

Planning and Highways Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2024

Present: Councillor Lyons - In the Chair

Councillors: Lovecy, Gartside, Johnson, Hewitson, Hughes, Davies, Riasat, S. Ali, Chohan, Hassan, Andrews, Curley and Kamal

Apologies:

Also present: Councillor Taylor

PH/24/17 Supplementary Information on Applications Being Considered

A copy of the late representations received had been circulated in advance of the meeting regarding applications 138808/FO/2023 and 139066/FH/2024.

Decision

To receive and note the late representations.

PH/24/18 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2024 as a correct record.

PH/24/19 138768/VO/2023 - 258 Brownley Road Manchester M22 5EB

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing regarding a City Council Development, the change of use of a former probation centre (Class E) to homeless shelter for up to 20 homeless people (sui generis).

The application related to the conversion of a vacant probation centre to a homeless shelter providing 20 bedrooms for single homeless people, incorporating communal living areas, staffroom, and parking.

Objections had been received from 92 local residents, together with 2 letters of support.

The main concerns raised related to the proximity of the proposed use to a neighbouring children's day nursery and safeguarding issues; anti-social/criminal behaviour perceived to be generated by prospective residents; the use of the open space opposite and interaction with children; the impact to nearby property values and the provision of satisfactory operational arrangements, to ensure that the development does not harm the living conditions of nearby residential occupiers.

Consideration of this application was deferred by the Planning and Highways Committee on 14 February 2023 to enable a site visit to take place.

The Planning Officer noted that the site visit had taken place, looking at the relationship of the property to the day nursery next door, neighbouring residential properties, the open space opposite and the access to premises and car parking area.

The applicant addressed the Committee, noting that discussions had taken place with the nursery and neighbouring properties, which involved their management plan. Addresses in both the Woodhouse Park and Sharston Ward had been notified of the application. A drop-in session was held for Sharston residents to discuss their concerns. The engagement that the applicant had completed was aimed at informing residents why the development was necessary in Wythenshawe, given that there was a lack of temporary accommodation provision in South Manchester. The proposed site would be a good neighbour, with sufficient staffing levels to manage the site and provide a prompt response to any complaints. Anti-social behaviour would not be tolerated at the site.

A ward Councillor for Sharston addressed the Committee, requesting that they considered the existing communities and hear their concerns. Sharston residents had told them that they had received no communication regarding the development. They felt the property to not be suitable for this site. However, if approved, they requested that the homelessness team work closely with residents and ward Councillors if any issues did arise.

The Planning Officer noted that the applicant had discussed a detailed management plan and that included contact details to contact with complaints. Staff would be on site 24 hours a day and if there was a breach of the licence agreement signed by residents, they could be moved out of the site. A condition regarding CCTV and other security measures was to be agreed. The site had Class E, office use that provided no control to the Planning authority, whereas this permission would give control through the management plan and other conditions.

A member noted that they had noticed at the site visit that one neighbour was particularly close to the proposed site and questioned if a condition could be added for extra boundary work to act as an additional barrier to the site for neighbours.

The Planning officer accepted that there was a gap in the boundary treatment and that there was no reason a condition could not be added to look at this.

Councillor Andrews moved the Officer's recommendation, with the additional condition relating to boundary work as proposed.

Councillor Lovecy seconded the proposal.

Decision

The Committee resolved to Approve the application for the reasons and subject to the conditions set out in the officer's report, together with an additional condition relating to landscaping works.

(Councillor Johnson declared an interest in this item and therefore vacated the room, taking no part in the discussion or vote)

PH/24/20 138801/VO/2023 - 69 Dickenson Road Manchester M14 5AZ

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing regarding a City Council Development, the change of use of a former children's home to create 24 no. self-contained residential units for short stay homelessness accommodation (sui generis), together with ancillary office and administrative space, associated elevational alterations and roof works.

Objections had been received from 4 local residents. The main concerns raised relate to the proximity of the proposed use to a neighbouring hospital school and safeguarding issues; anti-social/criminal behaviour perceived to be generated by prospective residents; the impact to residential amenity of local residents, and the impact to the conservation area which lies 80m to the north of the site.

The Planning Officer had nothing to add to the printed report.

The applicant addressed the Committee, noting that the application was to repurpose an unused building into short stay homeless accommodation with office and administrative space. The site would be for those with medical needs where alternatives are not appropriate. The site would free up beds in hospitals by providing a place for those ready to leave to go to if they are homeless. The site would be operated by Manchester City Council, with three staff plus security staff on site at all times. There would be no visitors to the property except professionals as required. The site would aim to help residents to be able to move on within a maximum of six months. Background checks would be completed on each referral to ensure that this was an appropriate setting for them. All residents would sign a Licence Agreement that, if broken, could lead to the loss of accommodation. The applicant had engaged with residents and explained the use of the site.

