



## PLANNING COMMITTEE

**MEETING** : Tuesday, 5th March 2024

**PRESENT** : Cllrs. Taylor (Chair), Morgan (Vice-Chair), D. Brown, J. Brown, Campbell, A. Chambers, Conder, Dee, Gravells MBE, Sawyer and Evans

**Officers in Attendance**

Planning Development Manager

Planning Policy Manager

Principal Planning Officer

Highways Officer (x2)

Locum Planning Lawyer, One Legal

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

**Also in attendance**

Public Speaker (x3)

Councillor Castle

**APOLOGIES** : Cllrs. Toleman and Tracey

### 61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Dee, Evans, Campbell, and Morgan declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 (Response to a Major Planning Application). Each member recused themselves from the Chamber during the discussion on the item and took no part in the voting or members' debate on the item.

Councillor Gravells declared a non-pecuniary interest in the same item, as he had previously been the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning and had discussed the application but had not pre-determined it.

### 62. MINUTES

Councillor Conder noted that she wished for an amendment to be made to the minutes in relation to the item '26 Heathville Road - 23/00520/FUL' to clarify that she believed the property in question could be converted into a ground floor

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apartment and an upper two-floor maisonette, which would provide two family homes.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday, 6th February 2024 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to the amendment outlined above.

**63. LATE MATERIAL**

Late Material was circulated in respect of agenda item 6 (63-69 Northgate Street – 22/01181/FUL) and Item 7 (Gala Club – 23/00259/FUL).

**64. RESPONSE TO A MAJOR PLANNING APPLICATION WITHIN STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL - LAND AT WHADDON**

*Cllrs Dee, Morgan, Evans, and Campbell took no part in the discussion or voting on the item and recused themselves from the Chamber after public speeches made by Cllrs Morgan and Campbell as Ward members.*

**Officer Report**

The Planning Policy Manager presented the report, which sought Planning Committee approval to make a response to a planning application in Stroud District Council's administrative area for development of land at Whaddon.

**Public Speeches**

*The Vice-Chair addressed the committee in opposition to the application as the Ward Member for Grange.*

He stated that the application should be refused and that he supported the Planning Policy Manager's recommendation on the following grounds:

- While large-scale developments were sometimes necessary to meet housing demand, the current application did not adequately address the numerous infrastructure concerns, such as hospital placements, traffic, school placements, green open spaces, etc.
- The impact on the Highway Network would be more than substantial.
- There were already issues surrounding traffic in the locality; should Stroud District Council grant consent to the application, this would substantially worsen.

The Vice-Chair further noted that he believed that the report should make reference to the impact the application would have on Grange Road, as well as St Barnabas Roundabout and the wider highway network which was mentioned in the report.

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*Councillor Campbell addressed the committee in opposition to the application as Ward Member for Tuffley.*

She stated that the application should be rejected on the following grounds:

- She, Councillor Dee, former Councillor G. Dee, and other residents of Tuffley strongly opposed the application.
- There would be a significant increase in traffic.
- The application would negatively impact the area's infrastructure.
- The roads were already congested; approving the application would exacerbate this issue.
- It may increase the risk of flooding.
- The acceptance of the application would lead to a loss of amenities, views, and tranquillity around the local churches.
- Even with improvements to St Barnabas Roundabout, the scheme would still not be viable."

**Members' Questions**

The Planning Policy Manager responded to a Members' question concerning whether the Stroud application was currently suspended and whether this was owing to Highways concerns as follows:

- The Inspector expressed concerns over the impact of growth to the south of Gloucester and proposed allocations in nearby areas, such as Sharpness, with the impact on Junctions 12 and 14 of the M5 and other roads. In February 2024, Stroud District Council received a letter from the Inspectors, confirming a 7-month pause to allow for the preparation of additional evidence, followed by a 3-month consultation period.

The Highways Officer responded to Members' questions concerning whether there would be changes to junctions at Eastern Avenue, Cole Avenue and the junctions along those roads as well as St Barnabas roundabout, should the application receive consent as follows:

- There was a scheme proposed to make improvements to the St Barnabas roundabout. However, the application was not advanced enough to indicate whether improvements would be needed at other junctions in the locality. Highways would investigate the application thoroughly and produce trip generation and other modelling data for such decisions.

