

Open

Planning Committee

Agenda

6pm
Tuesday, 16 June 2026
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Planning Committee

Members of Committee:

Chairman: Councillor R Drew
Vice-Chairman: Councillor J F Byng

Councillor E Bourne
Councillor H E Dyke
Councillor M J Hart
Councillor N Martin
Councillor C Rogers

Councillor L Carroll
Councillor P Dyke
Councillor D Little
Councillor F M Oborski MBE
Councillor D Ross

Information for Members of the Public:-

Part I of the Agenda includes items for discussion in public. You have the right to request to inspect copies of Minutes and reports on this Agenda as well as the background documents used in the preparation of these reports.

An update report is circulated at the meeting. Where members of the public have registered to speak on applications, the running order will be changed so that those applications can be considered first on their respective parts of the agenda. The revised order will be included in the update.

Part II of the Agenda (if applicable) deals with items of "Exempt Information" for which it is anticipated that the public may be excluded from the meeting and neither reports nor background papers are open to public inspection.

Delegation - All items are presumed to be matters which the Committee has delegated powers to determine. In those instances where delegation will not or is unlikely to apply an appropriate indication will be given at the meeting.

Public Speaking

Agenda items involving public speaking will have presentations made in the following order (subject to the discretion of the Chairman):

- Introduction of item by officers;
- Councillors' questions to officers to clarify detail;
- Representations by objector;
- Representations by supporter or applicant (or representative);
- Clarification of any points by officers, as necessary, after each speaker;
- Consideration of application by councillors, including questions to officers

All speakers will be called to the designated area by the Chairman and will have a maximum of 3 minutes to address the Committee.

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information you should contact Louisa Bright Principal Committee and Member Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732763 or email

Disclosure of Interests

Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, they are required to consider in ADVANCE of each meeting whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-

registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. If advice is needed, Members should contact the Monitoring Officer or other legal officer in good time before the meeting.

If any Member or co-opted Member of the Council identifies a DPI or ORI which they have not already registered on the Council's register of interests or which requires updating, they should complete the disclosure form which can be obtained from Democratic Services at any time, copies of which will be available at the meeting for return to the Monitoring Officer.

Members and co-opted Members are required to disclose any DPIs and ORIs at the meeting.

Where the matter relates to a DPI they may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.

Where the matter relates to an ORI they may not vote on the matter unless granted an advance dispensation.

Where a Member or co-opted Member has an NRI which directly relates to their financial interest or wellbeing, or that of a relative or close associate, they must disclose the interest at the meeting, may not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.

Where a matter affects the NRI of a Member or co-opted Member, the Code of Conduct sets out the test which must be applied by the MEMBER to decide whether disclosure is required. Again please ensure you have spoken in ADVANCE to the relevant legal officer and determined whether it is appropriate to declare the NRI and leave.

WEBCASTING NOTICE

This meeting is being filmed* for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's website site (www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk).

At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 1998. The footage recorded will be available to view on the Council's website for 6 months and shall be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to be filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and or training purposes.

If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the Stourport and Bewdley Room where they can still view the meeting.

If any attendee is under the age of 18 the written consent of his or her parent or guardian is required before access to the meeting room is permitted. Persons under 18 are welcome to view the meeting from the Stourport and Bewdley Room.

If you have any queries regarding this, please speak with the Council's Legal Officer at the meeting.

*Unless there are no reports in the open session.

NOTES

- Councillors, who are not Members of the Planning Committee, but who wish to attend and to make comments on any application on this list or accompanying Agenda, are required to give notice by informing the Chairman, Director of Legal & Governance, or Director of Housing & Planning before the meeting.
- Councillors who are interested in the detail of any matter to be considered are invited to consult the files with the relevant Officers to avoid unnecessary debate on such detail at the Meeting.
- Members should familiarise themselves with the location of particular sites of interest to minimise the need for Committee Site Visits.
- Please note if Members wish to have further details of any application appearing on the Schedule or would specifically like a fiche or plans to be displayed to aid the debate, could they please inform the Development Control Section not less than 24 hours before the Meeting.
- Members are respectfully reminded that applications deferred for more information should be kept to a minimum and only brought back to the Committee for determination where the matter cannot be resolved by the Director of Housing & Planning.
- Councillors and members of the public must be aware that in certain circumstances items may be taken out of order and, therefore, no certain advice can be provided about the time at which any item may be considered.
- Any members of the public wishing to make late additional representations should do so in writing or by contacting their Ward Councillor prior to the Meeting.
- For the purposes of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, unless otherwise stated against a particular report, "background papers" in accordance with Section 110D will always include the case Officer's written report and any letters or memoranda of representation received (including correspondence from the Highway Authority, Statutory Undertakers and all internal District Council Departments).
- Letters of representation referred to in these reports, together with any other background papers, may be inspected at any time prior to the Meeting, and these papers will be available at the Meeting.
- **Members of the public** should note that any application can be determined in any manner notwithstanding any or no recommendation being made.

Wyre Forest District Council

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 16 June 2026

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Appointment of Substitute Members To receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, together with the name of the Councillor for whom he/she is acting.	
3.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
4.	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 19 May 2026.	7
5.	Applications to be Determined To consider the report of the Planning Manager on planning and related applications to be determined.	12
6.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal & Governance before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	
7.	Exclusion of the Press and Public To consider passing the following resolution: "That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of "exempt information" as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act".	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

8.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal & Governance before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE,
FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

19 MAY 2026 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: R Drew (Chairman), J F Byng (Vice-Chairman), E Bourne, L Carroll, H E Dyke, P Dyke, I Hardiman, M J Hart, N Martin, F M Oborski MBE, C Rogers and D Ross.

Observers:

There were no members present as observers.

PL.01 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Little.

PL.02 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor I Hardiman was a substitute for Councillor D Little.

PL.03 Declarations of Interests by Members

Councillor E Bourne declared that she is a Bewdley Town Councillor and one of the applications came to their council meeting. She said that she came to the meeting with a complete open mind as Wyre Forest District Council had given them a lot of information and it was very clear.

PL.04 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PL.05 Applications To Be Determined

The Committee considered those applications for determination (now incorporated in Development Control Schedule No. 634 attached).

Decision: The applications now submitted be determined, in accordance with the decisions set out in Development Control Schedule No. 634 attached, subject to incorporation of any further conditions or reasons (or variations) thought to be necessary to give full effect to the Authority's wishes about any particular application.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.11pm.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

19 May 2026 - Schedule 634 Development Management

The schedule frequently refers to various standard conditions and notes for permission and standard reasons and refusals. Details of the full wording of these can be obtained from the Planning Manager, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster. However, a brief description can be seen in brackets alongside each standard condition, note or reason mentioned.

Application Reference: 25/0628/FUL
Site Address: 154 St Johns Avenue, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY11 6AT
The Committee received representation from Mr Macdonald (objector) and Mr Renwick (applicant) prior to a decision being made.
DEFERRED for a site visit.

Application Reference: 26/0161/S73
Site Address: Land Adjacent, 11 Stourport Road, Bewdley, Worcestershire
The Committee received representation from Mr Millman prior to a decision being made.
APPROVED subject to:
<p>a. The following conditions;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restrict use of kiosk and seating area to Use Class E (b) (sale of food and drink) only and for no other use whatsoever without the prior written consent of the LPA. 2. Restrict opening hours to between 1000 and 1830 Monday to Saturday and between 1000 and 1530 Sundays and Bank Holidays. 3. No changes in site levels permitted without written approval of the LPA. 4. No external lighting permitted without written approval of the LPA. 5. No outside music at any time. 6. Implementation and retention of litter bin and cycle storage as shown on Drawing No. 4204-02C. 7. No external plant to be installed without written approval of the LPA. 8. Flood Mitigation Measures to be implemented, retained and maintained. 9. No commercial kitchen oven to be installed at any time. 10. Development to be implemented in accordance with approved plans.

Application Reference: 25/0797/FUL

Site Address: Unit 1, Britannia Business Park, Stourport Road Service Road
Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY11 7QP

DELEGATED APPROVAL subject to:

- a. The signing of the S106 Agreement to secure additional public benefits as set out in paragraph 4.31 of the report; and
- b. The following conditions:
 1. The existing car parking layout to be retained and kept available for its intended use at all times.
 2. Cycle parking provision to be retained for the purposes of cycle parking only at all times.
 3. Car Park Management Plan (CPMP) to be adhered to at all times.
 4. Within 3 months of the grant of permission, detailed drawings of all car parking areas on the business park site shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA and thereafter implemented, and marked out on the ground and retained for the purposes of parking at all times.
 5. Use restricted to a gym only as defined by Use Class E(d).
 6. No amplified music to be played at any time.
 7. No external plant and extraction equipment to be installed unless details submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA.
 8. No external lighting unless details submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA.
 9. Development to be in accordance with the approved plans.
 10. Within 3 months of the date of this permission, an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) shall be installed at the site in a location first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved AED shall thereafter be retained, maintained and made available for use at all times during the operation of the gym.

Application Reference: 25/0961/FUL

Site Address: Unit 2, Riverside, Exchange Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire
DY10 1BY

APPROVED subject to:

- a. The following conditions:
 1. The materials to be used externally on the development hereby authorised shall comply with the details shown on the approved plan.
 2. Existing mechanical ventilation to be removed prior to replacement installation.

Application Reference: 25/0963/ADV

Site Address: Unit 2, Riverside, Exchange Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY10 1BY

APPROVED subject to:

a. the following conditions:

1. Advert and any supporting structure to be kept in a clean, tidy and safe condition and no display of adverts without the permission of the landowner.
2. In the hours of darkness, the advertisement display luminance shall be no greater than 600cd/m² in accordance with the recommended maximum nighttime luminance value set out in Table 10.4 within the Institution of Lighting Professionals - Professional Lighting Guide (PLG 05) 'Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements including Digital Displays' (or its equivalent in a replacement guide) in cd/m².
3. In daylight hours, the advertisement display luminance shall be controlled in order to reflect ambient light conditions (to ensure it is neither too bright or too dull), and shall at all times be no greater than the recommended maximum daytime luminance values set out in Table 10.5 within the Institution of Lighting Professionals - Professional Lighting Guide (PLG 05) 'Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements including Digital Displays' (or its equivalent in a replacement guide) in cd/m².
4. The advertisement(s) hereby granted consent shall not be illuminated by flashing or intermittent lighting.
5. The advertisement consent hereby granted shall expire at the end of 5 years from the date of this consent.
6. Advertisement to be in accordance with the approved plans.

Application Reference: 26/0021/LBC

Site Address: Unit 2, Riverside, Exchange Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY10 1BY

APPROVED subject to:

a. the following conditions:

1. The materials to be used externally on the development hereby authorised shall comply with the details shown on the approved plan.
2. The advertisement(s) hereby granted consent shall not be illuminated by flashing or intermittent lighting.
3. Development to be in accordance with the approved plans.

Application Reference: 24/0687/FUL

Site Address: Land At Os 377180 274615, Whartons Farm, Cleobury Road, Bewdley, Worcestershire

APPROVED subject to:

a. the following conditions:

1. Maximum storage height of containers restricted to single height only.
2. Landscaping scheme to be submitted, agreed, implemented.
3. Landscape and Environment Management Plan (LEMP).
4. No external lighting unless details are submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.
5. No external boundary treatment unless details are submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.
6. Restriction of operational hours to 08:00 – 18:00 Monday to Saturday, with no Sunday or Bank Holiday use.
7. Submission of a method statement for the protection of the adjacent ditch from pollution during construction.
8. Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the containers have been laid out with adequate aisle width for short term parking and manoeuvring, as shown on the New Proposed Site Plan, drawing no. 24156.104 01.
9. The Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the drainage area has been adequately protected to prevent pedestrian access.
10. The Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the pedestrian signage shown on drawing no. 2506044-01 has been installed either side of the public right of way BW 568.
11. The Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the existing site access onto Cleobury Road has been resurfaced with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
12. Construction Management Plan.
13. Completion of access road resurfacing prior to use and ongoing maintenance thereafter, in line with Highways requirements.
14. Development to be in accordance with approved Plans.
15. Removal of all containers and the land to be restored to its former condition if the use hereby permitted ceases.
16. The use hereby permitted shall be strictly limited to self-storage only within Use Class B8.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TO REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Planning Committee

Part A Applications

Ref:	Address of Site	Recommendation	Page No.
25/0628/FUL	154 St Johns Avenue Kidderminster Worcestershire DY11 6AT	Approval	13
26/0271/FUL	Drollis Farm Bournes Green Road Chaddesley Corbett Worcestershire DY10 4PA	Approval	31

Part B Applications

Ref:	Address of Site	Recommendation	Page No.
25/0510/RES	Land At Os 381692 271240 Worcester Road Stourport On Severn Worcestershire	Delegated Approval	49
25/0669/FUL	Margaret Thatcher House 35 Mill Street Kidderminster Worcestershire DY11 6XB	Delegated Approval	60

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**PLANNING COMMITTEE****16 June 2026****PART A**

Application	25/0628/FUL	Date	26.08.2025
Reference:		Received:	
Ord Sheet:	381919 276623	Expiry	19.12.2025
		Date:	
Case Officer	Julia Mckenzie-Watts	Ward:	Blakebrook And Habberley South

Proposal: **Erection of five detached dwellings****Site Address:** **154 St Johns Avenue, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY11 6AT****Applicant:** **Mr Will Renwick**

Summary of Policy	Policies SP.1, SP.2, SP.6, SP.9, SP.11, SP.13, SP.20, SP.23, SP.27, SP.29, SP.30, SP.31, SP.32, SP.33, SP.35, SP.37, DM.24, DM.26 of the Wyre Forest Local Plan (Adopted April 2022) Health and Wellbeing SPD Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD Housing SPD Streetscape Design Guide 2022 National Planning Policy Framework 2024 National Planning Practice Guidance National Design Guide
Recommendation	APPROVAL
Reason for referral to Committee	Member of the public registered to speak

1.0 Planning History

- 1.1 24/0189/FUL - Erection of 9no. Dwellings, Refurbishment and Extension of the Existing Dwelling and Demolition of the existing Detached Garage and Outbuildings: application withdrawn 25/6/2024

2.0 Consultations and Representations

- 2.1 Kidderminster Town Council – No objection.
- 2.2 Tree and Biodiversity Officer – No objection subject to conditions.

