

Planning Committee

Thursday, 18th June, 2020

2.30 - 3.50 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Councillor Paul Baker (Vice-Chair), Councillor Stephen Cooke, Councillor Diggory Seacome, Councillor Bernard Fisher, Councillor Dilys Barrell, Councillor Mike Collins, Councillor Alex Hegenbarth, Councillor Paul McCloskey, Councillor Tony Oliver, Councillor John Payne and Councillor Rowena Hay
Officers in Attendance:	David Oakhill – Head of Planning, Michelle Payne – Senior Planning Officer, Nick Jonathan – Legal Officer

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Barnes. Members joined Councillor Baker in sending their condolences to him for his recent loss.

Councillor Atherstone was absent. All other members were present.

In Councillor Barnes's absence, Councillor Baker took the Chair, and proposed Councillor McCloskey as temporary Vice-Chair, seconded by Councillor Hay.

RESOLVED THAT

Councillor McCloskey be appointed as Vice-Chair on a temporary basis.

2. Declarations of Interest

Item 5d – 105-107 Winchcombe Street

Councillor Barrell – this is a CBH application, and her son works for CBH. She has not discussed the case, in unaware whether or not he has had any involvement, and has been advised by the legal officer that this is not a prejudicial interest.

3. Declarations of independent site visits

390 Gloucester Road: Councillors Oliver, Baker, Cooke and Hay.

Beaufort Arms: Councillors Oliver, Baker, Cooke, Hay and McCloskey.

In response to a Member, the Chair confirmed that independent site visits are at the individual's discretion, as long as guidelines and social distancing are being observed.

4. Minutes of last meeting

RESOLVED THAT

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 May were approved and signed as a correct record.

5. Planning/Listed Building/Conservation Area Consent/Advertisement Applications, Applications for Lawful Development Certificate and Tree related applications – see Main Schedule

6. 20/00487/FUL 390 Gloucester Road

Officer introduction

The Senior Planning Officer presented the application, at Committee due to an objection from the Architects' Panel. A previous approval, preferred by the Architects' Panel, has now expired.

Public Speaking

Mr Michael Lumley, the architect, spoke in support of the application.

Member questions

The Chair confirmed that no highways officer was present to answer questions.

In response to Members' questions, the Senior Planning Officer confirmed that:

- the chimney stack is presumably functional, as there is a fireplace on the ground floor;
- the references to the Architects' Panel comments in the report were based on their preference for the previous scheme, rather than their concerns that the proposal represented an over-development of a constrained site. She apologised for this oversight.

Member debate

Members raised the following issues:

- local residents are in favour of a scheme –a good reason in itself to support it;
- the road is unmade and unadopted, and appears in better condition in the drawings than it actually is;
- the site has access on and off the A40 at a very busy point –a particular concern during the construction period. An enforceable condition to control contractor vehicles' parking and deliveries to this very tight site should be included;
- the design is interesting and makes good use of the space; inclusion of a study is notable, with a likely increase in home-working going forward;
- a brick finish rather than render would give better balance and diversity in the street scene;
- the Architects' Panel's preference for the previous scheme is hard to understand – the chalet-style dwellings may have matched others in Granley Road, but are difficult to live in and would not make best use of the footprint; this design is more aesthetically pleasing;

The Senior Planning Officer responded as follows:

- suggested Condition 3 requires the applicant to ensure safe parking provision for contractor vehicles, loading and unloading of plant and materials – this could amended to require a construction method statement showing exactly where facilities will be made available;
- the photos in the presentation were taken this week and show the current state of the road.

Vote on officer recommendation to permit, with amended Condition 3 to include construction method statement

12 in support – unanimous

PERMIT

7. 20/00611/FUL Beaufort Arms
Item 5b: Beaufort Arms, London Road
Officer introduction

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the case, at Committee at the request of Councillor Savage and the Civic Society. There is extant planning permission at this site, it is considered a sustainable location within the PUA, and that while local concerns are noted, officers consider it acceptable and there is no highways objection.

Public Speaking

Marcus Evans of SFPlanning spoke in support of the application.

Member questions

In response to questions from Members, the Senior Planning Officer confirmed that:

- the neighbour's concerns about loss of light were taken into consideration, and the scheme was revised accordingly to lose one of the proposed studio apartment; the scheme is now comparable to the extant permission, which was considered acceptable;
- there is no space in the site to turn a car; no parking space is proposed and the assumption must be that cars will not visit the site;
- the applicant did not provide a Design and Access statement setting out the rationale in developing the site – these do not usually form part of local validation requirements;
- the shared driveway to the side is the joint responsibility of all residents with access rights over it; it is not part of the public highway;
- the national recommendation of 50 sq metres for accommodation occupied by two people is for guidance only – not a statutory requirement; Cheltenham has no minimum space standards;
- the scheme of delegation as set out means that if a consultee objects within a certain time period, a committee decision is triggered – it doesn't need the support of a councillor as well. In this case, the Civic Society objected, and Councillor Savage requested a committee decision on behalf of local residents.