**Members' Debate**

The Chair stated that he believed that the proposed response from the City Council was fair. He added that he had concerns about the application and supported the response. He also stated that he wished to include the amendment suggested in

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the Vice-Chair's representation, which was to add Grange Road as an area that would be significantly impacted if the application were granted consent.

The Chair moved, and Councillor D.Brown seconded the Officer's recommendation, with an additional amendment to mention Grange Road as a road that would its highway network adversely affected should the application receive consent.

**RESOLVED** that the response to the planning application provided at Appendix 3 of the Officer report be approved and submitted to the case officer at Stroud District Council with an amendment to mention Grange Road.

**65. 63-69 NORTHGATE STREET (FORMER SAINSBURY STORE) - 22/01181/FUL**

**Officer Report**

The Principal Planning Officer presented the report which detailed an application for the demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of site to provide residential led mixed use scheme.

**Public Speeches**

*A representative of The King's School addressed the Committee in opposition to the application in its current format on the following grounds:*

- Kings School were pleased that the site was marked for development. However, there were concerns about the possible increase in traffic during construction and the enduring development. This raised safety concerns for the children and staff of the school.
- The main area of concern was that cars drove down at speed on Pitt Street, frequently the wrong way, despite it being a one-way street and that there had already been numerous near misses with schoolchildren.
- Kings School had been in contact with various stakeholders including Richard Graham MP, Councillor Tracey and Gloucestershire Highways about ways pedestrian safety could be improved on Pitt Street. He asked that the Planning Committee took into consideration the safety of students and other pedestrians in the area before giving an application consent.

*A representative for Clarehouse Developments Ltd addressed the Committee in favour of the application.*

He said that the application should be granted on the following grounds:

- The applicant had a significant property portfolio and was a long-term investor. It had not been possible to find a long-term viable tenant for re-occupation and this reflected the trend they have seen nationally with other properties.

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- The proposal would retain the retail frontage. They were confident that the commercial unit would be occupied.
- 55 high quality apartments would be provided in the City Centre.
- The pre-application process commenced in 2021. Extensive care, time, and consideration and been put into the application.
- Feedback had been acted upon by the applicant.
- The Conservation Officer had confirmed that any loss or harm to the setting of the Raven Centre, 8 Hare Lane, the Cathedral or Church of St John would be marginal and less than substantial and was outweighed by the public good the application would cause.
- Architectural advancements would be made to Hare Lane and Northgate Street.
- Heritage assets would be preserved and enhanced.
- The visually intrusive frontage would be removed.
- 11 affordable homes would be provided. This was policy compliant.
- The applicant had used a chartered commercial surveyor and was therefore confident that the proposed retail unit would be occupied.
- Communal and private amenity space would be provided.
- The scheme would lead to 100% net gain in biodiversity units.
- The scheme would lead to Green Space being introduced into the City Centre.
- It was predicted that there would be 80 occupants in the dwellings, who would contribute to the local economy.
- A minimum of 65% carbon emission reduction would be achieved for the proposed flats owing to Solar Panels and Heat Pumps being used.
- The new buildings would meet modern building regulation standards.
- Contributions would be made towards open space, education, and other community needs. This was secured by S106 funding. This totalled over £500,000. CIL would be £230,000.
- Approving the development would lead to job creation.
- Granting the application would assist with urban regeneration.

### **Members' Questions**

The Principal Planning Officer responded to Members' questions concerning why a pedestrian priority street had not been proposed as a condition as part of the application, whether the open space contribution would be spent on site, whether it was guaranteed that users of the properties would not have vehicles, what the nearest unrestricted road where users could park without a permit was, how the mural would be stored, concerns around whether there was a physical gap between the Raven Centre and the new proposed building whether the Raven Centre was owned by the Council, whether there were planning conditions in the report that dealt with the concerns raised by Historic England, whether the views of Gloucester Cathedral would be affected by the development, whether the air source heat pumps could be used for cooling, whether there were two disabled parking spaces proposed, whether the dwellings would be freehold properties and what would happen if the modelling shown to the Committee did not match what was built if the application received consent as follows:

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- In order for something to be included as a condition, there must be proof of its necessity. The change in circumstances that would arise should the application be approved would probably not necessitate the requirement of a pedestrian priority street in planning terms.
- In all likelihood, the Open Space contribution would be spent off-site on other projects.
- It could not be guaranteed that residents of the dwellings would not own vehicles. However, residents would be dissuaded from car ownership due to being excluded from having an automatic right to a Parking Permit scheme.,.
- There was no unrestricted on street parking in the immediate environment around the application site.
- Specific details about how the mural would be stored had not been provided. However, condition 16 and 17 of the report required that the applicant provide a Method Statement for the removal and storage of the mural which would need to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and reinstated prior to first occupation of block B unless approved otherwise by the Council.
- The applicant had asserted that the existing building and Raven Centre were not tied in. If the applicant proposed to integrate the building with the Raven Centre, that would require listed building consent. Such a proposal would need to be considered by the Authority, and the Conservation Officer would examine the impact it would have on the building.
- The Raven Centre was not owned by the Council.
- It would probably not be reasonable to condition wholesale design amendments to the scheme as changes would require planning permission and would materially change the proposal. Therefore, all amendments should be made prior to determination. The Conservation Officer's professional opinion was that there would be a less than substantial harm to heritage, the Principal Planning Officer agreed with this assessment.
- The scheme would not have a substantial impact on the views of the Cathedral.
- He was unaware whether the air source heat pumps could be used to cool the properties. The comfort of residents on the top floor had not been raised as an issue throughout the application process. It was assumed that, through building regulations, suitable levels of accommodation would need to be provided.
- There were two disabled parking spaces proposed.
- Whether the properties were freehold, would not fall under the remit of a material planning consideration, outside of the 11 affordable units that would be secured
- He was not sure exactly where the nearest unrestricting parking street was. However, residents would not have access to the permit scheme and the lack of street parking, parking spaces of the dwellings and the exclusion of residents from the parking scheme would in all likelihood disincentivise vehicle owning persons from purchasing one of the dwellings.
- There were no conditions in the officer report that directly responded to Historic England's comments as the officer view was that the development would cause less than substantial harm to heritage.

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- Any approval would be subject to a condition to build in accordance with the floorplans and elevation plans and not specifically with the modelled visuals. Their accuracy is reliant on the architects' modelling.

The Highways Officer responded to Members' questions concerning whether there was a provision to allow the Kings School to be contacted in the traffic management plan during the construction phase of the application should concerns around traffic be realised, whether residents would park dangerously in the area if there were no parking spaces proposed and how many people owned cars in Gloucester as follows:

- There was a condition relating to a construction management plan. When the condition came to discharge, he would make a point in highlighting issues raised by the Kings School. He would liaise with the applicant to ensure that the views of the School were taken into consideration.
- There were no places to park a vehicle on site. The area around it was constrained for parking. It would be costly for residents to park in Hare Lane in the morning and afternoon. The dwellings would be unsuitable for persons who owned a vehicle. Residents would be excluded from the Permit scheme.
- There was census data on the amount of vehicle owning persons. Generally speaking, the number of vehicles was linked with the number of habitable rooms and the ability to park within the vicinity of a dwelling. Broadly speaking, owing to security concerns, residents would be unlikely to park their vehicle out of view of their home.

### **Members' Debate**

The Chair stated that he was broadly supportive of the scheme. He said that he did not share concerns about cars and parking as there were no car parking spaces in the vicinity of the proposed build nor any open roads where persons could park. He said that he believed that the dwellings would be predominantly used by people who would use other means of transportation. He stated that he shared concerns for school children of Kings School, but that the main road that they used was away from the site so would be difficult to condition.

The Vice-Chair stated that he agreed with the assessment of the Chair. He stated that on balance that he believed that the application should receive consent. He said that it would bring housing to the centre of Gloucester and would add to the vitality of the City.