25/0628/FUL

- 2.3 North Worcestershire Water Management Officer – No objection subject to a surface water drainage condition.
- 2.4 Severn Trent Water – No objection subject to a foul and surface water drainage condition and advice notes.
- 2.5 Highway Authority – No objection subject to conditions with respect to the provision of visibility splays, widened access layout, passing and turning areas and implementation of a surface water drainage strategy to prevent surface water run-off into the public highway.
- 2.6 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Nuisance Assessment team) – No objection.
- 2.7 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Contaminated Land team) – No objection.
- 2.8 Worcestershire Archaeologist – No objection. There are no archaeological concerns with development of this site. The conservation officer should be consulted in relation to the setting of The Grove and the wider impact on the character of the local area. The Grove (WSM41489) is an unlisted early 19th century house and is recorded on the Historic Environment Record. There are associated, broadly contemporary, unlisted outbuildings (WSM82002), one of which is within the development site.
- 2.9 Hereford And Worcester Fire And Rescue Service – No objection. Fire Service Vehicle access should comply with the requirements of ADB 2019 Vol. 1 B5, section 13 & Table 13.1. In particular - there should be Fire Service vehicle access for a Fire Appliance to within 45 metres of all points inside dwelling houses/Flats. Access road and hardstandings to be in accordance with ADB 2019 Vol. 1 Table 13.1 Dead-end access routes longer than 20m require turning facilities. Water for firefighting purposes should be provided in accordance with: ' National guidance document on the provision of water for fire - fighting' and BS 9990
The proposed plans appear to comply with ADB.
- 2.10 Conservation Officer - No objection. The application site lies outside of any designated conservation area and does not include any designated heritage assets. However, it forms part of the wider setting of The Grove (HER ref: WSM41489), an early 19th-century unlisted building of local historic interest, together with associated curtilage outbuildings (WSM82002), one of which is understood to fall within the application site. While non-designated, such assets are recognised within the NPPF (Section 16) as having a degree of significance, and it is therefore appropriate to have regard to their setting and any potential impacts arising from development proposals. The submitted Planning Statement provides a general assessment of character and appearance but does not directly address the historic interest of The Grove, its associated outbuildings, or the role of the application site within their setting. However, a site visit has been undertaken to assess the relationship between the application site and these heritage assets, and to inform a proportionate understanding of their significance and setting.

25/0628/FUL

In this context, the main heritage considerations relate to:

- The contribution of the application site to the setting of The Grove
- The relationship between the retained outbuilding and the proposed development
- The extent to which the subdivision of the plot may influence the historic character of the wider site

The proposed development, comprising five detached dwellings including four to the rear, would introduce a change to the existing spatial arrangement of the site. However, the surrounding area is characterised by relatively large detached properties set within generous plots, which provides a degree of contextual support for this form of development. Based on observations from the site visit and the information available, the application site does not appear to make a strong or sensitive contribution to the significance or setting of The Grove or its associated outbuildings. The relationship between the assets and the site is relatively limited, and the presence of existing subdivision and surrounding development reduces the extent to which the site can be understood as part of a coherent historic setting. While a more explicit acknowledgement of the historic context within the submission would have been beneficial, the level of information provided is considered sufficient to reach a proportionate and informed view in this instance. Overall, the proposal is not considered likely to result in harm to the significance or setting of the non-designated heritage asset, subject to appropriate consideration of layout and scale.

2.11 Public consultation - 18 letters of objection and 6 letters with neutral comments received from nearby occupiers.

The letters of objection can be summarised as follows:

- Overdevelopment of the site
- Access to the property will be dangerous and cause light and noise pollution.
- Parking issues on the road with the school at drop off and pick up times
- Bin store, how are the bins to be managed?
- Plot 1 – the plot width has not been reduced, a house to the front of the front elevation of the existing house is not going to enable the avenue to retain its character. The property to the east of the site will have its light affected and their garden will be in the shadow of plot 1, surely this has to be a consideration.
- Noise and traffic impacts are unacceptable.
- Trees have been cut down on the site
- Noise for people working at home.
- Traffic calming measures are required
- There is a covenant on this 150 year property with the land registry WR114900-154 stating there is to be only 1 private residential house to be on this land which is all so horticultural land having housing cattle for a number of years .
- Impact on our privacy and overlooking, taking away our views.
- The houses won't blend into the area.
- Impact on foxes and the badgers setts on the site.
- Block light to number 155 as windows will be facing this property.
- No bat and bird boxes are shown on the plans
- There is a 150 year covenant on the site which only permits one dwelling

25/0628/FUL

[Officer comment – a covenant is not a material planning consideration]

The letters of neutral comments can be summarised as follows:

- Development is going to happen anyway
- Fewer dwellings is a lot better compared to the withdrawn application
- Traffic calming measures should be encouraged
- Swift nest bricks a planning condition to provide enhancement for biodiversity
- Concern about school traffic and on-street parking

3.0 Site Location and Description

- 3.1 The application site comprises a large garden area, outbuildings and double garaging in a residential area of Kidderminster on approximately 0.7 hectares of land within the substantial curtilage of No.154 St Johns Avenue and is accessed from St Johns Avenue itself via a long driveway.
- 3.2 The area is residential, houses within the area are mainly detached in nature, with a mix of both single and two storey dwellings. Immediately to the north of the application site lies Baxter College and St Johns Church of England Primary School.
- 3.3 The current application seeks planning permission for the erection of five detached dwellings and represents a resubmission following a withdrawn application (reference 24/0189/FUL) for the erection of 9no. dwellings.
- 3.4 The following supporting documents have been submitted with the application:
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
 - Road safety audit
 - Planning statement
 - Optimal season grassland survey
 - Drainage report
 - BNG
 - Highways report
 - Tree constraints plan
 - Tree protection plan
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 The main considerations for this application are:
- Principle of development
 - Design, Scale, Layout and Appearance
 - Residential Amenity
 - Highway Safety
 - Flood Risk and Drainage

25/0628/FUL

- Pollution and potential contaminated land
- Trees, Biodiversity and Landscaping
- Refuse
- Heritage

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 4.2 The Development Plan for Wyre Forest is comprised of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan, which was adopted in April 2022 and for the purposes of decision making is up to date. Applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It should also be worth noting that due to the robustness of the Local Plan, decision making on applications is firmly plan-led.
- 4.3 One of the key material considerations is the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'NPPF') (December 2024 version). The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (para. 7). So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paras. 10-11). It states that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (para. 39). It also states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led (para. 15). It also states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led (para. 15). The NPPF seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing (para. 60) and requires the housing needs of different groups in the community to be addressed including those seeking affordable housing to be addressed and people wishing to commission or build their own homes (para. 62). Where relevant reference to other parts and requirements of the NPPF will be made throughout this report.
- 4.4 Policy SP.2 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan guides the process of locating new windfall development and seeks to focus new development in accordance with the hierarchy of settlements in the district.
- 4.5 The application site is located to the side and rear of the existing large, detached property at 154 St Johns Avenue in the main town of Wyre Forest, Kidderminster. The principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable subject to the following site specific considerations.

DESIGN, SCALE, LAYOUT AND APPEARANCE

- 4.6 The NPPF states that good quality design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Decision takers should always seek high quality design and should ensure developments:
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

25/0628/FUL

- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

4.7 Policy SP.9 (housing mix and density) requires that all new housing developments are well designed and address local housing needs incorporating a range of different types, tenures and sizes of housing to create mixed communities. The policy goes on to state that the actual mix of the housing will be influenced by the context of the site, the market needs and the most up to date housing needs specific to the location and that the make up of individual developments, their design and density will be in sympathy with the development context and existing neighbouring development. It is anticipated that new brownfield and greenfield developments will have a minimum density of 35 dwellings per hectare, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be in conflict with the development context and existing neighbouring development. Individual site characteristics may mean that this level of density is not achievable on all greenfield developments, and this will need to be robustly justified and evidenced by the applicant in relation to housing needs and local context.

4.8 In terms of compliance with policy SP.9, St Johns Avenue as a whole contains properties of differing types, styles, sizes and ages most of which have large long rear gardens particularly on this side of the road, apart from the adjacent dwelling at number 155 which has a very short garden, quite out of character with the other properties within the immediate vicinity of the site. Whilst the policy states that development should incorporate housing densities of at least 35 dwellings per hectare (this site is 0.7 hectares), the Council originally raised concern over the initial application for nine dwellings on the site which would have resulted in overdevelopment of the site and therefore having reviewed the design aspects and constraints of the site, in reality a density of 35 dwellings would not be achievable on this site as it would result in a cramped appearance of the development and therefore the proposed density of 9 dwellings per hectare is considered acceptable in this location.

4.9 Policies SP.20 and DM.24 state that all development will be expected to be of a high design quality, will need to integrate effectively with its surroundings, in terms of form and function, reinforce local distinctiveness and conserve, and where appropriate, enhance cultural and heritage assets, landmarks and their settings. New and

25/0628/FUL

innovative designs which promote high levels of inclusivity and sustainability will be encouraged and supported where they enhance the overall quality of the built environment.

- 4.10 The proposed dwellings would be two storeys in height with rooms in the roof to reflect the building heights of neighbouring dwellings. The accommodation is to be arranged over three floors with study, sitting room, utility, W.C and open plan kitchen / breakfast / dining and family room at ground floor, with master suite and two bedrooms and bathroom on the first floor and a further two bedrooms and shower room in the roof. The dwellings have been arranged in a line of three dwellings (plots 2-4) to the rear of the site, one to the front adjacent to number 153 St Johns Avenue and plot 5 to the rear of the existing house. The dwellings will each have active frontages and rear gardens to create a clear public and private realm each with a double garage with parking spaces to the front. A bin collection point is also proposed to the front of plot 1, this will consist of a 1.8m high, 3m wide, 1.7m wide brick enclosure with brick headers to allow the residents living in plots 2-5 to wheel their bins to the bin collection point for collection from the evening before bin collection day and the morning of collection day.
- 4.11 The four dwellings at the rear of the site (plots 2-5) would measure 14.39 metres in width, 9.6 metres in depth and would have a pitched roof measuring 5.0 metres in height to the eaves and 9.1 metres in height to the ridge. Plot 1 at the site frontage would measure 12.3 metres in width, 10.5 metres in depth and would have a pitched roof measuring 5.0 metres in height to the eaves and 8.7 metres in height to the ridge. Plot 1 at the front of the site has been redesigned to include a single projecting gable, a recessed front element and the inclusion of a chimney which is considered to be acceptable, however the 12.3 metre width has not been amended as requested as the agent has sent through a list of the adjacent dwellings to the site and their widths which shows that plot 1 will be narrower than the adjacent dwellings:
- Number 153 –12.3 metres in width
 - Number 156 - 14.3 metres in width
 - Number 157 - 17.22 metres in width
 - Number 158 - 11 metres in width
 - Number 159 - 13.8 metres in width
- 4.12 The development has been designed to reinforce the character of St Johns Avenue, which is characterised by large, detached houses set in well-proportioned gardens. The design of the dwellings will incorporate double fronted traditional properties to assimilate with those in the surrounding area with the design detailing to the roof, chimneys and stone detailing to the windows adding visual interest to ensure the development does not appear overly uniform or monolithic, a condition will be added to any approval seeking the submission of materials types and colours to ensure that these are acceptable for the locality, levels of the site, boundary treatment and details of the refuse storage to ensure a high-quality development.
- 4.13 The design, scale and proposed materials, reflects the local vernacular and is of an appropriate and of a sensitive design. It is clear that the proposal would not represent an over development of the site and the residential development on the site would be in keeping with the character, appearance, plot size and density of other residential

25/0628/FUL

development in the surrounding area. The proposal sits comfortably and is consistent with the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

- 4.14 The indicative room sizes, internal layout of the dwellings and the size of garden spaces are all considered acceptable in the context of the Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD and each dwelling would benefit from sufficient levels of natural light and ventilation to habitable living spaces. On this basis, the proposal is considered to represent high quality design and would be in accordance with LP Policy SP.9, Policy SP.20, Policy SP.22, Policy DM.2, Policy DM.24, Policy DM.26, the Design Guidance SPD and the advice in the NPPF.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 4.15 The NPPF requires that all new developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience (paragraph 135(f)). Paragraph 126 of the National Design Guide (2019) states that 'well-designed homes and communal areas within buildings provide a good standard and quality of internal space. This includes room sizes, floor-to-ceiling heights, internal and external storage, sunlight, daylight and ventilation.'
- 4.16 There is concern about the location in close proximity to a primary school which is located to the rear, however as there is no local or national planning policy that indicates that additional distances ought to be provided where land uses are located adjacent to schools the proposed garden lengths are acceptable. In this instance, the extreme edge of an existing large school playing field is considered to be significantly less sensitive to overlooking issues compared to a rear garden of a residential property which would be used more extensively and in a more private nature. There is an existing row of trees with heights ranging from 4-7 metres which provide screening, however, the submitted plans show for additional tree planting and these will be conditioned to be retained and replanted for the lifetime of the development if any are damaged or die in order to ensure that the screen is retained and enhanced.
- 4.17 The most sensitive relationship within the site boundary is between Plot 5 and the existing dwelling. The Council's guidance states that a 12.5 metre distance is required where habitable windows face a blank side elevation. In this case this is an oblique angled relationship rather than a direct back-to-side relationship and therefore the proposal meets with the Council's guidance. In respect of overlooking from the existing dwelling towards the rear garden of Plot 5, the windows on the rear elevation that are closest to the boundary with this plot are non-habitable windows. The agent has stated that internal alterations carried out to the existing dwelling would ensure that any first floor windows on the eastern side of the rear elevation will be obscure glazed and serve non-habitable rooms and that the applicant is content to secure this by a planning condition given that the existing dwelling is located within the blue line land. Although the main dwelling itself is outside of the red line and within the blue line, a proposed Grampian condition will ensure that no development shall commence on the proposed development until all works to the existing dwelling have been completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority to avoid undue overlooking of the rear garden to plot 05.

