

Minutes of the Planning Committee

3 July 2019 at 5.00 pm
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present: Councillor Downing (Chair);
Councillor Hevican (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Allen, Chidley, S Davies,
M Hussain, Mabena, Millar, Rouf and Simms.

Apologies: Councillors Ahmed, Dhallu, Shackleton,
Taylor and Trow.

64/19 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 June, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

65/19 **Applications Deferred Pending a Site Visit by Members of the Committee and Ward Representatives**

Resolved that consideration of planning application DC/19/62696 (Proposed 5 No. 3 bed houses and 4 No. 2 bed flats with associated access, landscaping and infrastructure. Land to rear Vicarage Road/Ebrington, Road /Arlington Road, West Bromwich) be deferred, pending a site visit by the Committee and ward representatives.

66/19 **DC/19/62842 (Proposed change of use to 8 bed, 8 person HMO (house in multiple occupation). 12 Gibson Drive, Smethwick, B66 1RW.)**

The Development Planning Manager reported that an amended plan had been received and recommended that consideration of the application be deferred, to allow the Service Manager – Highways to review the plan.

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Resolved that consideration of planning application DC/19/62842 (Proposed change of use to 8 bed, 8 person HMO (house in multiple occupation). 12 Gibson Drive, Smethwick, B66 1RW) be deferred to enable analysis of amended plans by the Service Manager – Highways.

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DC/19/63086 (Pursuant to planning application DC/18/61850, demolition of rear extension, proposed single and two storey rear extensions to accommodate an additional six bedsits together with bicycle parking facilities, refuse and recycling storage, external alterations with external staircase and proposed subdivision of retail unit at ground floor with new shop fronts. 598 - 600 Bearwood Road, Smethwick, B66 4BW.)

There was no applicant or objector present.

The Committee was minded to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions recommended by the Director – Regeneration and Growth.

Resolved that planning application DC/19/63086 (Pursuant to planning application DC/18/61850, demolition of rear extension, proposed single and two storey rear extensions to accommodate an additional six bedsits together with bicycle parking facilities, refuse and recycling storage, external alterations with external staircase and proposed subdivision of retail unit at ground floor with new shop fronts. 598 - 600 Bearwood Road, Smethwick, B66 4BW) be approved, subject to the following conditions:-

- 1) submission and approval of a noise report;
- 2) provision of cycle storage;
- 3) provision of bin storage;
- 4) submission and approval of a lighting scheme;
- 5) no part of the rear access stairway shall be used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area;
- 6) external materials to match existing; and
- 7) the bedsits shall not be self-contained.

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DC/19/62969 Proposed 80 bedroom care home with associated parking, boundary treatment and associated works. Land Adjacent Harvest Road/Dudhill Road, Rowley Regis.)

There was no objector present and the applicant did not wish to address the Committee.

The Development Planning Manager reported that an amended plan had been received, showing an increase in the roof height by 500mm to allow vehicular access. Two further conditions were also recommended requiring grounds conditions remediation works and details of bin storage.

The Committee was minded to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions now recommended by the Director - Regeneration and Growth.

Resolved that planning application DC/19/62969 Proposed 80 bedroom care home with associated parking, boundary treatment and associated works. Land Adjacent Harvest Road/Dudhill Road, Rowley Regis.) be approved, subject to the following conditions:-

- 1) approval of external materials;
- 2) approval of finished floor levels,
- 3) Transport Assessment and Travel Plan;
- 4) details of electric vehicle charging points;
- 5) Coal Authority ground conditions investigation and remediation;
- 6) details of cycle parking;
- 7) drainage, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);
- 8) glazing and ventilation scheme;
- 9) details of fixed plant equipment, and any recommended mitigation measures;
- 10) details of extraction equipment associated with the proposed kitchen and mitigation measures;
- 11) details of a site management plan limiting hours of construction to Monday to Friday 08:00 to 18:00 hours, Saturdays 09:00 to 16:00 hours with no working on Sundays and Bank Holidays (deliveries too), alongside details of wheel cleaning facilities, A statement to control dust and emissions associated with the build;
- 12) no burning of materials on site;

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- 13) dropped kerb widening;
- 14) implementation of barrier;
- 15) details of boundary treatment;
- 16) details of hard and soft landscaping;
- 17) ground conditions remediation works;
- 18) details of bin storage.

