Committee: 7 November 2018

DC/18/62173

Ward: Rowley

Mr Alan Martin
SMBC Housing Partnerships
Sandwell Council House
Freeth Street
Oldbury
B69 3DE

Proposed construction of a 90 unit 'Extra Care' home containing 1 and 2 bedroom apartments and associated communal facilities, parking and landscaping.

Public Open Space

Public Open Space Moor Lane/Harvest Road Rowley Regis

Date Valid Application Received: 23 August 2018

### 1. Recommendations

Approval subject to the approval of Full Council; no objection from the Lead Local Flood Authority; further comments from Urban Design and Highways in respect of minor design and highways matters; and the following conditions:-

- ii) External materials;
- iii) Site investigation and remediation;
- iv) Boundary treatments;
- v) Landscaping;
- vi) Drainage;
- vii) Electric vehicle charging points;
- viii) Construction work is limited to the following times; Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm, Saturdays 8am to 2pm with no activities on Sundays or National Holidays the above criteria also applies to deliveries to the site;
- ix) Provision and retention of parking spaces; and,
- x) Implementation of compensation measures to greenspace to the north of the site.

## 2. Observations

The application has been reported to your Committee as the proposal constitutes a departure from the Local Plan. A summary report for the proposal was previously considered at your October meeting and members resolved to visit the site. This full

report now makes a recommendation taking into account all material considerations.

#### The Application Site

The proposal relates to area of open space on the corner of Moor Lane and Harvest Road, Rowley Regis. Adjacent to the site on the northern boundary is a three storey block of flats. Two storey terrace housing is opposite the site on the western side of Harvest Road. Moor Lane and the open space both rise steeply up to the east towards Rowley Regis Hospital. Rowley Regis Crematorium is opposite the site to the southeast.

#### **Current Application**

The application has been submitted by the Council's Housing Partnerships department, and seeks full planning permission for a 90 unit 'extra care' home, designed with older people in mind, containing one and two bedroom apartments and associated communal facilities, parking and landscaping. The building would be three storey in height, and would broadly have a quad shaped footprint; the building surrounding a central garden courtyard for the use of the residents. Two car parking areas would provide a total of 36 spaces, with one accessed from Moor Lane and one from Harvest Road.

#### **Publicity**

The application has been publicised by neighbour notification, site and press notice, with three objections being received. These will be discussed later in the report.

## **Statutory Consultee Responses**

Highways have raised issues with the parking areas and the trip rate data. The applicant is discussing these issues with Highways and will submit an alternative layout in due course.

The Urban Design Team have raised no objection to the proposal, but have raised minor points relating to materials, boundary treatments and bin storage which are currently being considered by the agent.

Environmental Health raise no objection to the proposal. Land contamination conditions are recommended by condition; as is the provision of electric vehicle charging bays.

The Police's 'Design Out Crime Officer' has no objection to the proposal.

Severn Trent raise no objection to the proposal subject to conditions.

The Lead Local Flood Authority has raised an objection in relation to inconsistencies between SuDS shown on the landscaping plan and drainage strategy plan. The agent is aware of the issue and is liaising with the LLFA.

# **Planning Policy and Other Material Considerations**

The site is designated as Community Open Space (COS) in the current adopted SAD DPD. The proposal is therefore a departure.

The site of the proposed development is not allocated for residential development on the SAD Policies Map, therefore it is a housing 'windfall' where SAD Policy H2 applies. The proposed development meets the guidance set out in policy as the site is previously developed brownfield land. The site has seen previous use as a landfill site and before that was the site of a brickworks and marlhole.

The proposed residential extra care facility triggers SAD policy H4, and the criteria set out under this policy need consideration. Proposals under SAD H4 should located with access to local facilities and amenities and accessible by public transport. The proposal meets the requirements of this policy as the site is approximately 500m from Old Hill District Centre 700m from Blackheath town Centre. A Spar supermarket is only 250 m away on Harvest Road. A corner type shop and hot food takeaway are about 100m away in Powke Lane, while a Principal Public Transport Route bus service runs past the site connecting West Bromwich and Merry Hill, and another bus route also passes the site. A community hospital on the other side of Moor Lane provides healthcare facilities.

From a policy perspective the proposal is a departure from the adopted SAD DPD. However, Strategic Policy are of the opinion that additional measures - in the form of tree planting and

landscaping enhancement proposed to the area to the north of the site - to increase its amenity value, would compensate for the loss of the COS. Consequently, the impact of the development can be minimised.

## **Responses to Objections**

The main points of objection may be summarised as follows:-

- i) Highway safety concerns;
- ii) Loss of open space; and,
- iii) Loss of trees.

# In addressing the points of objection in turn:-

- i) Highways have reviewed the scheme and have not indicated any significant concern from a road safety perspective. Although Highways have raised issues with the proposal, these matters are relatively minor and are not insurmountable. Further comment from Highways is anticipated.
- ii) As discussed above, there is no policy objection to the proposal. The departure is also subject to the approval of Full Council.
- iii) The approval would be subject to the approval of a detailed landscaping plan. Notwithstanding this, the proposal has been discussed with the Council's Tree Preservation Officer and Landscape Architect, and no objection has been received from either officer.

#### Conclusion

The proposal would provide well designed, quality housing for older people and is compliant with national and local policy in this respect. Whilst regrettable, the loss of the open space can be compensated by enhancements to the adjacent area, and the provision of sheltered housing arguably utilises the land to greater benefit than the existing open space; subject to compensation measures.

The recommendation of approval is subject to further comment from the LLFA, Highways and Urban Design, and to relevant conditions.

### 3. Relevant History

DD/09206 Erection of 89 dwellings Approved - 18.07.1979

## 4. Central Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development.

## 5. <u>Development Plan Policy</u>

BCCS:-

TRAN2 - Managing Transport Impacts of New Dev

TRAN4 - Creating Coherent Networks for Cycling and Walking ENV3 - Design Quality

ENV5 - Flood Risk, Sustainable Drainage Systems Urban Heat...

ENV7 - Renewable Energy

ENV8 - Air Quality

SADD:-

SAD H2 - Housing Windfalls

SAD H4 - Housing for People with Specific Needs

SAD EOS4 - Community Open Space

SAD EOS9 - Urban Design Principles

## 6. Contact Officer

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