The Planning Officer noted that the management plan would be a condition of planning permission as would other security measures such as CCTV. The application would bring a vacant building back into use.

Councillor Lovecy moved the Officer's recommendation.

Councillor Curley seconded the proposal.

Decision

The Committee resolved to Approve the application for the reasons and subject to the conditions set out in the officer's report.

PH/24/21 138808/FO/2023 - Car Park At Junction Of Charles Street And York Street Manchester

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing regarding the erection of 15-storeys plus plant level building to provide purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA - Sui Generis) along with site preparation works, works over the public highway and other associated works.

16 objections had been received including 2 from local businesses who adjoin the site.

The Planning Officer noted that a long late representation had been circulated to the Committee and provided a summary of that document.

Two objectors attended, splitting the allocated four minutes, and addressed the Committee, the first noting that they were the owner of a neighbouring business. They stated that the construction process would force their business to close and were unsure if their business would survive a long closure. They think that pedestrian safety would be compromised during construction. The objector stated that the applicant had made no thought regarding the impact on local businesses. They requested that the Committee perform a site visit if they would not refuse the application.

A second objector stated that the Committee needed a site visit to understand the significant impact of the development and they could not make a decision without that. They raised concerns that neighbouring businesses had been ignored in the application. Concerns were noted regarding the lack of agreement with Euro Car Parks for an area for a compound. The objector felt that the neighbouring nursery had been ignored, with the proposal creating a barrier to it. They stated that there had been no engagement with the nearby Bracken House, where almost half of residents would lose daylight due to the application. They did not believe there was a need for this type of development in this area.

The applicant's agent addressed the Committee, stating that they had proposed an appropriate use and design for the site. This was a prime location for PBSA as it was close to the Oxford Road Corridor. Expanding the PBSA offer would free up much needed family homes. The agent felt that the proposal could be constructed without harm to the area and would bring benefits. The applicant had proposed additional health and safety measures for the nursery, noting the concerns that remained. They accepted that there would be a temporary disruption in the area, but the impact would be minimised. They stated that all commitments made are assured by the Planning Conditions that would be attached to permission if granted. The applicant was open to continued dialogue with neighbouring businesses and residents.

The Planning Officer noted that the report before Committee was a lengthy one that provided enough information for them to make a decision. They stated that the impacts on neighbouring properties, the nearby nursery and on Bracken House had all been clearly set out in the report. Whilst an agreement had not been reached with Euro Car Parks, the Planning Officer noted that an alternative would be found if an agreement could not be made.

A member queried if it would be all windows at Bracken House that were impacted by the proposed development. It was confirmed that it would be half of the windows.

A member raised concerns regarding air quality and the engagement process. The Planning Officer stated that air quality and noise were planning issues and were set out clearly in the report. The impact regarding air quality and noise had been discussed with colleagues in environmental health and with mitigation they were satisfied that the impacts would be acceptable. In terms of communication, officers had gone well beyond their statutory requirements. The conditions on site will enable businesses to remain in place, but the Planning officer accepted there will be an impact. However, that impact would be managed and mitigated to an extent that officers are satisfied with. The site is a development site that if not developed, will be left as is which was deemed unacceptable. The Planning officer stated that if the purpose of a site visit was to see the nursery play area, that would be difficult from the public highway, and they suspected there would be safeguarding issues and they would not have rights to access the site.

The Director of Planning added that to resolve to complete a site visit, the Committee needed Planning grounds for that visit. They stated that the report already provided visuals of what would be seen on a site visit.

A member raised concerns about the impact of the development on the nearby nursery and young children's health. They had concerns another nursery would be lost. Further concerns were raised regarding the consultation process.

The Director of Planning noted that the consultation process always goes above the statutory requirements.

The Planning Officer noted that Environmental Health had assessed the scheme and were satisfied with the impact. They noted that all Early Years concerns had been addressed in the report and confirmed as acceptable. The applicant had committed to a temporary ramp for access to the nursery, if approved by highways.

Councillor Hewitson proposed a site visit to see the proposal in the context of the adjacent buildings and businesses.

Councillor Curley seconded the proposal.

Decision

The Committee resolved to defer consideration of the application, in order to undertake a site visit on the grounds of seeing the proposal in the context of the adjacent buildings and businesses.

PH/24/22 139066/FH/2024 - 183 Withington Road Manchester M16 8HF

The Committee were informed that the applicant had withdrawn the application and therefore no determination was required.