

Wellington Town Council

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Minutes of the PLANNING COMMITTEE meeting held at Civic Offices, Wellington on Wednesday 19th July 2023, commencing at 6.00pm.

Present: Cllr Snell (Chairman), Cllr McGinn, Cllr Woolley, Cllr Williams, Cllr Jobe.

In Attendance: John Haywood from Telford and Wrekin Council, 14 members of the public and Karen Roper, Town Clerk.

36/23	Welcome and Introductory Comments – The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. John Haywood was sincerely thanked for his attendance. The chairman said good evening to the planning committee and fourteen members of the public, some had indicated they wished to address the committee. He introduced John Haywood from the Borough Council.
37/23	Apologies for absence – Were received from Cllr Cook because of another meeting commitment. The following members voted to receive and accept his apologies Cllr Snell (Chairman), Cllr McGinn, Cllr Woolley, Cllr Williams, Cllr Jobe. There were no votes against and no abstentions.
38/23	Declarations of Interest – None were received
39/23	To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 28th June 2023 – The minutes were proposed, seconded and agreed that they were a true and accurate record of the meeting the following members voted unanimously in favour Cllr Snell (Chairman), Cllr McGinn, Cllr Woolley, Cllr Williams, Cllr Jobe. There were no votes against and no abstentions.
40/23	Matters Arising from those minutes - None
41/23	To receive details of Planning Applications received since the last meeting TWC/2023/0442 Site of The Lion, 3 Whitchurch Road, Wellington Conversion and extension of former public house to 10no. assisted living/transitional living units with associated infrastructure and landscaping. John Haywood (JH) introduced himself as a Planning Delivery Specialist. He explained his key role is taking unused or mothballed sites and bringing them back into use. Essentially finding suitable sustainable uses for empty buildings that are a problem to the community and he was in attendance to hear the concerns of the public.

He acknowledged information was not initially available to people and said there is no point in putting forward a facility within a community that is not suitable for the area or locality.

The clarifying statement for the application was dated the 26th of May. Planners had asked the developers to provide details on what exactly they wanted to do. The application is for 10 units to provide specialist supported living for young people leaving the care system and needing additional support prior to becoming independent. This is a transitional step with residents remaining for 6 possibly up to 12 months depending on need. This is not intended to be a permanent home; staff will be available 24 hrs / 7 days a week to provide a care package and he hoped this information clarifies a lot of concerns.

Residents asked if the proposed use could be changed? JH said when the application talks about a specific use if that then requires changing, the applicants would have to apply to Telford and Wrekin planning to seek validation for a change or variation of use. The application can only be judged now upon what the application says. Councillor Jinks said in the Planning Affordable Housing statement dated April 2023 ref: 6.22.3 states the intended use of the building could be for offenders, people with drug and alcohol dependency and refugees. JH said the document has now been updated and changed to reflect the proposed current use for supported living for young people. Cllr Jinks asked what guarantees residents have that Telford and Wrekin will not apply to itself for a change of use for the building in the future.

JH said the new document had been amended on the planning portal, he referred to the appropriate paragraphs.

Mr Gledhill asked how can we have confidence that Telford and Wrekin will not change their mind ending up with a mix of ex-offenders and young people being housed and who will police the situation.

JH said the design of the facility is not compatible for ex-offenders or people who have drug and alcohol dependency it would be gross mismanagement of the building. Residents said the impact on residents is likely to be immense because of other facilities that are located nearby so how can we trust Telford and Wrekin not to change the use.

Residents said if it is intended for young people who need supported housing i.e. vulnerable children why would you put them in an area where there is drug dealing in Crescent Road and nearby Strickland House treats people for drug and alcohol dependency so how is it a safe area for vulnerable young people?

Residents also expressed concern that the proposed communal outdoor area may disturb residents who back on to the property.

Mrs Gledhill asked what will the young people be doing all day, will they be supported by tax payers? JH said they going to be taught life skills some will be in education or work. Mrs Gledhill said they should be asked to contribute to the community.

Another resident asked what does the 24/7 care look like? Where would they park? JH said the support would include managing a private tenancy, shopping, money management, bill payment and personal care. The sort of things that a normal family would provide.

