

Nottingham City Council

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 19 October 2022 from 2.30 pm - 4.04 pm

Membership

Present

- Councillor Michael Edwards (Chair)
- Councillor Graham Chapman (Vice Chair)
- Councillor Azad Choudhry
- Councillor Kevin Clarke
- Councillor Jay Hayes
- Councillor Angela Kandola
- Councillor Jawaid Khalil
- Councillor AJ Matsiko
- Councillor Salma Mumtaz
- Councillor Ethan Radford (minutes 37-38 inclusive)
- Councillor Mohammed Saghir

Absent

- Councillor Leslie Ayoola
- Councillor Corall Jenkins
- Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
- Councillor Sally Longford
- Councillor Toby Neal
- Councillor Cate Woodward

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

- Laura Alvarez - Senior Principal Design and Conservation Officer
- Lisa Guest - Principal Highways Officer
- Martin Poole) Area Planning Managers
- Rob Percival)
- Jo Bates - Community Planner
- Paul Seddon - Director of Planning and Regeneration
- Tamazin Wilson - Planning and Environment Solicitor
- Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

34 Apologies for Absence

- Councillor Sally Longford)
- Councillor Cate Woodward) illness
- Councillor Gul Khan)

- Councillor Toby Neal)
- Councillor Lesley Ayoola) personal
- Councillor Corral Jenkins - Councillor Khalil Jawaid substituting)

35 Declarations of Interests

None.

36 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2022, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

37 29 Addison Street, Nottingham

Martin Poole, Area Planning Manager, presented application 22/00779/PFUL3 by Grace Machin Planning & Property on behalf of Unitech Plus Ltd, for the **proposed** change of use of redundant bowls club carpark and club house to accommodate the erection of 29 apartments (2 x 1 bed, 25 x 2 bed and 2 x 3 bed).

Martin Poole delivered a presentation which included contrasting views of the site, both currently and once developed as proposed, including aerial and street views, along with plans and computer generated images (CGIs) of the elevations.

The following points were highlighted and committee members' questions responded to:

- a) the site has become available as operating the Bowls Club is no longer financially viable. The proposal includes use of the existing clubhouse and pavilion, with further additions;
- b) The bowling green itself and club car park are not formally recognised as part of the open space network, but a proportion will be retained as green space for the communal garden;
- c) the view from the street of the Arboretum's Chinese Bell Tower will remain between the buildings;
- d) the pavilion has not been found to be of sufficient interest to be considered for listing as a protected structure;
- e) due to the changes in ground level, a lower ground floor/ semi-basement level will be included;
- f) the Addison Street facing architectural style of the development is a modern interpretation of the surrounding traditional Victorian villas with the use of different shades of brick and a sensitive treatment of the connecting staircase;
- g) the rear elevations facing into the communal garden are of a more contemporary style;
- h) representations have been received, expressing concern at the density of the scheme and questioning if it is for students. It should be noted that whilst the developer is called "Unitech Plus Ltd", they do not specialise in student accommodation and are not connected to the universities. While the scheme is not aimed at students, it was acknowledged that it would be possible for students to occupy the accommodation, and the committee is not able to apply any restriction with regard to student occupation;
- i) with regard to planning obligation and a contribution to section 106 funding, the viability of the development has been independently tested and whilst determined that it can afford to pay the full contributions, the developer can claim vacant building credit to offset part of the affordable housing obligation, so this part of the contribution has been reduced and the section 106 contribution sought is policy compliant, as set out in the report;

- j) whilst a modern interpretation, the Addison Street facing design of the proposal is invariably simpler but well considered with attention to detail to propose a good balance between existing buildings in the locality and contemporary design. There is no intention to recreate a Victorian villa;
- k) photovoltaic panels (solar panels) are intended to be included on the rear roofing of buildings and the development is aiming for a high level of insulation. The recently tightened building regulations will apply to this development, as set out within the report;
- l) maintenance of communal landscaping will be covered by conditions, as will the requirement for appropriate quality materials, including paving;
- m) the proposal would result in the removal of three trees along the Addison Street boundary, 2 horse chestnut and 1 lime. These trees have been assessed and whilst 2 are considered to be 'Category C' (of low or average quality of value, but of adequate condition), the third has been rated as 'Category U', which is unsuitable for retention. As the lower ground floor work of the development will impinge on the root level of the trees, the developer has agreed that the 2 'Category C', trees will be replaced elsewhere on the site. Planning colleagues believe that the loss of the trees is justified. Details of suitable replacement planting will be determined by condition.

Comments from members the committee included:

- n) whilst the design claims to be a modern interpretation of Victorian villa it is downgrading and the design attempts at decoration are merely gestures which can be improved on by the addition of small detail such as brick detail, sills or strengthening the appearance of the eaves. Other modern developments within the city have very successfully included small but additional details which have much improved the overall appearance and improved the standard of design;
- o) the overall scheme is acceptable, but assurance is sought regarding the landscape management of the welcome and attractive communal garden, and also that the paving is of good quality and durable;
- p) members of the committee commented that development provided insufficient car parking space and expressed concern that this would impact on parking availability in surrounding streets.