25/0628/FUL

- 4.18 The distances between the new and existing dwellings have been carefully designed to ensure that there are adequate distances between the proposed dwellings and the existing dwellings and land uses in the surrounding area. Having regard to the above, the proposals would not have a significant impact on the living conditions of occupiers of nearby dwellings. The impact on the living conditions of existing residents close to the proposals would be minimised and their amenity would not be safeguarded in accordance with Policies SP.20 and DM.24. Despite the close proximity to number 155 there would be no overlooking of this property or impact on privacy due to the separation distance between the nearest dwellings. A 2 metre high boundary fence dropping to 1m at the front of the site is also to be erected along the side boundary to further reduce any impact. The proposals comply with the NPPF in that acceptable living standards are to be provided.
- 4.19 Your Officers are therefore of the view that the site is of a sufficient size to accommodate five dwellings without any detriment of residential amenity through loss of privacy or light and the scheme therefore complies with Policies SP.20 and DM.24 of the local plan, the Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD, the Health and Wellbeing SPD and government advice contained within the NPPF.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

- 4.20 The NPPF states in Paragraph 108 that promoting sustainable transport should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:
- a. the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
 - b. opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;
 - c. opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;
 - d. the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and
 - e. patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.
- 4.21 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 4.22 Paragraph 117 of the NPPF advises that all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.
- 4.23 Policy SP.27 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan states: Proposals must demonstrate that:
- the location and layout of development will minimise the demand for travel;
 - they offer viable sustainable transport choices, with a particular focus on active travel

25/0628/FUL

modes with attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks;

- they address road safety issues; and in particular,
- they are consistent with the delivery of the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan objectives

‘Priority will be given to improving infrastructure, technology and services to support active travel (walking and cycling) and passenger transport (bus, rail and community transport) during the plan period.’

- 4.24 Further to the Highways initial recommendation of deferral and ongoing discussion between the Applicant and the Highway Authority, a DMRB GG119 compliant Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been undertaken as requested, to assess the geometric layout and design of the access and the achievable visibility splays, in accordance with adopted standards and guidance, such as Manual for Streets.
- 4.25 Neighbours have raised concerns with regards to the time that the audit was carried out and have queried why this was not done at the busiest times of the day which are school drop off and pick up time, Highways have responded to this query and have stated that ‘it is noted that the wider area is subject to congestion at school drop of and pick up times due to the location of Baxter College and St Johns Church of England Primary School to the north of the proposed site, and there is a school pedestrian access on St John’s Avenue, approximately 55 metres to the west of the site. The RSA Stage 1 process comprises both on site and desktop assessments and whilst It is acknowledged that the site visit was undertaken at 1.30pm, i.e. outside school drop off / pick up times, the matters of access layout and design for RSA assessment are not time dependent and are not invalidated by the concentration of traffic activity associated with the school, which is typically short duration and time limited.’
- 4.26 It is considered that the access layout is deemed to be compliant with highway’s streetscape design guide standards. It is noted that there are existing ‘School Keep Clear’ markings on the carriageway plus signage which stipulates No stopping at any time on entrance markings. There are also double yellow line restrictions for approximately 60 metres on the opposite side of the road to deter on-street parking. Any contravention of formal traffic regulation orders is a matter for Civil Enforcement and importantly, the presence of on-street parking associated with the schools is an existing situation, not caused by the development proposal. Moreover, the trip generation associated with 5 dwellings is low, being typically approximately 3- 4 two-way trips in the AM and PM peak hours and these peak hours don’t correspond directly with the school peaks which are shorter although more intensive. Highways therefore conclude that the scale of the development is modest and unlikely to materially increase congestion beyond the existing level and it would be challenging to maintain an objection, particularly as the RSA has identified no safety problems to be addressed.
- 4.27 Based on the RSA Stage 1 findings, the Highway Authority does not consider that further stages of road safety audit are required, plus the highway modification is an extension of an existing dropped kerb rather than full access works and there are no personal injury collision (PIC) records on St Johns Avenue. However, as part of the Highway Authority’s ongoing responsibility, personal injury collision data is continually collected and Highways will monitor the operation of the location in relation to the site

25/0628/FUL

access post development and where necessary, appropriate actions would be considered. Within the site, as shown on Drawing no. 154JAK2 100 P06, the private access drive which will function as a shared surface for vehicles and pedestrians, is of variable width as a speed reducing measure and low-level lighting will be installed. A lighting condition will be added to secure the lighting details.

- 4.28 The parking provision complies with standards for Plots 1 and 5 and exceeds standards for Plots 2, 3 and 4 and cycle parking can be accommodated within the garages. Dropped kerb works will be required in the highway, to facilitate access, with works to be carried out by WCC contractors Ringway Infrastructure Services. Highways have also recommended that the adjacent dropped kerb is combined into a single continuous dropped crossing to prevent vehicles mounting sections of full kerb and this will also improve the crossfall on the footway for disabled users and a condition will be added to this effect.
- 4.29 The site will remain private and will not be adopted by the Highway Authority and as such, a local authority refuse vehicle will not enter to the site to collect waste and recycling directly from the individual dwellings. Therefore, a Refuse Strategy is required by condition as to ensure adequate servicing of the proposed site. Any revision to the site layout as shown on drawing no. 154JAK2 100 P06, to accommodate refuse storage, will require further consultation with the Highway Authority.
- 4.30 The planning submission has been assessed against local policy in the Streetscape Design Guide (SDG) and national policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Having reviewed the access design and layout, which is compliant with standards, with no safety problems identified by RSA and no personal injury collision data, there is no evidence to indicate that the modest scale of development proposed would conflict with Paragraph 116 NPPF and therefore, there are no grounds for refusal which could be upheld at appeal subject to the inclusion of conditions and notes.
- 4.31 **RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY**
Policy SP.37 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan relates to reducing carbon emissions and to secure sustainable energy solutions. The policy requires major developments to incorporate energy from renewable or low carbon sources equivalent to at least 10% predicted energy requirements and to be accompanied by an Energy Statement. Also, that all developments should include electric vehicle charging points and, where possible, be fitted with solar panels. Policy SP.29 requires developments to incorporate design features including achieving internal water use of 110 litres per person per day.
- 4.32 All houses will be provided solar photovoltaics which are to be situated on the roof space of each dwelling, allowing each resident to benefit directly from the energy savings associated with the solar photovoltaic system on their roof space. Electric vehicle charging and each car park area for the flats will have access to electric vehicle charging, (in accordance with Building Regulations).
- 4.33 Therefore, subject to the inclusion of a condition, the development would accord with Policies SP.29 and SP.37 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan.

25/0628/FUL

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

- 4.34 Policies SP.30 and SP.31 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan refers to flood risk management and sustainable drainage and policy SP.32 advises that effective on-site management of surface water can improve water quality, water conservation, the replenishment of ground water supplies and reduce instances of flooding. All new developments with surface water impacts will be required to demonstrate that flows and volumes of surface water runoff leaving a development site do not exceed Greenfield levels. Also, all major developments will be required to submit a detailed Drainage Strategy to show that the proposed drainage system meets the criteria for providing Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and that the proposed drainage systems will be managed and maintained for the lifetime of the development.
- 4.35 The proposed drainage strategy presented in detail in the submitted report aims to reduce the surface water discharge to 1.6l/s for all storm events up to and including the 1 in 100-year storm plus 40% allowance for climate change and allowing a 10% urban creep allowance too. As no on site testing has been undertaken yet, the strategy proposed utilises an underground attenuation tank to store water, with a pumped discharge to the sewer system in the road, which according to the STW sewer maps is a foul sewer system. The report states that infiltration testing will be completed prior to detailed design and should infiltration prove to be feasible, the design will be revised to remove the outlet and the below ground tank will be revised to a soakaway.
- 4.36 The site itself is not at risk of flooding from any source and as areas in the vicinity of the proposed development are believed to be at low risk of surface water flooding. The North Worcestershire Water Management Officer are not opposed to the principle of having a drainage strategy that sets out a preferred option and a fallback option, in this case the preferred option is the discharge via soakaway and the fallback option is the use of an underground attenuation tank, however there is concern that the location currently allocated for the SuDS would not be suitable for the soakaway (the preferred option), and therefore that changes might need to be made to the layout to accommodate the discharge via soakaway
- 4.37 North Worcestershire Water Management Officer have therefore raised no objection subject to the inclusion of a condition in relation to no development other than demolition commencing till the surface water drainage scheme has been agreed and as such the development would accord with Policies SP.31 and SP.32 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan and Paragraph 159 and 167 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.38 **POLLUTION AND POTENTIAL CONTAMINATED LAND**
 The NPPF, in paragraph 198, advises that ‘Planning Policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:
- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;

25/0628/FUL

b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
 c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation’.

4.39 Policy SP.33 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan requires ‘Development proposals to be designed to avoid any significant adverse impacts from pollution, including cumulative ones, on: human health and wellbeing; biodiversity; the water environment; neighbouring land uses; and existing or proposed Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA).

4.40 Para 197 of the NPPF is clear that where a site is affected by contamination issues, responsibility rests with the developer and/or landowner. WRS Contaminated Land team have been consulted and have commented that they have no objections to the proposal and therefore the application is acceptable in this regard.

TREES AND BIODIVERSITY

4.41 The application was submitted prior to the requirement for the need for a 10% biodiversity net gain which is now required for all applications. Policies SP.23 and DM.26 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan concern biodiversity and landscaping and expect all new developments to make a positive contribution to the natural environment through biodiversity net gain, provision of habitat and availability of appropriate foraging opportunities. It is acknowledged that the application predates the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements, however a measurable gain in biodiversity is still expected.

4.42 In the exercise of its functions the Council is required to give due regard to the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and this is enshrined throughout national and local planning policy.

4.43 Circular 06/2005 states that the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a development is being considered which would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. It goes on to state that ‘it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before planning permission is granted’ (Para 99).

4.44 Badgers (*Meles meles*) are known to be active on the site and therefore a badger survey has been submitted by the applicant which was undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist. The result of the survey identifies a main sett and five outlier setts within the site boundary. The ecologist has advised that, without mitigation, the proposed development would have a high impact on these setts. The original number of proposed dwellings has been reduced, and a large area has now been excluded from development for the conservation of badgers as shown on the submitted plan. The current recommendation is to retain the main sett, incorporating enhancement planting and protective exclusion fencing, while the outlier setts would be closed under a Natural England licence.

25/0628/FUL

- 4.45 The site was subject to degradation of on site habitat by way of the removal of a number of large trees to the rear and side of the site prior to the submission of the original application, 24/0189/FUL. This loss has been accounted for in the BNG calculation and will form part of the sites Biodiversity mitigation. The current application has been submitted with a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment which shows the following:
- 4.46 The current development proposals result in a -6.39 (-81.21%) net loss in area-based habitat units and a +0.75 (+135.96%) net gain in hedgerow units. The proposed development therefore surpasses the minimum target of 10% biodiversity net gain for hedgerows but does not surpass the target for area-based habitats. In order to achieve a minimum of 10% uplift in BNG units, the proposals must deliver an additional 7.18 area based units. In order to satisfy trading errors within the metric, the 6.957 units must comprise:
- +3.07 units any medium distinctiveness grassland
 - +3.39 units individual trees
 - +0.31 units any medium distinctiveness woodland
 - +0.41 units any other habitat
- 4.47 The above units will be delivered through the enhancement of either on-site or off-site provision which will be determined post decision. Your officers are satisfied that the mandatory 10% BNG can be achieved.
- 4.48 The Council's Trees and Biodiversity Officer has provided further comments upon receipt of the revised PEA and metric that there is no further objection subject to the inclusion of conditions. Your Officers are in agreement with the Trees and Biodiversity Officer and the conditions as recommended would be included as part of any subsequent approval in order to demonstrate compliance with Policy SP.23 and DM.26 of the local plan, the NPPF and the Environment Act 2021.