Mr Gledhill (MG) asked who is funding the scheme as the company making the application do not appear to have any money.

JH said whilst that is not a planning matter. It had been addressed in the statement. The proposal is that Telford and Wrekin will provide the care, so through the normal ways you would have access to address any problems.

A resident requested clarification regarding the previous application dated April paragraphs 9.1.2, which states the proposal is for 100% affordable retirement accommodation.

JH said the document on the portal contains cut and paste errors by developers. There is no intention that this application is for retirement living and the developers would be advised to amend the document.

MG said it does not seem as if they know what they want to do and they should resubmit a clear application stating exactly what they want to do.

JH disagreed and said it is clear the intention is for supported accommodation for young people.

A resident said the main concern for him is the close proximity of houses. His home is only a yard away from the proposed social area, which will be a noisy environment and to have that so close to his house is obviously a concern.

Cllr Jobe said it seems that you are not bothered about the site being developed it is about the social consequences of what it could be developed into and the use to which it will be put. He added unfortunately we as the Planning Committee can only judge things on the development..... the buildings. We are very sympathetic to your concerns, and they have been noted. Perhaps there could be a fresh look at the application and some conditions could be added that that may help to address some of these matters. As far as we as the Town Council Planning committee is concerned we are not empowered to consider the social consequences but we are very aware of how important these are to you and thanks for bringing your concerns to us.

A resident stated the demographics are really important, if you think about the location the surrounding area is generally populated by older residents.

Cllr Jinks said there is so much ambiguity within the documentation and it is so very important these issues are brought to the attention of the Town Council planning committee making decisions and relying on these supporting documents. She confirmed the planning Committee can object, grant and make suggestions with regards to conditions.

Cllr Williams said if the residents are concerned about the physical location of the social area being noisy, if it was moved in a more detailed application to the front of the building would that help? The resident responded yes from a selfish point of view but this would still affect other residents and it is not the right area for this type of development.

A resident asked about the ages of the young adults to be catered for, JH said he could only confirm the ages were noted as 16+ in the application. The residents said they needed clarification that this will not change.

Mr Gledhill said no one can guarantee that a business will not apply for change at some point.

JH said the town council would be able to makes comments to identify specific uses that would be acceptable. The design of the building would not suit mixed user groups. Everyone would have the opportunity to make objections if a future application is made for a change of use. Immediate neighbours would be consulted as a requirement of the planning team. There would be site notices and he suggested residents sign up for planning alerts that will be sent by email.

Mr Gledhill said it is not always the case that owners are notified.

The Chairman invited Cllr Jinks to address the meeting. She said the application is for 9 supported living units and one on the car park. Many are concerned and have commented on the portal or are present tonight.

The Town council can either object or grant subject to conditions which can be about nuisance, safety, over development and loss of privacy, these are really legitimate reasons and there are already over 30 comments on the portal. She asked why the young people would need to be directly supervised – would they pose a threat to people's privacy?

She mentioned there had been previous pre application advice and the planning officers had recommended a reduction of 4 units. The developers have said it was not a viable option to reduce the units by 4 and is this approach just to be accepted from them?

Cllr Jinks said there was no reference to the Children's Nursery or Wrekin College yet other educational establishments are mentioned. The GP surgery is much further away than the application states. She explained the site egress and access is via the Lawns which is an unadopted road and again this is a legitimate reason to object due to safety issues. Tradesmen will be expected to park on public car parks as there is no onsite parking.

The application concedes it exceeds recommendations made in the Planning Affordable Housing Statement dated 23rd April and is therefore overdevelopment. Paragraph 2.8 also confirms the application is contrary to the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan and contrary to the associated supplementary planning documents including the NPPF framework (National Planning Policy Framework) 2021 exceeding their recommendations by 400%. This is a legitimate valid reason to reject the application. There are numerous discrepancies within the documentation which still states the development could have other uses. She had made a FOI request to establish the locations of HMO's in Wellington, she listed the sites to members and gave examples of how this affects the quality of life for residents.