Councillor Sawyer noted that she liked numerous aspects of the application. She said however, that she did not believe the proposed brick colouring/scheme at the Hare Lane block fitted in with the character of the street. She stated that her views were supported by Historic England, the Conservation Officer, and the Civic Trust. She stated that she requested that a condition be imposed which stated that either no work commenced on site until a revised drawing was put to the relevant officers or the application be deferred until improvements to the design were proposed. She stated that the planning grounds for suggestion deferral was that the application was not in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as it

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was not sympathetic to the local character. She stated that she believed that the application as currently proposed also did not accord with policy SD4 of the adopted Joint Core Strategy and Policy A1 of the adopted City Plan.

Councillor Dee noted that she agreed with points raised by Councillor Sawyer.

Councillor Conder stated that she agreed with points raised by Councillor Sawyer. She stated that she believed that it was a generic design which was similar to the Friars Orchard development. She stated that the red brick design on Brunswick Road for the Friars Orchard development fitted in with the character of the area but that the proposed build on Hare Lane did not. Councillor Conder stated that it was difficult to know how to remedy the particular design on Hare Lane, as the building was a square, flat roof, unlike the Raven Centre, however she believed that the colour scheme could be improved.

Councillor Gravells stated that he believed a condition should be implemented that put a time restriction on when the mural would be put back up.

The Principal Planning Officer noted that condition 17 stipulated that no above ground construction of Block B (the Northgate Street block) shall commence until a Method Statement for the installation of the mural and that condition 18 prior to first occupation of any unit within Block B (the Northgate Street block), details of interpretation material for the relocated mural shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Councillor Gravells withdrew his suggestion for the condition in relation for the mural as he believed it was covered by condition 17 and 18 of the report. He stated that he believed that the scheme was excellent in many ways, particularly in regard to the number of affordable homes that would be provided. This said, Councillor Gravells raised concerns about the lack of parking spaces that would be provided, noting that this could lead to dangerous parking in the locality, and concerns about Kings School. He said that as good as the scheme was for people who needed housing, there were not enough parking spaces provided. He stated that he would not support the application in its current format and stated that he would be happy to support Councillor Sawyer's suggestion for deferral. He said that he believed that the applicant could reduce the number of units to increase the number of parking spaces which would lead to a less detrimental impact on the highway network, which were the main reasons he believed it should be deferred.

Councillor A.Chambers stated that he was generally supportive of the build and highlighted that there needed to be more properties in the City Centre. He stated that he had counted 150 empty shopping units in the local area when he last checked. He highlighted that a lot of anti-social behaviour had taken place in the units since it had become empty and that the application being granted would help to alleviate that. Councillor A. Chambers highlighted that there were 5,500 people in the City of Gloucester who needed housing and commented that the application would assist those people to get onto the housing ladder. He stated that he had two concerns with the application. He stated that he did not believe that there were enough parking spaces proposed. He further commented that there were also not enough bike spaces included in the application. Councillor A. Chambers agreed with Councillor Gravells' assertion that the scheme may be improved, should the



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applicant reduce the number of dwellings and increase the number of parking spaces as well as the number of bike racks. He said that he would also like to receive clarity as to whether there was a gap between the Raven Centre and the build, noting that he would support the application if those two conditions were added.

Councillor Conder stated that Friars Orchard did not provide parking for the residents in the blocks of flats, similar to the scheme proposed. She said that initially, the dwellings at Friars Orchard were occupied by elderly and retired persons. Councillor Conder noted that the nature of the residents had changed over the years. She said that some of the apartments were being let to students, that landlords were not local and that it was a more transient community than when residents had initially moved in. She stated that she believed a similar situation would arise at the proposed site. She stated that it would attract landlords who were not local who would let out the properties to students. She said that she did not believe it would be a family occupied environment and that she believed Members should be aware of that.

Councillor A.Chambers stated that the application would assist with the shortfall of accommodation in the city and that prospective tenants would assist with bringing income into the area, which was good for business. He reiterated that if adequate bike storage was provided and that there would definitely be a physical gap between the Raven Centre and the building, he would be minded to support the application.