REFUSE

- 4.49 Policy SP.35 of the Local plan relates to waste and sets out that proposals for new development should incorporate adequate facilities into the design to allow occupiers to separate and store waste for recycling and recovery unless existing provision is adequate. Such facilities should be well-designed and to ensure that waste is dealt with at as high a level as possible on the waste hierarchy; to protect amenities and prevent pollution, the waste implications of all new development must be considered.
- 4.50 The Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy requires that on-site facilities for separating or storing waste should be adequate to meet the needs of occupiers of any proposed new development. Such facilities should be well designed so that they do not act as an eyesore.
- 4.51 The Council provides a kerbside collection service, and where roads are not adopted, bins are required to be presented at the kerbside, as the Council is unable to access such roads with its collection vehicles and would be unable to service the properties from both an insurance and operational perspective, as they are unable to drive refuse vehicles along unadopted roads. The agent's preferred option was for the Council's refuse vehicles to enter the private drive, subject to an indemnity agreement, however

25/0628/FUL

The Council's waste team are not prepared to enter the site due to insurance concerns and therefore an alternative solution was sought. A private refuse collection company was suggested; however, the agent has stated that this would introduce an ongoing financial burden for future residents, which could affect the attractiveness and saleability of the dwellings and would require additional legal arrangements to be put in place.

- 4.52 According to Building Regulations (Approved Document H), the recommended drag distance for refuse collectors is 25 metres and the proposed location of the bin store as indicated on plan meets the requirement. The refuse collection vehicle will therefore stop at the kerbside, and it is noted that the Council refuse team are in agreement with this proposal. However, at the same time, the residents are expected to drag their bins a maximum of 30 metres, which aligns with the inclusive design principles in the Department for Transport's *Manual for Streets* guidance, and the actual drag distance on this site is much further and therefore does not accord with the recommended guidance.
- 4.53 It is therefore proposed to position a refuse collection point at the site frontage; this would allow 8 bins at any one time to be stored within the open fronted 3m wide, 1.7m deep, 1.8m high brick structure. Plots 2, 3, 4 and 5 are to wheel their bins to the bin collection point for collection and are to only leave bins in the bin collection point from the evening before bin collection day and the morning of collection day as their bins are to be stored at their own property for the rest of the week. The agent has stated that they are more than happy to make this agreement legally binding through stipulating this condition in the relevant title deeds (note - this cannot be a planning condition).
- 4.54 There have been neighbour concerns with regards to the bin storage area and potential smells and mess. However as has been set out above the bins will not be left in the collection point, they will only be there for collection by the Council's Waste team and the Council's Waste team have confirmed that this represents a practical and deliverable solution. It noted that the residents of plots 2, 3,4 and 5 are expected to drag their bins a maximum of 30 metres, which aligns with the inclusive design principles in the Department for Transport's *Manual for Streets* guidance. The actual drag distance on this site is much further and as such does not accord with the recommended guidance, however the residents will be made aware of this fact and is not in itself a reason to refuse the application.
- 4.55 Your Officers are therefore satisfied that the provision of the bin storage area in conjunction with a refuse management plan will ensure that the development accords with Policy SP.35 and will result in suitable refuse arrangements. A condition will be added to any approval to seek agreement of details of the materials to be used for the bin storage.

HERITAGE

- 4.56 Policies SP.21 and DM.23 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan relate to Safeguarding the Historic Environment and advise that development proposals should avoid harm or loss of significance to a heritage asset wherever possible. The level of harm should require very robust justification and substantial harm to a designated heritage asset should only be allowed in exceptional circumstances.

25/0628/FUL

- 4.57 The application site lies outside of any designated conservation area and does not include any designated heritage assets. However, it forms part of the wider setting of The Grove (HER ref: WSM41489), an early 19th-century unlisted building of local historic interest, together with associated curtilage outbuildings (WSM82002), one of which is understood to fall within the application site. While non-designated, such assets are recognised within the NPPF (Section 16) as having a degree of significance, and it is therefore appropriate to have regard to their setting and any potential impacts arising from development proposals.
- 4.58 The submitted Planning Statement provides a general assessment of character and appearance but does not directly address the historic interest of The Grove, its associated outbuildings, or the role of the application site within their setting. The main heritage considerations relate to:
- the contribution of the application site to the setting of The Grove
 - The relationship between the retained outbuilding and the proposed development
 - The extent to which the subdivision of the plot may influence the historic character of the wider site
- 4.59 The application site does not appear to make a strong or sensitive contribution to the significance or setting of The Grove or its associated outbuildings. The relationship between the assets and the site is relatively limited, and the presence of existing subdivision and surrounding development reduces the extent to which the site can be understood as part of a coherent historic setting.
- 4.60 The Council's Conservation Officer has commented that overall, the proposal is not considered likely to result in harm to the significance or setting of the non-designated heritage asset, subject to appropriate consideration of layout and scale and your Officers therefore consider that the development would accord with Policies SP.21 and DM.23 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 indicates that determination must be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 12 of the NPPF advises that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
- 5.2 No objection has been raised by any statutory consultee, including: Trees and Biodiversity, Drainage, Highways and Contaminated Land, subject to the imposition of conditions. Your Officers considers that the proposal would make efficient use of an

25/0628/FUL

underused site within a sustainable location in Kidderminster and the development would accord with the development plan.

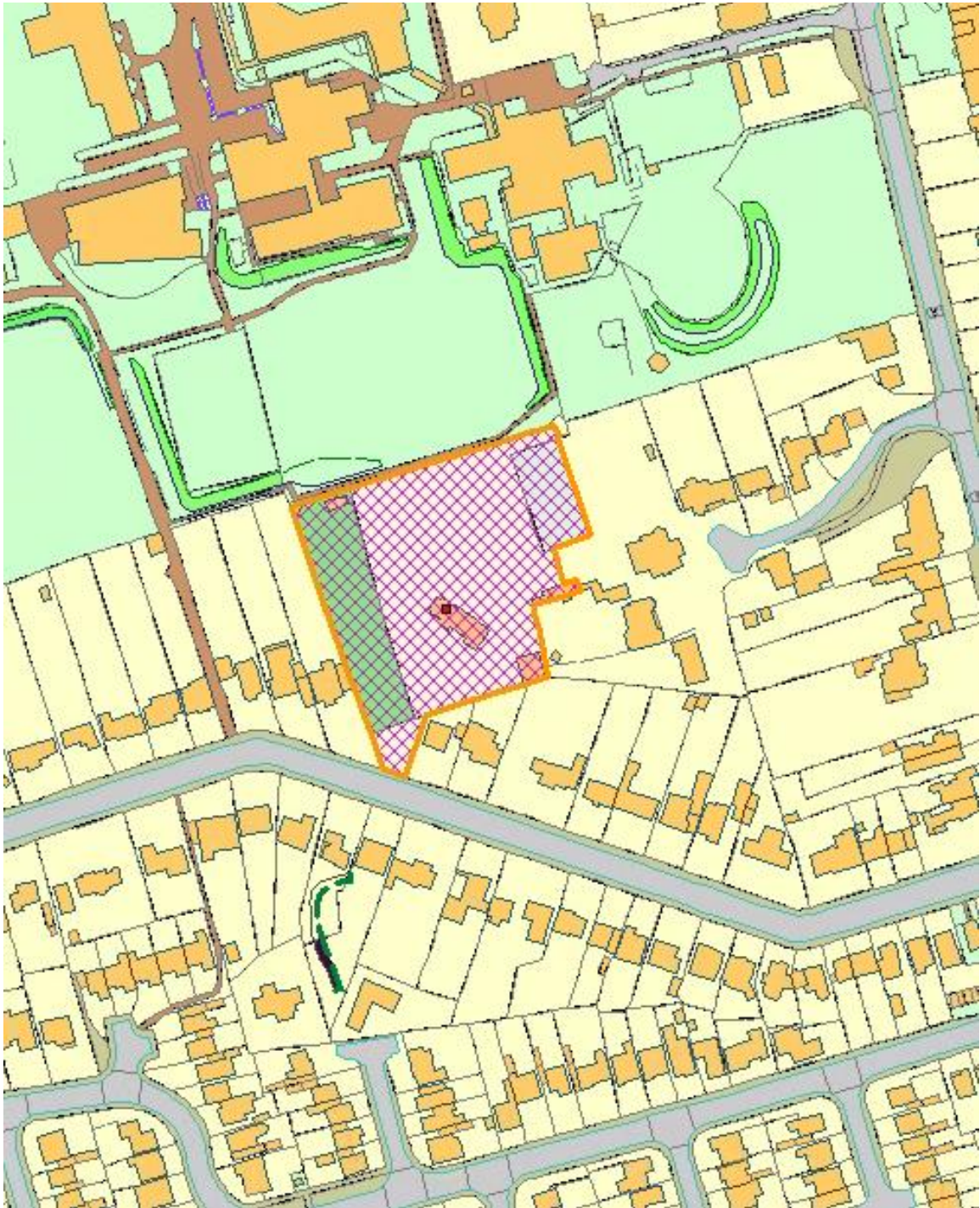
5.3 It is therefore recommended that the application is **APPROVED** subject to:

a. The following conditions:

- 1) Three-year time limit to implement development
- 2) Details of all external building and hard surfacing materials
- 3) Details of boundary treatment including retaining walls
- 4) Details of site levels and finished floor levels
- 5) Surface water drainage details
- 6) Water Efficiency
- 7) Foul water drainage disposal
- 8) No external lighting unless details submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA
- 9) Badger Survey and implementation of agreed mitigation measures
- 10) Construction Environment Management Plan (Biodiversity)
- 11) Vegetation clearance outside bird nesting season
- 12) Landscaping plan to be implemented
- 13) Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Measures
- 14) Tree planting along boundary that adjoins the school boundary and retention of trees
- 15) Landscape and Environment Management Plan
- 18) Noise impact assessment and implementation of agreed measures
- 19) Access and parking provision to be provided
- 20) Cycle Parking to be provided
- 21) Refuse collection point enclosure details and implementation
- 22) Construction Environmental Management (CEMP) (Highways)- demolition and construction phases, details of vehicular movements
- 23) Visibility splays to be provided
- 24) Widened access layout
- 25) Passing and turning area information
- 26) Water efficiency measures
- 27) Submission of energy statement and implementation of measures
- 28) All first floor windows on the eastern side of the rear elevation of the existing dwellinghouse to be fitted with obscure glazed windows prior to first occupation of the development
- 29) Development to be in accordance with the approved plans

Informatives

- a. WFDC waste and collection details for new residents
- b. Own responsibility to obtain Building Regulations
- c. Sewer and water mains advice note (Severn Trent)
- d. BNG Plan
- e. Vegetation removal outside of bird nesting season



Strategic Growth

154 St Johns Avenue Kidderminster Worcestershire DY11 6AT

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PART A

Application Reference:	26/0271/FUL	Date Received:	01.04.2026
Ord Sheet:	391476 274826	Expiry Date:	27.05.2026
Case Officer	Emma Bailey	Ward:	Wyre Forest Rural

Proposal: Demolition of existing farmstead comprising farmhouse, annex, outbuildings and barn (permitted for conversion to dwelling under planning ref: 24/0546/PNR) and replacement with 1No. dwelling, detached garage, office and store building, change of use of land to residential garden, provision of walled and landscaped gardens and swimming pool and associated works

Site Address: Drollis Farm, Bournes Green Road, Chaddesley Corbett, Worcestershire, DY10 4PA

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Neale

Summary of Policy	DM.22, DM.23, DM.24, DM.25, SP.11, SP.20, SP.21, SP.27, SP.30, SP.31, SP.32 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2022) Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD Green Infrastructure SPD Streetscape Design Guide National Planning Policy Framework 2024 National Design Guide
Recommendation	APPROVAL
Reason for referral to Committee	Planning Manager considers that the application should be considered by Committee

1.0 Planning History

- 1.1 WF332/86 - Town and Country Planning Act 1971 WF332/86 dated 17 June 1986. First floor extension over kitchen at Drollis Farm, Bournes Green, Chaddesley Corbett – Approved.
- 1.2 06/1216/FULL - Change of use and conversion of barn to one dwelling – Withdrawn 24.01.07.
- 1.3 07/0304/FULL - Change of use and conversion of barn to be occupied by relatives of the occupiers – Approved 14.05.07.
- 1.4 08/2016/CR - Conditions 4, 6, 7, 10, 11 and 14 of Planning Application 07/0304/FULL – Approved 09.10.08.
- 1.5 23/0075/S73 - Removal of Condition 8 of Planning Permission 07/0304/FULL – Withdrawn 02.06.23.
- 1.6 23/0466/PNR - Change of Use of Agricultural Building to a Dwellinghouse – Granted 01.08.23.

26/0271/FUL

- 1.7 24/0546/PNR - Prior notification for the change of use of agricultural building to 1No. dwelling (revised scheme) – Granted 03.10.24.
- 1.8 26/0151/CLP - Certificate of Lawfulness Proposed use for a domestic outbuilding – Refused 23.04.26.
- 1.9 26/0152/CLP - Proposed single storey side and rear extension – Refused 23.04.26.

2.0 Consultations and Representations

- 2.1 Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council – No objection. The Parish Council raised concerns regarding the proposed dwelling, noting its executive scale and questioning whether, in the absence of any clear justification for expansion, it may have a detrimental impact on the openness and rural character of the countryside setting. Further concern was expressed in relation to the extensive use of glazing and the potential for increased light spill from the property which could result in light pollution. It was also noted that the site is in close proximity to public footpaths, and members felt it would be important for the applicant to demonstrate how the proposal would provide a wider benefit to the parish. Notwithstanding these concerns, some members expressed support for the proposal, subject to the Conservation Officer being satisfied with the points raised.
- 2.2 North Worcestershire Water Management – No objection subject to condition - While I have no objections to the proposed development, I believe a little more information is required regarding the drainage arrangements, specifically the pond volume, detailed design of the pond and discharge rates from the site; ideally this would be provided prior to a decision being made since the rest of the drainage and flood risk information is satisfactory, but if preferable it may be conditioned.
- 2.3 Tree and Biodiversity Officer – No objection - The applicant has submitted a BNG plan and associated metric, which will need to be secured and approved alongside submission of a relevant Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan. A suitably qualified ecologist has been appointed to assess the site for protected species, and the submitted PEA identifies the presence of protected species on site, including common pipistrelle bats roosting within building B5.