Mr Gledhill said the applicant, Mr Craven does not appear to be totally legitimate and gave details. He added there are already 230 local crimes a month recorded in Wellington. The numbers are increasing so it's not the right place for this development that will be housing vulnerable young people. The Lawns is an unadopted Road and parking is suggested in the communal area of the development and this will only increase traffic on the Lawns.

The chairman said he had allowed everyone to have their say and added the Town Council do not make the final decision as a request has been made for this application to be green carded or called in. There will therefore be an opportunity at Telford and Wrekin Planning committee to discuss this matter further. All of the information received tonight is to be included in the minutes and much of it is already on the portal. He suggested that residents make sure that all of their comments are added to the portal.

Cllr Woolley said he would prefer to let it go through the planning process and minutes will go before T&W full council planning committee if called in. Cllr McGinn agreed it should go through the full planning process.

Cllr Jinks said Councillors McClements and Carter have been approached to call the matter in but this was as yet unconfirmed.

Cllr Snell called for a vote; Cllr Williams proposed to **support development of the site subject to the following conditions.**

	• Feel the matter should go before full planning process at Telford and Wrekin (be green carded or called in) • The application should not constitute overdevelopment. (i.e. it should not exceed planning policy documentation) • Conditions of use is limited to the support of young people only. • Re configuration of the building to enable greater privacy for neighbours (on the grounds of loss of privacy) Cllr McGinn seconded the proposal and the following members voted in favour Cllr Snell, Williams, McGinn and Jobe. Cllr Woolley objected on grounds of overdevelopment. The Clerk was asked to put forward the comments made.
	TWC/2023/0456 Glebe House, Glebe Street, Wellington, TF1 1JP Erection of a 1.8m high fence, automated entrance gates, alterations to front boundary walls and installation of a fire escape staircase. The following members voted in favour Cllrs Snell, Williams, Woolley, McGinn and Jobe. There were no votes against and no abstentions.
	TWC/2023/0465 15 Sweet Chariot Way, Wellington, Telford, TF1 3JE Height and side reduction by up to 3m , removal of crossing and duplicated branches in the canopy and removal of epicormic growth to main stem to 1no. Lime tree (T1) and 1no Oak tree (T2) and height reduction by up to 4m, side reduction by up to 3m, removal of crossing and duplicated branches in the canopy and Crown lift by up to 5m by removal of epicormic growth to main stem to 1no. Lime tree (T3). The following members voted in favour Cllrs Snell, Williams, Woolley, McGinn and Jobe. There were no votes against and no abstentions.
	TWC/20 23/0489 The Vicarage, Church Walk, Wellington, TF1 1RW Reduction of first and second limbs by up to 3m. to 1no. Weeping Willow (T3)
	TWC/2023/0495 18 Lindfield Drive, Wellington, TF1 1SF Crown reduction by up to 2m to 1no. Lime tree The following members voted in favour Cllrs Snell, Williams, Woolley, McGinn and Jobe. There were no votes against and no abstentions.
	TWC/2023/0496 Bee House, 52 Leegomery Road, Wellington, TF1 3BN Pollarding by up to 4.5m to 2no. Lime trees (T1 & T2) The following members voted in favour Cllrs Snell, Williams, Woolley, McGinn and Jobe. There were no votes against and no abstentions.
	TWC/2023/0499 Strickland House, The Lawns, Wellington, TF1 3BX Pollarding by up to 3m to 1no. Lime tree and Crown reduction by up to 2m and crown lift by up to 3m including removal of rubbing branches to 1no. lime tree. The following members voted in favour Cllrs Snell, Williams, Woolley, McGinn and Jobe. There were no votes against and no abstentions.
42/23	Correspondence- None had been received.

43/23	Telford & Wrekin Planning Committee applications (if any) - None were received.
44/23	Urgent matters (for information only) – None were received.
45/23	To agree the date and time of the next meeting – Wednesday 9th August 2023 at 6.00pm. The following members voted in favour Cllrs Snell, Williams, Woolley, McGinn and Jobe. There were no votes against and no abstentions. The Chairman sincerely thanked John Haywood and members for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Chairman **Date.....**