Member debate

Members raised the following issues:

- it is disingenuous to expect anyone moving to these properties to be out-and-out cyclists without a car; car owners are therefore likely to be discriminated against;
- re. traffic, there are already issues with beer delivery trucks and Chinese Take-Away customers. There is often a line of parked cars all along the pavement, even when the pub isn't open. This application won't necessarily make it worse, but people need and will have cars;
- there are no policies regarding the number of car parking spaces, but Gloucestershire Highways insist vehicles should have safe access onto the highway, which will be difficult here; parking will have an adverse effect on neighbouring amenities;
- one-bedroomed apartments are in high demand in Cheltenham, we have no five-year housing supply, and these will be popular, but they are exceptionally small, below 50 square metres – tenants will effectively be living in the kitchen, which could be harmful effect to well-being;
- the bin store seems inadequate to service three new flats, the pub, and the flats over the pub;
- how will the pub's future storage requirements be accommodated?
- the design is innovative but a lighter, reflective render would benefit other properties;
- the approved drawings show a fire escape and access to the side, the proposed drawings don't – if the fire escape has been removed, will the proposal meet building regulations?

In response, the Senior Planning Officer confirmed that:

- bin and cycle storage for the apartment building will be separate to that for the pub and apartments; it is sufficient size for the number of apartments;
- grey render was approved in the extant permission, so it would be unreasonable to ask for a change of materials with this application;

- parking is clearly a big concern, and officers have sympathy for local residents; there are similar situations in many areas of Cheltenham, close to town. However, as set out in the report, this is a sustainable location and in the absence of parking standards or any objection from Highways, it would be difficult to support as a refusal reason at appeal. In addition, the small number of additional units could not be considered to have a severe impact on the current situation;
- the fire escape on the pub building shown on the comparative elevation has been removed during the refurbishment of the pub; the current drawings show what has been approved by building control officers.

Members made the following further points:

- although the apartments are small, Cheltenham needs one-bed accommodation, and the small size should be reflected in the price, making the flats affordable;
- concerns remain as to whether the compact nature of the dwellings but presumably people won't buy them if they don't feel they are big enough;
- the applicant should be congratulated on saving the very popular pub – which probably generated more traffic in its heyday than the current proposal will;
- this is a good, clean, contemporary design;
- as the lane to the side is a private shared drive and the Highways Authority has no jurisdiction over it, parking issues could well arise, but this is the case all over town, and it will be a police matter if any kind of obstruction arises.

Vote on officer recommendation to permit

11 in support

1 in objection

0 abstention

PERMIT

8. 20/00690/CONDIT Farmers' Market, Promenade

Officer introduction

The Head of Planning introduced the application, to amend the 2006 planning permission to increase the number of days for the Farmers' Market from 21 to 41 a year. Officers consider this will provide economic and social benefit to Cheltenham. The application is at Committee because Marketing Cheltenham is the applicant, and the recommendation is to permit.

Public Speaking

None

Member questions

In response to questions from Members, the Head of Planning confirmed that:

- the reason why additional generators may be required to provide power for stalls on the Promenade is because it allows flexibility for the stall-holders – mains power will be utilised as much as possible but their requirements are not known and may be greater
- as Marketing Cheltenham and the Cheltenham BID worked together on the proposal, it can be assumed that local businesses were consulted and supportive.

Member debate

- several Members were concerned about the use of potentially large generators powered by carbon fuels, in view Cheltenham's green agenda, and wondered if a condition could be included to ensure that generators are only used when mains power isn't available.

The Head of Planning felt there were a number of considerations here, including distance from the power source and power requirements; an informative and proactive discussions with the market organisers may be more appropriate, as CBC will control the market anyway via licence applications.

Vote on officer recommendation to permit, with informative

12 in support – unanimous

PERMIT

9. 20/00035/LBC 105 Winchcombe Street

Officer introduction

The Head of Planning introduced the listed building applications for various repairs, at Committee as the building is owned and managed by CBH. The impact on the listed building will be positive, and the recommendation is to approve

Public Speaking

None

Member questions

None.

Member debate

The Head of Planning confirmed that the roof slate, felt and battens will be removed and replaced.

Vote on officer recommendation to grant

12 in support – unanimous

GRANT

10. Appeal Updates

These were noted in the papers.

11. Any other items the Chairman determines urgent and requires a decision

The Head of Planning will circulate note to members regarding the impact of COVID on planning functions.

Chairman

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