As detailed within the PEA, a license will need to be obtained from Natural England prior to any works commencing. A RAMS statement will also be submitted, detailing suitable protective measures and compensation for the regard of bats.

An arboricultural report has also been submitted, detailing a full tree survey including an assessment of the impacts of the proposed development and an arboriculture statement. This details the removal of 5 low quality trees/hedges, and requests that prior to any works on site, all recommendations are to be followed, including details of protective fencing to be erected and construction exclusion zones to be put in place. Conditions to include CEMP and Lighting Plan.

26/0271/FUL

- 2.4 Nuisance Assessment Team (WRS) - No objection to the application. Construction/Demolition Phase Nuisance Informative: In order to minimise any potential nuisance from noise and dust emissions, the applicant should refer to the 'WRS Code of Best Practice for Demolition and Construction Sites' <https://www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/media/raejo4k2/wrs-contractor-guidance-2nd-edition-v-1-0.pdf> and ensure its recommendations are complied with.
- 2.5 Contaminated Land Team (WRS) – No objection subject to condition. WRS have reviewed the application, with records indicating the site has an agricultural history. Given the application includes demolition of existing structures, it is recommended that an ACM survey is undertaken. A condition for the reporting of unexpected contamination is recommended.
- 2.6 Worcestershire County Council (Archive and Archaeology) – If minded to approve, conditions are recommended. The proposed demolition would result in substantial harm to the NDHAs by virtue of their total loss. The LPA must weigh this harm against the planning benefits of the scheme as per Paragraph 216 NPPF. The application is supported by a Heritage Statement that accepts the total loss of the buildings would constitute substantial harm but identifies the significance of the buildings as low. The heritage statement claims the planning balance is clearly weighted towards demolition, as the benefits of the scheme outweigh the loss of the NDHAs. Local heritage listing is a means for a community and a local authority to jointly identify heritage assets that are valued as distinctive elements of the local historic environment. Any buildings added to the Local List are believed to be of a significance that warrants their retention, otherwise they would not have been included. There are limited public benefits in replacing a habitable dwelling with another habitable dwelling of similar scale. It is, therefore, unlikely that the loss of the NDHAs is outweighed by the benefits, unless the heritage statement demonstrates that the significance of the buildings is much lower than previously identified. In taking decision as to whether the loss of the NDHAs should be allowed, the LPA should consult their Conservation specialist on the significance of the buildings. Should the LPA decide to approve this application, then we recommend the following conditions to require a Level 3 Record (as defined by Historic England) of the buildings. Recording cannot fully offset the harm but would provide a small compensation for the loss.
- 2.7 Exolum Pipeline System – No comments received.
- 2.8 Cadent Gas Limited – No comments received.
- 2.9 Highways Authority – No objection subject to conditions. The proposed development comprises the phased demolition of the existing dwellinghouse and associated ancillary buildings, together with the removal of the on-site agricultural building, as stated in the submitted Technical Note (TN) prepared by Rappor Consultants Ltd. Furthermore, the site currently benefits from permission for two residential dwellings, resulting in the proposed scheme representing a net reduction in permitted residential units and Highways can concur that the proposed 1 dwelling is unlikely to result in an unacceptable impact on safety and capacity on the local network in relation to Paragraph 116 NPPF. Vehicular access to the site is existing with adequate visibility and parking can be provided within the curtilage.

26/0271/FUL

However, from Bournes Green Road which is an unclassified rural road, access to the site is via a long private track and it has been identified that public rights of way will be affected. The WCC Public Rights of Way Team have raised an objection, as per comments provided separately, dated 22nd April 2026 and accordingly, the Highway Authority is obliged to recommend that the application is deferred until the concerns raised by the Public Rights of Way Team have been adequately addressed.

- 2.10 Countryside Access Mapping Orders Officer – No objection following revised submission - New plans have now been submitted along with a proposal to phase the landscaping work and formally divert the public footpath. This mitigation is fully detailed in the ‘Response to PRoW Officer’ document and ‘Landscape Phasing Plan’. We acknowledge and accept the spirit of the proposed condition stated in the ‘Response to PRoW Officer’ document and would not wish to hold up development beyond the immediate vicinity of the right of way.
- We would prefer the following wording: No works shall be undertaken within the hatched area shown on the approved Landscape Phasing Plan (0301-LIC-XX-XX-DR-L-0010) Rev P01 until a Public Path Diversion Order for the affected section of Public Footpath CC-606 has been made and confirmed. For the avoidance of doubt, this condition shall not prevent demolition of the existing buildings, site clearance, enabling works or construction of the replacement dwelling outside the hatched area shown on the approved Landscape Phasing Plan, provided those works do not obstruct, interfere with, alter, narrow or otherwise affect the legal line of Public Footpath CC-606. The legal line of Public Footpath CC-606 shall remain unobstructed and available for public use unless and until the Public Path Diversion Order has been confirmed.

- 2.11 Conservation Officer – Object to the application. The proposed development would result in the demolition of the existing farmhouse, annex, outbuildings and threshing barn at Drollis Farm, assets which are identified on the Wyre Forest Local Heritage List and which therefore constitute non-designated heritage assets for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DM.23 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Local Plan.
- Whilst the submitted Heritage Statement seeks to characterise the significance of the buildings as relatively limited, insufficient justification has been provided to demonstrate that their comprehensive demolition is necessary or unavoidable. Notwithstanding the above concerns, officers would be willing to re-consider the extent of identified heritage harm should the scheme be amended to retain the threshing barn and respond more directly to the surviving historic farmstead character through revisions to the layout, scale, massing and overall design approach. Retention and sensitive incorporation of the barn within the scheme would preserve an element of the site’s historic significance and allow the legibility of the former farmstead grouping

to remain appreciable within the rural landscape, thereby reducing the overall level of harm arising from the proposals.

The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular paragraphs 210 and 215, together with Policy DM.23 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Local Plan. On the basis of the information currently submitted, objection is raised to the proposed demolition and redevelopment, although a revised scheme incorporating retention of the threshing barn and a more responsive farmstead-led design approach may warrant further consideration.

26/0271/FUL

- 2.12 Public Consultation – One comment received, summarised below: ‘If your authority intends to grant permission for this planning application, I recommend you make installation of a minimum of two Swift nest bricks a planning condition to provide enhancement for biodiversity. I support the mitigation measures already proposed, but none of these relate to birds.

Swifts are in trouble, having declined by over 60% in the last 25 years. Swifts are now a 'Red-listed' species on the list of Birds of Conservation Concern and a Priority species for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). Designing for and installing Swift bricks into the fabric of the new building during the construction phase is easy, inexpensive, and will last the life-time of the building’.

3.0 Site Location and Description

- 3.1 The application site lies within the open countryside Green Belt on the eastern fringes of the Wyre Forest district, around 5 miles east of Kidderminster. The site is accessed via a lengthy private driveway and forms a small range of barns, barn conversion and farmhouse. The central barn was previously subject to a change of use under application 07/0304/FULL.
- 3.2 The application proposes the demolition of the existing farmstead, comprising a farmhouse, annex, outbuildings and barn (permitted for conversion to dwelling under planning ref: 24/0546/PNR) and replacement with one dwelling, a detached garage, office and store building, including the change of use of agricultural land to residential garden, along with the provision of walled and landscaped gardens and a swimming pool and associated works.
- 3.3 The following supporting documents have been submitted with the application:
- Planning Statement
 - Highways Technical Note
 - Energy and Sustainability Assessment
 - SUDS Drainage Strategy
 - Heritage Statement
 - Landscape Visual Appraisal
 - Planting Schedule
 - Ecological Assessment
 - Arboricultural Report
 - Design and Access Statement
 - PROW Plan
 - Landscape Phasing Plan

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 The main considerations for this application are:
- Policy Context
 - Green Belt Considerations

26/0271/FUL

- Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of Area
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Pollution, Potential Contaminated Land and Climate Change
- Access and Highway Safety
- Trees and Biodiversity
- Historic Environment and Landscape Character
- Green Belt Appraisal
- Planning Balance

POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.2 The Development Plan for Wyre Forest is comprised of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan, which was adopted in April 2022. The Wyre Forest District Local Plan is complemented by a number of supplementary planning documents (SPD), these include the Planning Obligations SPD, Housing SPD, Health and Wellbeing SPD and Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD. In accordance with the Act, applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless materials considerations indicate otherwise. It should also be worth noting that due to the robustness of the Local Plan, decision making on applications is firmly plan-led.
- 4.3 One of the key material considerations is the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'NPPF') (December 2024 version). The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (para. 7). So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paras. 10-11). It states that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (para. 39). It also states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led (para. 15).

GREEN BELT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.4 As the site is washed over by the West Midlands Green Belt, the harm of the proposal in this respect must be considered. The NPPF and Policy DM.22 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan have been considered. Paragraph 142 of the NPPF outlines that the essential characteristics of the Green Belt is its openness and permanence. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. These very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 4.5 At the local level, Policy SP.7 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan recognises the importance of the District's Green Belt and establishes a presumption against inappropriate development. Policy DM.22 similarly states that development within the Green Belt will not be permitted except in very special circumstances or where one of the identified exceptions applies.

26/0271/FUL

- 4.6 Paragraph 154(d) of the NPPF provides an exception for the replacement of a building provided that the new building is in the same use and is not materially larger than the building it replaces. The existing farmhouse is modest in size and the floor area of the farmhouse measures 654.6 cubic metres in volume and the ridge height of the farmhouse is 120.77 (AOD). In comparison, the proposed dwelling would have a volume measuring 3223 cubic metres and would be 2.03 (AOD) taller than the ridge height of the existing farmhouse. Your Officers therefore consider that the size and scale of the proposed dwelling would be materially larger than the existing farmhouse it would replace and, as such, the proposal would amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt, contrary to Policy DM.22 of the Local Plan and paragraph 154(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework. Consequently, the proposal cannot be regarded as appropriate development on that basis.
- 4.7 Consideration has also been given to whether the proposal could be supported under paragraph 154(g) of the NPPF relating to the redevelopment of previously developed land. The NPPF advises that previously developed land is defined as land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land but excludes agricultural buildings. Whilst elements of the site comprise an existing dwelling and the site does have a fallback position in which one of the barns could be converted into a dwelling, as well as hard surfaced areas, and therefore does comprise some previously developed land, the proposal includes a substantial replacement dwelling and ancillary structures that would increase the overall built form on the site. The proposal would therefore not represent redevelopment that clearly preserves openness and, as such, it is not considered that the development would fall within this exception.
- 4.8 In addition to definitional harm arising from inappropriate development, the impact on the openness of the Green Belt must be considered. The applicant contends that the removal of existing buildings together with other landscape enhancements across the site, would reduce the visual impact of development and improve the overall appearance of the farmstead. These considerations offer some weight and are material to the assessment. However, such measures do not negate the fact that the proposed replacement dwelling would be materially larger than the existing dwelling and would result in increased built mass within the Green Belt and therefore does not meet the exception in paragraph 154(d) of the NPPF.
- 4.9 Overall, planning permission should not be granted unless very special circumstances exist. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. The applicant has advanced a number of considerations in support of the proposal, including the comprehensive redevelopment of the site, landscape and biodiversity enhancements, removal of existing structures, sustainability measures and the delivery of a self-build dwelling. These matters are considered within the planning balance section of this report.

DESIGN AND IMPACT ON CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF AREA

- 4.10 The NPPF states good quality design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development

26/0271/FUL

acceptable to communities. Decision takers should always seek high quality design, and should ensure developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

4.11 All development within Wyre Forest District will be expected to exhibit high quality design and help to create and reinforce local distinctiveness as set out in Policies SP.20 and DM.24. The sites allocating policies require specific elements to be delivered as part of the overall development of the site. Policy D1 of the Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan also seeks to promote high quality design in new developments.

4.12 The proposal seeks the comprehensive redevelopment of the site through the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of a replacement dwelling together with ancillary buildings arranged around a courtyard form. The proposed dwelling adopts a contemporary interpretation of traditional agricultural architecture. The submitted plans indicate a range of materials including brick, timber cladding, glazing and clay roof tiles, which are commonly found within the wider rural area. The simple building forms, pitched roof profiles and courtyard arrangement reference the character of traditional Worcestershire farmsteads whilst incorporating modern detailing and large areas of glazing appropriate to a contemporary dwelling.

4.13 In visual terms, the site benefits from a degree of enclosure provided by existing vegetation, landform and boundary treatments. The submitted Landscape and Visual Appraisal indicates that views of the site are generally filtered or intermittent from the wider landscape. Whilst the proposed dwelling would be larger than the existing farmhouse, the redevelopment remains focused within the established developed core of the site and would not result in an isolated or visually intrusive form of development extending into the surrounding countryside. Your Officers also note the concerns

26/0271/FUL

raised by the Parish Council concerning lighting and a condition has been recommended to secure external lighting in the interest of nature conservation in particular bats which will include security and garden lighting. It would be unreasonable and unenforceable to control internal lighting.