Resolved

1) to grant planning permission subject to:

(a) prior completion of a Section 106 Planning Obligation which shall include:

- (i) a financial contribution of £241,176 towards affordable housing;**
- (ii) a financial contribution of £64,467 towards open space improvement;**
- (iii) a financial contribution of £10,960 towards local employment and training;**

- (b) the indicative conditions substantially in the form of those listed in the draft decision notice at the end of the report;**
- 2) for the power to determine the final details of both the terms of the Planning Obligation and the conditions of planning permission to be delegated to the Director of Planning and Regeneration;**
- 3) to note that the Committee are satisfied that Regulation 122(2) Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 is complied with, in that the planning obligations sought are (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, (b) directly relate to the development and (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.**

38 Units 1 to 4, Queens Road

Rob Percival, Area Planning Manager, presented application 22/00593/PFUL3 by Lichfields on behalf of C/O Agent for redevelopment of the site, including demolition of all buildings, to provide student accommodation and apartments with associated infrastructure, works and landscaping.

Rob Percival delivered a presentation which included contrasting views of the site, both currently and once developed as proposed, including aerial and day and night street views along with plans and computer generated images (CGIs) of the elevations, and skyline views from different approaches to and viewing points of the city to provide an indication of the height impact.

The following points were highlighted and committee members' questions responded to:

- a) the site on the corner of Queens Road and London Road has now been cleared;
- b) the proposed development is in context with other developments within the Strategic Regeneration Zone which incorporates the Island Complex;
- c) consideration has been given to the city's heritage assets, including the station. The scale of the scheme is felt to be appropriate with no adverse impacts due to the distance between the proposed development and existing heritage assets;
- d) the proposal has a three building footprint of a non-uniform shape which is slender and elegant in proportion;
- e) it is believed that this development would benefit the city and public realm surrounding the site, which integrates the pavement and provides tree planting opportunities;
- f) consideration has been given to providing visual texture to the brick structures, including different colour brickwork, recessed windows and a different treatment to the crown at the top of the tower where there is a contrast in design and materials;
- g) the plot of land has been allocated for mixed use development within the Local Area Plan and will provide much-needed student accommodation in easy reach of public transport connections;

- h) Planning colleagues feel that the development is appropriate and acceptable for the site and the city;
- i) whilst three objections have been received from residents of the neighbouring Hicking Building, a letter of support has also been submitted. Nottingham Civic Society has also submitted a representation, all of which are referred to within the report;
- j) the proposal has undergone the standard independent viability check regarding the planning obligation. Following the result of the assessments and planning officer negotiation, the developer will provide the planning obligation of section 106 funding totalling £200,000 each for phase 1 and phase 2 of construction;
- k) whilst some members of the committee are concerned that elements of the proposed building are too high, Rob Percival clarified that there are no building height limits within legislation, and that determination of height was a matter of judgement, adding that the provision of tall buildings was within Local Planning Policy and already an accepted development practice within the city;
- l) car parking provision is not included within the development, as has successfully been the practice for other student developments within the city.

Committee members' comments included:

- a) the scale and dominance of the proposal will negatively impact on the character of the local area, particularly the highest tower. Further consideration should be given to reducing the scale and impact of the building;
- b) consideration and design efforts for the development elevation facing the station has been minimal as it appears wholly unattractive and oppressive. More effort needs to be made to improve its current unattractive appearance;
- c) the design is brutal and will negatively change the skyline of Nottingham. It infringes on neighbouring Victorian buildings, is not liked, and not welcome;
- d) use of the potentially awkward shaped site for accommodation is welcomed, but further consideration needs to be given to the design which does not appear to comfortably fit together, particularly the crown to the tower, which is square, harshly brutal and will be seen for many miles, acting as a landmark;
- e) the overall style is not suitable for a building which will be the most prominent in view from the south of the city;
- f) the current overall design does not meet the required quality, particularly considering its presence on one of the gateways to the city. Although the footprint is not square, the building appears square and distracts from its actual shape;
- g) further consideration is required for the ground floor entrance and the tower crown, the design for which appears unfinished;

- h) the use of different coloured bricks is welcomed, but with the addition of additional texture and further detail, the design could be much improved;
- i) the finished development would benefit from a pelican crossing;
- j) it is suggested that the decision is deferred, mainly on the grounds of design, but also potentially height, until an amicable solution can be reached;
- k) this committee has agreed a policy to provide student specific accommodation within the city to support the expanding need. As a result, some areas of the city centre have been repurposed to support the increasing numbers of students. Following an enormous amount of consideration, the design of this scheme does not meet the design standards for any accommodation, whether it is student or private. The committee should not compromise on design standards;
- l) the limitations of land value within the city are recognised, so it is inevitable that buildings will become taller but tall buildings need to be scattered and not all within in one area;
- m) as the University is becoming more popular and winning international awards, more students are attracted to the city, which is good for the economy, but they must be accommodated.

Paul Seddon, the Director of Planning and Regeneration, assured committee members that Planning officers have clearly identified committee members' concerns and will look to address them to enable the scheme to progress.

Resolved to defer a decision on the application to a future meeting pending a review of the architectural approach and design, including further consideration of how the scheme can most sensitively contribute to the Nottingham skyline.