The Principal Planning Officer outlined what he considered had been raised in Members' debate as potential reasons for deferral or to be subject to conditions of any permission to seek Members' agreement to this summary. He summarised them as follows:

- 1) A possible deferral or condition for altering the façade on the Hare Lane block. He stated that his position on the design/heritage impact and the Conservation Officer's was set out in the report. The design that was in front of the Committee had come as a result of negotiations between the applicant and Officers. Whether they would be willing to make further alterations, he could not say. However, the design of the façade on Hare Lane not being in character could be a material planning reason for deferral. He did not believe that it would be appropriate for it to be conditioned.
- 2) A possible deferral to address concerns relating to the impact the application could have on the highway network, particularly in relation to safety of the schoolchildren at The Kings School crossing on Pitt Street. In relation to this suggestion, the Principal Planning Officer was not aware of any additional information that could be obtained that would warrant a deferral.
- 3) A condition or deferral to redesign the scheme by reducing the amount of units to install more parking spaces. He did not believe that this suggestion would be a deferral matter, owing to the fact it would substantially change the nature of the application and would likely need to include a new access from the street.
- 4) A condition or to defer to secure clarification in relation to the gap between the Raven Centre and the Hare Lane block proposed. Whilst he understood

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the concern, he did not believe that it warranted being a condition. If the building was attached, there was the Listed Building Consent process to address heritage issues, and recourse outside of the scope of the Planning Committee through the Party Wall Act for action to be taken. However, if there was a deferral on design grounds, there may be an opportunity to receive clarity on whether there was certain to be a gap between the Raven Centre and the proposed build.

The Chair stated that on balance, he would support the Officer's recommendation.

Councillor Sawyer proposed deferring the application on the grounds that the application as it stood contradicted the NPPF as the design of the Hare Lane façade did not fit in with the character of the street scene. Further, on the grounds that the scheme contradicted policy SD4 (Design requirements) of the Joint Core Strategy and policy A1 of the City Plan. Councillor Gravells seconded the motion to defer.

The deferral was put to a vote and carried.

**RESOLVED** that the application was deferred.

**66. GALA CLUB, FAIRMILE GARDENS - 23/00259/FUL**

**Officer Report**

The Planning Development Manager presented the report detailing an application for football ground alterations, including a new stand, concrete paving, 6 x flood lights and timber fencing.

The Planning Development Manager further pointed to the Late Material which highlighted an additional representation by Cllr Castle. It stated:

*"This application was made 12 months ago by the Gala club, and we were contacted by a number of residents who had concerns about it so we called it in to the planning committee. Since then, we have held a meeting with the Gala club and residents to give them the opportunity to voice their concerns. The outcome of the meeting was positive, and we no longer wish to call it in to the committee as we have no objections to it. Ward Members' who called in the application."*

**Public Speeches**

*Councillor Castle addressed the Committee in favour of the application.*

She stated that the application should be granted on the following grounds:

- When the application was first proposed, she and Councillor Sawyer received representations by concerned residents. Subsequently, the Manager of Gala Wilton FC set up a meeting with local residents and a

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question and answer session was held. Since this meeting, she had not received further representations against the application.

*A representative of Gala Wilton FC addressed the Committee in favour of the application.*

He stated that the application should be granted on the following grounds:

- Granting the application would allow Gala Wilton FC to improve their facilities.
- Currently, Gala Wilton FC often lost their best players, as their facilities meant that they could not advance to the levels of other local clubs.
- The Club wanted to develop a strong youth policy, granting the application would allow them to retain their best young players and develop them and for an under 18s team to be formed.
- The application was in line with FA guidelines.
- If the club become more successful, this would help the social club that sat adjacent to the pitch and bring in more business to the local area.
- The Club had spent £30,000 to maintain the pitch and were ambitious.
- If the football club was successful, it was more likely local residents would use the social club.
- Since a question and answer session had been set up with local residents, there had not been a complaint about the application.

**Members' Debate**

The Chair moved and Councillor Gravells seconded the Officer's recommendation as laid out in the report.

**RESOLVED** that planning permission is granted subject to the conditions outlined in the officer report.

**67. DELEGATED DECISIONS**

**RESOLVED** that the delegated decisions of January 2024 were noted.

**68. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024.

**Time of commencement: 6.00 pm**

**Time of conclusion: 8.25 pm**

**Chair**