- 4.14 The proposal would inevitably alter the appearance of the existing farmstead through the removal of the existing buildings and their replacement with a more architecturally coherent development. However, the quality of the proposed design, the use of appropriate materials, the retention of a courtyard-based arrangement and the substantial landscape enhancements proposed are considered to ensure that the development would respond positively to its rural setting and reinforce local distinctiveness. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies SP.20 and DM.24 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan, Policy D1 of the Chaddesley Corbett Neighbourhood Plan and National Planning Policy Framework.

IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 4.15 The NPPF requires new developments to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience (paragraph 135(f)).
- 4.16 The application site occupies an isolated rural location and is not closely surrounded by neighbouring residential properties. The nearest dwellings are separated from the proposed development by substantial distances, intervening vegetation and the wider agricultural landscape. Consequently, the proposed replacement dwelling and ancillary buildings would not give rise to unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing impacts or loss of light to neighbouring occupiers. The proposed dwelling has also been designed to provide a high standard of accommodation for future occupants, including generous internal living space, private amenity areas and access to the surrounding landscaped grounds.
- 4.17 Accordingly, the proposal is not considered to result in any unacceptable impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or future residents and is therefore compliant with Policy SP.20 and DM.25 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan.

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

- 4.18 Policies SP.30 and SP.31 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan refers to flood risk management and sustainable drainage, which is consistent with the NPPF.
- 4.19 Policy SP.32 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan advises that effective on-site management of surface water can improve water quality, water conservation, the replenishment of ground water supplies and reduce instances of flooding. All new developments with surface water impacts will be required to demonstrate that flows and volumes of surface water runoff leaving a development site do not exceed Greenfield levels. Also, all major developments will be required to submit a detailed Drainage Strategy to show that the proposed drainage system meets the criteria for providing Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and that the proposed drainage systems will be managed and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

26/0271/FUL

- 4.20 The application site lies within Flood Zone 1, which is identified as having the lowest probability of fluvial flooding. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, SuDS Strategy and Drainage Strategy. These documents confirm that infiltration drainage is not feasible due to the site's ground conditions and therefore propose a sustainable drainage solution based upon attenuation and controlled discharge to the adjacent watercourse. Surface water would be managed through a combination of SuDS features, including an attenuation basin, before discharging at a restricted rate to the Hockley Brook.
- 4.21 North Worcestershire Water Management have reviewed the submitted information and raise no objection to the proposed development in principle. Subject to the recommended drainage condition, the proposal is considered acceptable in respect of flood risk and drainage and is compliant with Policy SP.30 and SP.31 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan.

POLLUTION AND POTENTIAL CONTAMINATED LAND

- 4.22 The NPPF, in paragraph 198, advises that 'Planning Policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:
- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;
 - b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
 - c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation'.
- 4.23 Policy SP.33 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan requires 'Development proposals to be designed to avoid any significant adverse impacts from pollution, including cumulative ones, on: human health and wellbeing; biodiversity; the water environment; neighbouring land uses; and existing or proposed Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA).
- 4.24 No objection has been raised by Worcestershire Regulatory Services in terms of potential contaminated land, subject to a condition for the reporting of unexpected contamination. The National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning decisions should ensure the site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions, pollution arising from previous uses and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation. The Framework also requires adequate site investigation information be prepared by a competent person is presented.
- 4.25 Officers therefore consider that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable development in terms of potential contaminated land or pollution risk. The development therefore accords with Policies SP.27, SP.33 and SP.37 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

26/0271/FUL

ACCESS AND HIGHWAY SAFETY

- 4.26 The NPPF states in Paragraph 108 that promoting sustainable transport should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:
- a. the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
 - b. opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;
 - c. opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;
 - d. the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and
 - e. patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.
- 4.27 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 4.28 Paragraph 117 of the NPPF advises that all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.
- 4.29 Policy SP.27 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan states:
- ‘Proposals must demonstrate that:
- the location and layout of development will minimise the demand for travel;
 - they offer viable sustainable transport choices, with a particular focus on active travel modes with attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks;
 - they address road safety issues; and in particular,
 - they are consistent with the delivery of the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan objectives’.
- ‘Priority will be given to improving infrastructure, technology and services to support active travel (walking and cycling) and passenger transport (bus, rail and community transport) during the plan period.’
- 4.30 The Highway Authority has reviewed the submitted Transport Technical Note and conclude that the proposed development is unlikely to result in an unacceptable impact upon the safety or capacity of the local highway network. The existing access arrangements are considered acceptable, adequate visibility is available at the site access and sufficient parking and turning space can be accommodated within the site. Furthermore, the proposal is anticipated to generate fewer vehicle movements than could arise from the existing lawful fallback position.

26/0271/FUL

- 4.31 The site is, however, crossed by Public Footpath CC-606 and the proposal has therefore required detailed consideration by Worcestershire County Council's Public Rights of Way Team. Following the submission of revised plans, a Landscape Phasing Plan and additional information setting out the proposed diversion strategy, the Public Rights of Way Officer has withdrawn their initial concerns and confirms that no objection is raised subject to an appropriate planning condition. Additionally, the Officer is satisfied that development can proceed outside the identified diversion area without prejudicing the public's ability to use the existing route.
- 4.32 To safeguard the continued use of the footpath, a condition will be included, preventing works within the area identified on the approved Landscape Phasing Plan until a Public Path Diversion Order has been made and confirmed. Subject to this condition, the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the public rights of way network. For the reasons set out above, the proposal is considered acceptable in respect of highways and public rights of way and is compliant with Policy SP.27 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

TREES AND BIODIVERSITY

- 4.33 Policies SP.23 and DM.26 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan concern biodiversity and landscape. Both policies expect new developments to make a positive contribution to the natural environment through biodiversity net gain, provision of habitat and availability of appropriate foraging opportunities. Landscaping schemes should be appropriate for a site's context, with trees, hedgerows, and other natural defining features retained wherever possible. Emphasis is placed on the planting of native species to support existing and encourage new biodiversity to the area and strengthen landscape character set out within the WCC Landscape Character Assessment.
- 4.34 The Council's Biodiversity Officer has reviewed the submitted ecological information and advises that, whilst the proposal is described as a self-build dwelling, the size of the application site exceeds the threshold for exemption from Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. A Biodiversity Gain Plan and associated metric have therefore been submitted and demonstrate that biodiversity enhancements are capable of being secured across the site. The Biodiversity Officer advises that the submitted BNG proposals, together with a Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan, can be secured through appropriately worded planning conditions.
- 4.35 The Biodiversity Officer has further recommended the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a sensitive external lighting strategy in order to safeguard retained habitats and protected species during both construction and occupation of the development. These requirements can be secured by planning condition. Therefore, subject to these conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on trees, biodiversity and protected species and is compliant with Policies SP.23, and DM.26 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 4.36 The development affects locally listed building. Part 16 of the NPPF which specifically relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment advises local planning authorities to take account of:-

26/0271/FUL

- a. the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b. the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - c. the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - d. opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.
- 4.37 Policy SP.21 states that development proposals should protect, conserve, and enhance all heritage assets and their settings. Their contribution to the character of the landscape/townscape should be safeguarded and protected to sustain the historic quality, sense of place, environmental quality, and economic vibrancy of Wyre Forest District. Policy DM.23 states that proposals likely to affect the significance of a heritage asset (including the contribution made by its setting or any important vistas or views) should be accompanied by a description of its significance in sufficient detail to allow the potential impacts to be adequately assessed by a qualified and/or experienced heritage professional. Development proposals should avoid harm to or loss of heritage assets wherever possible. The sympathetic and creative reuse and adaptation of historic buildings will be encouraged. Additionally, repairs, alterations, extensions and conversions of heritage assets must be sympathetically designed to respect the significance of the form, character and materials of the original heritage asset and its setting.
- 4.38 Policy D3 of the Chaddesley Corbett Neighbourhood Plan also states that the loss of locally listed buildings will be resisted.
- 4.39 The Council's Conservation Officer advises that the proposed demolition would result in a high degree of harm to the identified non-designated heritage assets and has raised an objection on this basis. In reaching this conclusion, the Conservation Officer notes that insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that demolition is necessary or that options for retention, adaptation or incorporation of the existing buildings within a revised scheme have been fully explored. These comments are afforded significant weight, and it is accepted that the proposal would result in harm to the significance of the locally listed farmstead. As such, the proposal conflicts with the objectives of Policy DM.23 and D3 and gives rise to heritage harm that must be weighed in the planning balance.
- 4.40 Notwithstanding the above, it is also recognised that the threshing barn benefits from permitted development rights for conversion under the prior approval process and could therefore be altered substantially without the need for a full planning application. Furthermore, whilst the extant prior approval demonstrates a degree of conversion potential, the practical constraints associated with retaining and converting the building as part of the wider redevelopment proposals are material considerations. These matters are relevant to the assessment of the significance of the heritage harm arising from the proposal and the weight that should be attached to that harm. Officers therefore conclude that the proposal would result in harm through the loss of non-designated heritage assets and that this harm attracts less than substantial weight in the decision-making process. The extent to which that harm is outweighed by other material considerations, including the fallback position associated with the extant prior

26/0271/FUL

approval, the redevelopment benefits of the scheme and other planning considerations, is considered within the overall planning balance section of this report.

PLANNING BALANCE

4.41 The proposal constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt and, by definition, results in substantial harm to the Green Belt, due to the replacement dwelling being materially larger in footprint, volume and height than the existing farmhouse it is to replace and the enlarged residential curtilage. The development therefore conflicts with Policy DM.22 of the Local Plan. Furthermore, the proposal would result in the loss of a locally listed threshing barn which is recognised as a non-designated heritage asset. The demolition of the farmhouse, threshing barn and associated buildings would result in harm to the significance of those assets and conflict with Policy DM.23 of the Local Plan. This harm weighs against the development in the planning balance.

4.42 Notwithstanding the identified harms, there are several material considerations which weigh in favour of the proposal, these are:

- The proposed development represents a comprehensive redevelopment of an existing residential site and farmstead complex. It would see the demolition of a number of agricultural buildings that are spread out on the site. The proposal would rationalise the existing arrangement of buildings and deliver a coherent and high-quality design response that reflects the agricultural origins of the site through its layout, scale, building forms and materials. As set out elsewhere in this report, the proposal is considered to achieve a high standard of design and would not result in unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the surrounding area. Significant positive weight is attached to this consideration.
- The table below shows the comparison between the existing built development (to be demolished) and the proposed built development in terms of floor area, volume and building heights:

Existing Buildings			
Building	GEA (m2)	GEV (m3)	Ridge Height (AOD)
South Farmhouse	208.6	606.76	120.46
Central Farmhouse	202.38	654.6	120.77
Main Barn	337.75	1563.05	121.30
Other Outbuildings	73.51	272.36	118.17
Total	822.24	3096.77	121.30 (highest)

Proposed Buildings			
Building	GEA (m2)	GEV (m3)	Ridge Height (AOD)
House	839	3223	122.8
Garage/Office	200	829	120.68
Pool Building	10	28	116.46
Total	1049	4080	122.80 (heights)
Existing vs Proposed	+ 27.57%	+ 31.75%	+1.50m

26/0271/FUL

The level of harm to the openness of the Green Belt as a result of the relatively small increase in floor area (27.57%), volume (31.75%) and building height (1.5m) following demolition of the existing buildings is considered to be moderate.

- The proposed enlargement of the residential curtilage has also been reduced following discussions with your Officers and would only result in a net increase of 455sqm (14.39%) larger in size than the existing curtilage. Officers consider that the revised residential curtilage would be in proportion with the scale of the proposed replacement dwelling. The size of the proposed residential curtilage would also allow for landscaping and ecological enhancements and help to significantly reduce the visual prominence of the replacement dwelling in the immediate surrounds.
- The proposal is also accompanied by a comprehensive landscape and ecological enhancement strategy. The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain assessment demonstrates that the development would deliver 20.69% Biodiversity Net Gain which is a substantial biodiversity uplift (compared to the mandatory 10% BNG requirement) across the site through habitat creation, native planting, orchard establishment, meadow grassland and wetland enhancements. These ecological benefits would significantly exceed the baseline position and would secure measurable long-term environmental improvements. Significant weight is attached to these biodiversity and landscape benefits.
- In relation to heritage matters, whilst harm to the non-designated heritage asset has been identified, officers consider that the weight to be afforded to this harm is less than substantial by the circumstances of the site. The historic farmstead has been subject to numerous alterations and additions over time, which have diminished the integrity and significance of the original agricultural holding. Whilst the buildings remain locally listed and retain heritage value, it is considered that limited weight should be attached to their loss when assessed against the overall significance of the assets.
- Furthermore, a material fallback position exists in respect of the threshing barn. The building could be demolished under permitted development rights pursuant to Part 11, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). This fallback position is a material consideration and reduce the weight that can reasonably be attributed to the retention of the building in its current form. Whilst the Conservation Officer has highlighted the existence of a conversion approval, officers are satisfied that the practical conversion potential of the building as part of the wider redevelopment proposals is limited and that this matter attracts only moderate weight in favour of retention.

4.43 Thus, when considered as a whole, the high quality of the proposed design, the substantial biodiversity net gain and ecological enhancements, the comprehensive landscape improvements, the rationalisation of the existing developed site, the limited significance and altered condition of the heritage assets, together with the possibility of demolition of the threshing barn under permitted development rights, are collectively considered to constitute material considerations of sufficient weight to outweigh the identified harms. For these reasons, and subject to the conditions set out below, officers consider that planning permission should be granted and that very special circumstances exist in this case.