69/19 **DC/18/62530 (Demolition of existing building and replacement with proposed place of religious worship. 15 - 18 South Road, Smethwick, B67 7BN.)**

The Development Planning Manager reported that reference to 22 cars in the paragraph at the bottom of page 17 of the report should read 8 cars. Condition 9 had been amended by the addition of “and implementation” and a further condition had been recommended requiring details of car parking layout.

The Committee received a letter from the applicant, which was circulated to all parties.

Objectors were present and addressed the Committee with the following points:-

- the existing Gurdwara serves the community from birth and offers many of the same services that the proposal will offer;
- the proposal will exacerbate existing parking issues;
- the proposal will split the community;
- the applicant has been approached to discuss concerns but was not forthcoming;
- the existing building is part of the original street scene of Smethwick and should not be demolished;
- there are other sites available in Smethwick;

The applicant was also present and addressed the Committee with the following points:-

- a detailed and independent parking survey was provided to highway officers there are no concerns about parking;
- there are several hundred on street parking spaces available in Smethwick and the proposal will only result in an overspill of 8 cars;
- events will be held for up to 150 people, and not 220 as suggested;

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- the proposal will meet the needs of the Afghan Sikh community, whose background and religious practice is different to that of Sikhs from other parts of the world;
- 90% of the current female Afghan Sikh population in Smethwick is illiterate and the centre will support women's empowerment by offering education to these women, who have previously been oppressed;
- Afghan Sikhs have suffered a lot, and are considered refugees;
- there is a high moral burden on Sikhs and all members of the proposed centre will be vetted;
- the proposal is not just another Gurdwara but will provide education services to the community and support inter-faith relations.

The Service Manager – Highways reported that the Transport Assessment had been carried out based on the assumption that the building would accommodate 150 people and considering other similar sites. It was felt that there was sufficient on-site and off-site parking provision to accommodate the estimated number of vehicles that the proposal would generate. These assumptions had also been tested based on 220 visitors, which would generate the need for an additional 8 off site spaces, which was also considered acceptable.

In response to members' questions of the applicant, objector and the officers present, the Committee noted the following:-

- The Afghan Sikh community in West Midlands was small so the centre would not exceed 150 guests at any one time.
- The education on offer would be aimed at women who had been oppressed in Afghanistan and had never had any education.
- The building would not operate 24 hours a day.
- Social events would be in line with religious institution and there would be no loud music or alcohol.
- The proposal to open at 5am was to accommodate morning prayers.
- Any recommendations made with regards to sound reduction would be adhered to.
- The site had been chosen based on the location of the congregation and taking costs into account.
- The applicant had tried to communicate with the other Sikh communities, however, it had been ineffective.

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- The niche needs of the Afghan Sikh community could only be met from the community itself and not the wider Sikh community.
- staff would be qualified to teach and a number of different languages would be available.
- The centre would be a place for everyone.

Members expressed disappointment that the two communities had not worked together to overcome disagreements but welcomed the opportunities that the development brought and were minded to approve the application, subject to the conditions recommended by the Director – Regeneration and Growth.

Resolved that planning application DC/18/62530 (Demolition of existing building and replacement with proposed place of religious worship. 15 - 18 South Road, Smethwick, B67 7BN.) be approved, subject to the following conditions:-

- 1) approval of external materials;
- 2) provision of cycle parking;
- 3) provision of electric vehicle charging bays;
- 4) approval drainage details;
- 5) archaeological desktop study;
- 6) approval of construction management plan;
- 7) car parking management plan;
- 8) no external amplification of sound and
- 9) travel plan measures and implementation;
- 10) car parking layout, grading and retention.

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Applications Determined Under Delegated Powers by the Director – Regeneration and Growth

The Committee noted a report on planning applications determined by the Director - Regeneration and Growth under delegated powers.

(The meeting ended at 6.10pm following an adjournment between 5.22 and 5.30pm.)

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