

Report to Planning Committee

19 July 2022

Application Reference	DC/22/66915
Application Received	7 April 2022
Application Description	Proposed 6 No. 4 bedroom dwellings with associated parking and landscaping.
Application Address	Land Corner Of Highams Close/Moor Lane/Pennant Road Rowley Regis
Applicant	Sandwell MBC
Ward	Rowley
Contact Officer	Carl Mercer carl_mercer@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

1.1 That planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions relating to:

- (i) External materials;
- (ii) Contamination;
- (iii) Drainage;
- (iv) Boundary treatments;
- (v) Landscaping;
- (vi) Electric vehicle charging;
- (vii) Construction method statement;



- (viii) Working hours - Monday to Friday 08.00 to 17.30; Saturday 9.00 to 13.00; and no work on Sundays or public holidays;
- (ix) Removal of permitted development rights; and
- (x) Retention of parking.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The proposal is compliant with national and development plan policy, raises no significant concerns from a design or highway safety perspective and would deliver much needed social housing in a sustainable location without appreciable detriment to the amenity of the surrounding area.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods – The design of the proposal is acceptable in respect of national and local planning policy.
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4 Context

- 4.1 The application is being reported to your Planning Committee as four objections have been received.
- 4.2 To assist members with site context, a link to Google Maps is provided below:

[Highams Close, Rowley Regis](#)

5 Key Considerations

- 5.1 The material planning considerations which are relevant to this application are:

Government policy (NPPF);



Layout and density of buildings / Design, appearance and materials
Access, highway safety, parking and servicing

6. The Application Site

- 6.1 The application relates to a parcel of council-owned land bounded by Higham's Close to the east, Pennant Road to the west and Moor Lane to the south. Land levels slope quite severely from east to west across the site. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, being characterised by two storey, semi-detached houses types. Rowley Regis Hospital is situated on the opposite side of Moor Lane.

7. Planning History

- 7.1 No relevant planning history.

8. Application Details

- 8.1 The development proposes six, four-bedroom dwellings; four served from Higham's Close and two from Pennant Close. Whilst at street level the dwellings would appear to be two storey, plots to Higham's Close would effectively have three storeys, as a lower ground floor has been introduced into the design to respond to land levels.
- 8.2 Two of the dwellings on Higham's Close would be semi-detached house types, the other four would be detached.
- 8.3 Each dwelling would be served by two off-street parking spaces, as per the council standard.
- 8.4 The application has been submitted by the council's housing department and the properties would be social rented accommodation managed by the council.



9. Publicity

9.1 The application has been publicised by neighbour notification letter, with four objections and one representation being received.

9.2 Objections

The main points of objections may be summarised as follows:

- i) There is insufficient parking along Higham's Close and the development would exacerbate the issue and compromise highway safety; and
- ii) Design – the houses appear dominating and over imposing.

These points will be discussed further in paragraph 13 below (Material Considerations).

Immaterial points have been raised regarding the application being an opportunity to address traffic and pedestrian issues on Moor Lane/Higham's Close junction. Although safety issues are not specified, the development should be assessed on its own merit and cannot be used to resolve issues that are not of its making.

Reference has also been made in the correspondence concerning the land being previously earmarked for residents' parking. This is a land ownership matter and not one for consideration during the determination of this planning application.

One representation supports the proposal but asks that 'swift bricks', to provide bird housing, are introduced into the scheme. The land is not allocated for any specific protection and provision of such habitat is not a policy requirement in this instance. The housing department may be approached to introduce such bird housing at its discretion.



10. Consultee responses

10.1 Planning and Transportation Policy

No objection.

10.2 Highways

No objection.

10.3 Severn Trent Water

No objection subject to condition.

10.4 Public Health (Air Quality)

No objection. Electric vehicle charging and low NOx boilers and required by condition.

10.5 Public Health (Contaminated Land)

No objection subject to condition.

10.6 Public Health (Noise)

No objection subject to restriction on working hours and submission of a construction method statement.

10.7 West Midlands Police

No objection.



11. National Planning Policy

- 11.1 National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development but states that local circumstances should be taken into account to reflect the character, needs and opportunities for each area.
- 11.2 With regards to design, planning policies and decisions should, amongst other things, ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development, and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.
- 11.3 In respect of highways, development *‘should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe’*.
- 11.4 The council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. The development plan cannot therefore be considered as being up to date. Paragraph 11d of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged and permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the NPPF as a whole.

12. Local Planning Policy

- 12.1 The following policies of the council’s development plan are relevant:

BCCS

CSP4 – Place Making

DEL1 – Infrastructure Provision

HOU1 - Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth

HOU2 – Housing Density, Type and Accessibility