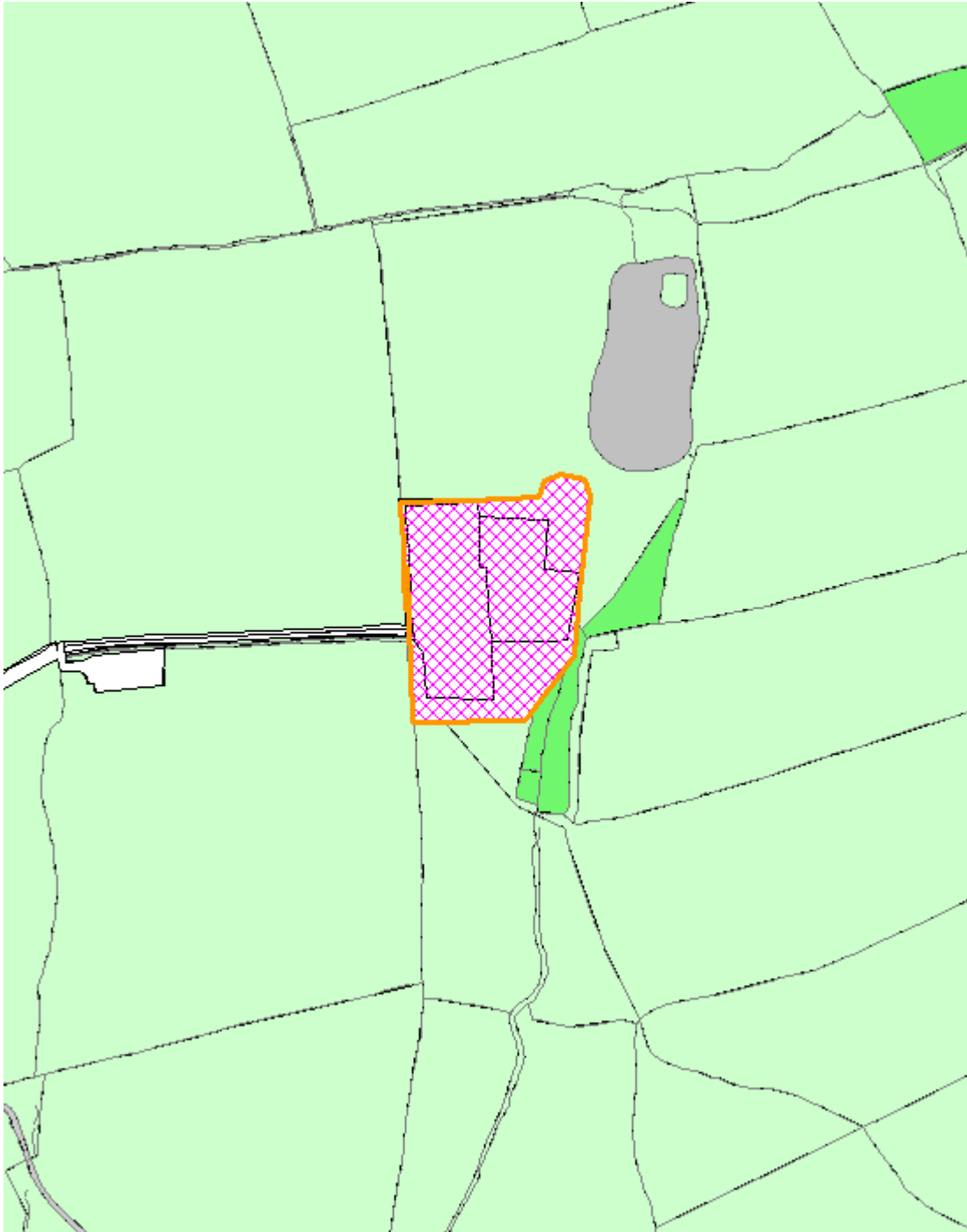
26/0271/FUL

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 indicates that determination must be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF advises that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making.
- 5.2 The proposed development has been assessed against the provisions of the Local Plan and all other material considerations. Whilst the scheme represents an intensification of the site, it has been demonstrated that the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable impacts in terms of highway safety, landscape character, biodiversity, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions. Furthermore, the proposal contains material considerations of sufficient weight to outweigh the identified harms. The proposal is therefore considered to represent sustainable development and would accord with the Development Plan when read as a whole.
- 5.3 Officers therefore recommend **APPROVAL** subject to:
- a) The following conditions
1. Three-year time limit to commence development.
 2. Site and finished floor levels
 3. External materials
 4. Details of windows and doors
 5. Boundary treatment details
 6. No works in connection with site drainage shall commence until a scheme for surface water drainage has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of surface water drainage measures, including hardstanding areas, attenuation basin design and volume, discharge rates, outfall arrangements and maintenance provisions and shall conform with the approved Flood Risk Assessment, Drainage Strategy and SuDS Strategy. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to first occupation and thereafter maintained in accordance with the approved details
 7. A final BNG Plan and metric that demonstrates no less than 20.69 uplift in BNG
 8. Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan (HMMP)
 9. Updated Landscaping and Planting Plan to reflect BNG Plan/Metric
 10. No development shall commence until a License has been obtained from Natural England for works affecting bat roosts, such works to be carried out in accordance with the approved license and mitigation measures
 11. A RAMS statement which shall detail suitable protective measures and compensation, particularly in regard to bats
 12. Development to be carried out in accordance with the recommendations and mitigation measures contained within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
 13. Bird Boxes
 14. Tree protection fencing and construction exclusion zones to be installed prior to commencement and retained throughout construction in accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement
 15. Construction Environment Management Plan for Biodiversity
 16. Historic recording level 3

26/0271/FUL

17. All buildings identified for demolition on the approved plans shall be cleared from the site including all materials and hardstanding prior to the first occupation of the dwellinghouse hereby approved
18. External Lighting Strategy
19. No works shall be undertaken within the hatched area shown on the approved Landscape Phasing Plan until a Public Path Diversion Order for the affected section of Public Footpath CC-606 has been made and confirmed. The legal line of Public Footpath CC-606 shall remain unobstructed and available for public use unless and until the Public Path Diversion Order has been confirmed
20. Removal of Permitted Development Rights for all extensions to the dwellinghouse and outbuildings
21. Provision of EV charging facilities prior to first occupation
22. Installation and retention of the sustainability measures identified within the application documentation
23. Unexpected contamination
24. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents



Strategic Growth

Drollis Farm, Bournes Green Road, Chaddesley Corbett, Worcestershire DY10 4PA

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PART B

Application Reference:	25/0510/RES	Date Received:	03.07.2025
Ord Sheet:	381692 271240	Expiry Date:	26.06.2026
Case Officer:	Emma Bailey	Ward:	Mitton

Proposal: The development of C2 Care Home and associated infrastructure (Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping to be considered)

Site Address: Land At Os 381692 271240, Worcester Road, Stourport on Severn, Worcestershire

Applicant: Liberty Care Developments & Taylor Wimpey West Midlands

Summary of Policy	<p>SP.1, SP.2, SP.5, SP.13, SP.16, SP.20, SP.23, SP.27, SP.28, SP.29, SP.30, SP.31, SP.32, SP.33, SP.35, SP.37, DM.1, DM.6, DM.23, DM.24, DM.26, SA.S8 of the Wyre Forest Local Plan (Adopted April 2022)</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing SPD</p> <p>Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework 2024</p> <p>National Planning Practice Guidance</p> <p>National Design Guide</p>
Recommendation	DELEGATED APPROVAL
Reason for referral to Committee	Major development

1.0 Planning History

- 1.1 21/1064/HYB - Hybrid Planning Application - Full Planning Application for Demolition and the Development of 94 Dwellings (Use Class C3). Outline Planning Application for the Development of a Care Home (Use Class C2) with Associated Access, or up to 16 dwellings (Use Class C3) – Approved 25 July 2022
- 1.2 25/0894/FUL - Formation of new vehicle and pedestrian access off Worcester Road – Pending consideration.
- 1.3 25/0893/S73 - Variation of Conditions 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, 15, 22, 25, 27, 35, 41 and 54 attached to planning approval ref: 21/1064/HYB to facilitate changes to access to care home site – Pending consideration.

2.0 Consultations and Representations

- 2.1 Stourport Town Council – Defer, pending comments from the Highways Authority. *[Officer comment – Any comments received will be added to the Addenda and Corrections Sheet.]*

25/0510/RES

- 2.2 Highway Authority – No objection subject to conditions. The access, parking and turning from The Links and the access, parking and turning from Worcester Road have been agreed-in principle by WCC Highways. The Highway Authority is satisfied that any outstanding matters can be addressed at the detailed design stage as part of the S278 highway works agreement. The application is supported by a suitably robust Parking Accumulation Assessment, Car Park Management Plan and Delivery and Servicing Management Plan, which should be secured by condition. A 2.0m wide public footway is proposed to be provided through the site connecting The Links to Worcester Road, and this is intended to be offered for adoption by WCC Highways to ensure its availability and maintenance in perpetuity. The requirements of a lighting feasibility study, suitable drainage strategy and a Road Safety Audit are to be resolved at the detailed design stage. The Applicant will be required to enter into a S278 Agreement with the Highway Authority to deliver works in the highway, and a S38 Agreement will be required in relation to the proposed public footway.
- 2.3 North Worcestershire Water Management Officer – No objection. The submitted Drainage Strategy Report demonstrates that the proposed development will not overwhelm the SuDS scheme designed for the wider Parson's Chain site and will provide sufficient runoff treatment so as not to increase flood risk on- or off-site.
- 2.4 Tree and Biodiversity Officer – No objection subject to a condition. The latest landscaping and planting plans reflect discussions held with the applicant. The submission of a LEMP is recommended to secure suitable management of the landscaping, this can be dealt with as a condition.
- 2.5 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Nuisance) – No objection. The applicant has provided amended plans showing the glazing on the southern side of the building to be upgraded in line with the western façade to minimise impacts of road/traffic noise. An updated noise assessment is therefore no longer required.
- 2.6 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Contaminated Land) – No objection. The measures set out within the remedial strategy approved at the time of the original hybrid application should continue to be adhered to.
- 2.7 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Air Quality) – No objection subject to conditions. Recommend conditions related to EV charging points and the use of low emission heating systems.
- 2.8 Worcestershire Archaeologist – No objection. Archaeological matters were dealt with at outline stage, no issues or concerns with this reserved matters scheme.
- 2.9 Conservation Officer – No objection. The principle of the development was established at the time of the outline planning permission and adequate separation exists between the application site and the Parsons Chain building (listed Grade II) to not cause harm to the setting of this building.
- 2.10 Public Consultation – 3 letters of representation received at the time of this report, 2 objecting to the development and 1 of support.

25/0510/RES

Objection letters received are summarised below:-

- * Access should be solely from the Worcester Road. Parking provision on the Parsons Chain development is already inadequate and cars park on-street and on blind bends, which will cause problems for large vehicles. Children play in the road. It can also be difficult to turn out of Parsons Chain
- * Noise concerns
- * Paid a lot of money to live on the development and pay high Council Tax charges, the scheme should not negatively impact Parsons Chain residents

The support letter received is summarised below:-

- * General support, however, need reassurance that parking provision is sufficient and that vehicles will not use The Links for on-street parking.

[Officer response:- Matters surrounding in-principle suitability of the site for a care home were established and accepted at outline stage. Access from The Links was also established and accepted at outline stage. The frequency and type of vehicles proposed to utilise this access, as well as parking provision, has been found to be acceptable by the Highways Authority in the consideration of this Reserved Matters application.]

3.0 Site Location and Description

- 3.1 The application site lies to the east of Stourport town centre as one of the district's key market towns on land formerly occupied by the Parsons Chain factory. Hybrid planning permission was granted in 2022 under planning ref: 21/1064/HYB for a phased redevelopment of this site comprising residential housing (phase one) and development of a care home or up to 16 additional dwellings (phase two).
- 3.2 This application relates solely to phase two and lies to the south-western corner of the land parcel. It is currently laid to hardstanding, having most recently been used as the site compound for the phase one housing development, now mostly complete and occupied. It is an area of land highly visible from Worcester Road, positioned between the OGL Software building and Minerva Point building (now demolished, with a new food supermarket under construction following the grant of planning ref: 22/0180/HYB in 2025).
- 3.3 The site is not affected by any landscape or heritage designation.
- 3.4 This application seeks reserved matters approval for the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of a three-storey, 72-bedroom care home with visitor lounge, cinema room, plant room, dining area, lounge area, laundry room and kitchen.
- 3.5 The building would be laid out in a broadly L-shaped format, with visitor parking to be contained to the west of the site off Worcester Road, and a smaller parking area for staff, deliveries and servicing from The Links housing development to the east. Soft landscaping and tree planting is proposed throughout, with a central formalised resident's garden to soften the backdrop of the OGL Software building further north.

25/0510/RES

The building would loosely enclose this garden, sweeping clockwise north-east to west, with communal and bedroom spaces overlooking these green spaces.

3.6 Vehicular access from Worcester Road and The Links was approved at outline stage, and remains largely unchanged save some minor alterations, agreed under planning refs: 25/0894/FUL and 25/0893/S73. A 2m wide pedestrian footpath is proposed to the eastern and southern edges of the site connecting phase one of the Parsons Chain development to Worcester Road and the under-construction supermarket to the south.

