to be part of the community, including employing 12 people from the Northampton area and ensuring the exterior of the property was looked after. The proposed business is a franchise and not trading in bankruptcy. Waste would be collected 3-4 times a week by a private company. There was no provision for dining in; take-out only was proposed.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **REFUSED** contrary to the officer recommendation for the following reasons: Impact on visual amenity, parking & traffic, noise impact on adjacent residential amenity. The Director of Place and Economy be given delegated authority to agree the wording of the reasons for refusal in consultation with the Chair.

Councillor Connolly left the meeting at this juncture.

84. **WNN/2021/0748 - Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4), including loft conversion and reconfiguration of internal layout
87 Gloucester Crescent**

The Interim Development Management Team Leader submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a change of use from dwellinghouse to HMO for 6 occupants. A loft conversion and single storey rear extension were also proposed as part of the application. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained additional letters of objection, a representation from the applicant and an update to the recommendation. It was highlighted that there were no objections from Private Sector Housing or the Local Highway Authority and, whilst no parking was proposed, the property was within a sustainable location, close to public transport links and shopping facilities. Should the application be approved, the concentration of HMO properties in a 50m radius would be 4%.

Councillor Davenport, in her capacity as a Ward Councillor for Delapre and Rushmere, spoke against the application and voiced concern around parking and waste; issues relating to HMOs were causing misery for existing residents in the area.

Councillor E Roberts, in her capacity as a Ward Councillor for Delapre and Rushmere, spoke against the application and commented that whilst Highways had not objected to the application, Northamptonshire Police had raised objections on highway grounds. She also noted that per the Council's adopted HMO SPD, applications should be refused if no parking beat survey was provided.

Vikas Thapa, a local resident, spoke against the application and voiced concern around issues relating to HMOs including parking, waste and antisocial behaviour.

Marie Ryan, a local resident, spoke against the application and commented that most of the residents near this property were elderly; this development would cause undue stress for them and it would exacerbate existing parking problems in the area.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

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

85. **WNN/2021/0877 - Change of Use from Offices (Use Class E) to 9 person House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis) and associated alterations
6 Cheyne Walk**

The Interim Development Management Team Leader submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a change of use from offices to HMO for 9 occupants. Parking for 10 vehicles was located to the rear of the property. An additional roof light was proposed at the front of the property. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained an update to the recommendation. It was also highlighted that the Conservation Officer had raised no objections to the proposal and should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 4.7%. In addition, conditions were included to address issues such as waste and cycle storage, drainage and plumbing facilities in the listed building, and maximum occupancy.

Councillor Stone, in her capacity as Ward Councillor for Castle, spoke against the application and commented that she would have preferred to see the building turned into flats and was concerned that the proposal could generate additional vehicles on an already busy and noisy street.

Alex Putjatins, the applicant, spoke in favour of the application and stated that he successfully managed 70 rooms in the town as an accredited landlord. His properties all exceeded minimum space standards and parking would be accessed from Spring Park, not Cheyne Walk. He also advised that 4 flats would not be financial viability in this instance, but the proposal was seeking to provide luxury accommodation.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

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

86. **Northampton Partnership Homes Applications**

87. **N/2021/0335 - Construction of 28no residential apartments, including formation of new access from Trenery Way, 29no car parking spaces, bicycle store and associated ancillary plant and service accommodation
Land at New South Bridge Road**

The Interim Development Manager submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for the construction of 28 residential apartments including the formation of new access from Trenery Way, 29 car parking spaces cycle storage and associated ancillary plant and service accommodation. New access to the development would be created from Trenery Way into a barrier-controlled area of parking comprising a mix of undercroft and external spaces. The design and height of the development was considered appropriate given its location. A mix of 1 and 2 bedroom flats would be provided across the 28 units providing 100% affordable housing. Members' attention was drawn to the Addendum which advised that the independent assessment of the submitted viability assessment concluded the scheme would not be viable if the relevant S106 developer contributions were required. Conditions were attached including the requirement to undertake a desk top study in respect of possible contaminants within the site and in respect of drainage matters.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

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

88. **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____