3.7 The following supporting documents have been submitted with the application:

- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement
- Energy Statement
- Heritage Statement
- Health Impact Assessment
- Landscape Strategy
- Noise Survey
- Drainage Strategy
- Car Park Management Plan
- Servicing Management Plan

4.0 Officer Comments

4.1 The main considerations for this application are:

- Background Information and Principle of Development
- Layout, Scale and Appearance Considerations
- Landscape Considerations
- Other Matters

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all planning applications to be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Council benefits from an adopted development plan which has been found to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and is a material consideration to be given weight in determining applications.

4.3 The Council's development plan consists at this time of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (April 2022) and adopted Neighbourhood Plans.

4.4 The spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy of Wyre Forest is set out in the adopted development plan, and it is consistent with NPPF advice on the delivery of sustainable development. This identifies Kidderminster as the strategic centre and primary focus for new development, with Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley as Market Towns

25/0510/RES

providing a more limited range of high-level services but acting as key centres for local people.

- 4.5 Reserved matters applications secure outstanding details of an outline planning permission and are limited to access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping considerations. Other more minor details to be agreed with the local planning authority before the development is either commenced, occupied or completed are dealt with by way of planning condition attached to the outline and/or reserved matters consent.
- 4.6 The provision of a care home on this site has been established through the granting of 21/1064/HYB, approved at Planning Committee April 2022. Alongside consent for the principal housing development now completed and occupied (phase one), this 2021 permission additionally granted outline planning permission for an additional 16No. dwellinghouses or care home (phase two), with all matters reserved except for access from Worcester Road and The Links.
- 4.7 Importantly, the scheme was found at the time of 21/1064/HYB to wholly accord with Local Plan Policy SA.S8 (Parsons Chain) which identifies the land parcel as an allocated site for redevelopment, Policy SP.2 (Locating New Development) which prioritises the redevelopment of brownfield sites in sustainable locations, and Policy SP.13 (Housing for Older People and Others with Specialist Housing Requirements) as a site suitable for the provision of a care home.
- 4.8 This current application for reserved matters seeks to confirm all remaining outstanding matters to facilitate the care home, these being: Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping.
- 4.9 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) 'Making an application' (May 2025) defines these outstanding considerations at Paragraph 006 as follows:-
- * 'Layout' – the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated and orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development.
 - * 'Scale' – the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings.
 - * 'Appearance' – the aspects of a building or place within the development which determine the visual impression the building or place makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture.
 - * 'Landscaping' – the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated and includes: (a) screening by fences, walls or other means; (b) the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass; (c) the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks; (d) the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art; and (e) the provision of other amenity features.

25/0510/RES

- 4.10 The principle of the development is therefore accepted. However, whether a recommendation for approval of reserved matters can be offered rests with whether the submitted details are acceptable in the consideration of local and national planning policy, and any other material planning consideration.

LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.11 At a national level, the NPPF at Para 131 recognises the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It goes on to state at Para 135 that good quality design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Decision takers should always seek high quality design, and should ensure developments:
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
 - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.
- 4.12 All development within Wyre Forest District will be expected to exhibit high quality design and help to create and reinforce local distinctiveness as set out in Policies SP.20 and DM.24 and the Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD.
- 4.13 Your Officers are of the view that the layout of the proposed care home responds positively to the site's context and approved outline parameters. The building would broadly follow the established building line on this side of Worcester Road and is shown to be set back from the shared boundaries by areas of planting and garden spaces and a pedestrian footway link, increasing separation between the care home building and dwellings closest to the site. This footway is regarded to be a key strength of the scheme, being agreed at the time of the outline permission to follow the eastern and southern boundaries to support improved permeability for pedestrians between The Links and Worcester Road, the under-construction food store, and the wider

25/0510/RES

public footpath network across Stourport more generally. The design of the care home and the position and open character of the footpath additionally ensures that risk of crime, and fear of crime, is minimised, with good levels of intervisibility between this site and the adjacent supermarket site.

- 4.14 Your Officers note that this link was originally intended to be made available for dual use by pedestrians and cyclists. However, due to site and building constraints, it was found to not be possible to deliver a pathway wider than 2 metres if offered for adoption, making it suitable for use by pedestrians only. Most pertinently, to increase the width of the link to 3 metres (the minimum adoptable width set by the Highways Authority for a dual use cycle way), would have been at the expense of land proposed to be used for planting and car parking spaces. To this end, a tandem S73 (variation of condition) application has been submitted to support this change to a single use pedestrian footpath only and remove reference to the use of the link by cycle users, which has received a comment of no objection by the Highways Authority.
- 4.15 In consulting with the Highways Authority for this current scheme, Highways Officers are content with the delivery of the pedestrian footpath link as shown in submitted plans and in-principle support is offered to its future adoption by Worcestershire County Council, subject to the submission of an acceptable lighting feasibility study, suitable drainage strategy and Road Safety Audit at the S278 Agreement stage. The applicant will be required to enter into a S278 Agreement with the Highway Authority to deliver works in the highway, as well as a S38 legal agreement to secure the use and maintenance of the footway for public use.
- 4.16 In the consideration of car parking provision, this is shown to comprise 20 visitor spaces with access from Worcester Road, to include accessible parking and EV charging spaces, plus 9 staff spaces to the rear with access from The Links. The Highways Authority has confirmed that this is adequate, following the submission of a parking accumulation assessment forecasting visitor and staff parking demand throughout the day, based on observed demand at comparable sites. The submission of a Car Park Management Plan additionally offers reasonable comfort that the potential risk of injudicious on-street parking on The Links and any associated highway safety impacts would be satisfactorily minimised, which is acceptable.
- 4.17 A Delivery and Servicing Management Plan has additionally been submitted which confirms that a wide range of vehicles will be required to service the site, including private ambulances, ambulances and HGVs associated with laundry, medical and pharmaceutical deliveries, clinical waste, general refuse collection, medical equipment and furniture, maintenance and facilities, post/parcels and grounds and external maintenance. It has been confirmed by the Highways Authority that the level of detail provided within this document satisfactorily evidences that these vehicles can be safely accommodated within the site, without risk of servicing occurring on street. No objection is therefore raised to the scheme's layout in Highway terms.
- 4.18 In the consideration of scale, your Officers held meetings with the applicant's agent where it was established that the scale of the development as a 72-bedroom care home related directly to evidenced needs in the local area, and to ensure the site's commercial viability as a care home as the Council's preferred use for the site. The proposal would provide care and support for residents with advanced health care

25/0510/RES

needs including dementia support, and so room sizes are dictated by the equipment and furniture needed to facilitate the highest standards of health care. This has in turn guided the scale and appearance of the principal building to ensure a suitable and safe environment for residents and staff. Justification for the scale of the building as shown is accepted by your Officers on balance.

- 4.19 Due to its scale, specific care and consideration must be given to the building's appearance to ensure that it does not appear incongruous or harmful in its setting. To this end, the use of a flat roof is regarded by your Officers to be appropriate and necessary in this instance, whereby the addition of a pitched roof would add further mass to an already large building, heightening its prominence within the Worcester Road street scene, and risking dominating nearby housing, including phase one of the Parsons Chain development. It was further agreed that the building's elevations should be broken up into sections through modest variations in the building's materials palette, use of minor projections and recesses to external walls, and an overhanging centralised canopy to the span of the building orientated east-to-west as the largest section of the building most visible to passing traffic. This, in combination with large window openings and suitable planting, is considered by your Officers to make a positive contribution towards reducing the impression of the building's massing and scale to ensure that its appearance integrates comfortably and effectively with the traditional designs and styles of residential and commercial buildings nearby, while offering appropriate visual interest.
- 4.20 Turning to matters of residential amenity, in addition to the scheme being set back from the boundaries by planting and the proposed footway, submitted floor layouts demonstrate that openings closest to 51 The Links (opposite side of the road to the east) and 52 and 54 The Links (north), would be limited to windows lighting stairways, corridors, changing spaces, and staff room. Windows for these spaces have been deliberately designed to be smaller than windows shown to serve bedroom and residents spaces, and it is not anticipated that any stairwell or private staff room would result in prolonged or otherwise unacceptable periods of overlooking. Windows to the second floor facing north are additionally proposed to be obscurely glazed. This, in combination with tree planting and use of suitable boundary treatments to shared boundaries would assist with reducing impacts of the building and any intervisibility that may occur, along with the design of the servicing carpark and vehicle access to this carpark which would be offset from 51 to minimise any impacts of vehicle movements.
- 4.21 Turning to 76 and 78 The Links (southeast of the site), the care home building would similarly be set back from the shared boundary behind designated garden spaces, tree planting and the footpath link. Openings closest to these neighbours would be obscurely glazed to upper floors and would serve corridor and assisted bathroom spaces, which is acceptable. Dwellings opposite the site on Worcester Road are regarded by your Officers to be of sufficient distance to not be unacceptably impacted by the scheme through its design or scale.

LANDSCAPING CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.22 In the consideration of landscape, the NPPF at Paragraph 135(b) requires new development to be visually attractive and recognises the importance of effective landscaping in the delivery of good development.

25/0510/RES

- 4.23 Local Plan Policy DM.26 (Landscaping and Boundary Treatment) broadly reiterates this importance and emphasises that new developments should make a positive and meaningful contribution to the enhancing natural environment through appropriate landscaping schemes that are bespoke to a site's context, with trees, hedgerows, and other natural defining features retained wherever possible in accordance with Policy SP.28 (Green Infrastructure). Emphasis is placed on the planting and retention of native species to support existing and encourage new biodiversity, through provision of habitat and availability of appropriate foraging opportunities in accordance with SP.23 (Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity).
- 4.24 Your Officers have worked closely with the applicant to bring forward a robust planting scheme briefly comprising of landscaped residents' gardens, as well as comprehensive tree planting and soft landscaped areas to frame ground floor openings and features of interest and to soften less visually appealing spaces such as car parking. A 'living wall' trained across the building's frontage closest to Worcester Road is additionally proposed to create an attractive green visual feature visible on the approach into and out of Stourport.
- 4.25 It has been confirmed by the Council's Tree and Biodiversity Officer that the landscaping scheme as proposed would represent a good and meaningful contribution toward supporting the local plan's aspirations to seek opportunities to create green and verdant spaces in more urban locations, bringing such considerations to the forefront of what makes good design and the positive impacts that can result.
- 4.26 The landscaping scheme would additionally serve an important function in managing surface water drainage on-site, through a range of different SuDS features including the use of permeable paving. This is evidenced by a submitted Surface Water Drainage Strategy, which has been confirmed by the North Worcestershire Water Management Officer to be suitable and appropriate to limit run-off and continues to accord with the wider drainage strategy for the Parsons Chain site.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.27 Condition 10 of the outline planning permission requires the submitted of a noise survey to capture noise levels from the OGL computing building and Minerva Point premises (including any redevelopment of these premises). In consulting with Nuisance Officers, an addendum to this noise survey was sought to take into account the now-demolished Minerva Point building, immediately south of the site. Subsequent to the request, the applicant has provided amended plans showing the glazing on the southern side of the building to be upgraded in line with the western façade to minimise impacts of road traffic noise. This is sufficient to overcome any concerns with respect to noise nuisance by Nuisance Officers, and an updated noise assessment has been confirmed to be no longer required.
- 4.28 Condition 16 of the outline planning permission requires the submission of details evidencing the use of renewable or low carbon sources equivalent to at least 10% of predicted energy requirements. A submitted Energy Statement, Design and Access Statement and submitted plans show the scheme to utilise the flat roof elements of the building for the discreet provision of solar panels, the use of an air source heat pump, mechanical ventilation heat recovery ventilation systems, and passive design measures including improved performance building fabric, energy efficient lighting and

25/0510/RES

low energy services/equipment. The submitted scheme significantly exceeds this 10% requirement by delivering in excess of 60% reduction in carbon emissions below baseline.

- 4.29 Condition 19 of the outline planning permission requires the submission of details of the location of refuse bins, recycling materials storage areas and collection points. A submitted Design and Access Statement and accompanying plans shows refuse and recycling storage to be housed in a designated externally accessed store building to the north-east of the site, with access by maintenance staff on collection days from The Links, which is accepted by your Officers as an appropriate and suitable location for this purpose.
- 4.30 Condition 20 of the outline planning permission requires details of any commercial kitchen extraction systems, including fume and odour control, in line with Defra/EMAQ+ guidance. This condition remains outstanding with technical details being required to be submitted prior to the care home being brought into use.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5.1 The proposed development has been found to accord with the approved outline planning permission, relevant Development Plan policies and national guidance, including the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide.
- 5.2 The layout, appearance, scale and landscaping details submitted demonstrate a development of a high-quality design that responds positively to the layouts and designs of surrounding buildings, offers meaningful public benefit through the provision of a footway link, and delivers meaningful green infrastructure, helping to raise the bar of new development across the district.
- 5.3 No objection has been raised by Highways, Trees and Biodiversity, Water Management, Historic Environment, Nuisance or Contaminated Land, subject to the imposition of conditions.
- 5.4 Officers therefore recommend **DELEGATED APPROVAL** subject to:
- a. Signing of a Section 106 agreement to require footway link to be maintained and made available to the public at all times;
 - b. The following conditions
 1. Three year time limit to commence development
 2. Landscape Environment Management Plan (LEMP)
 3. Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) (Highways and Noise)
 4. External materials
 5. Hard and soft landscaping details
 6. Installation of glazing specifications
 7. External lighting
 8. Finished floor levels and site levels
 9. Boundary Treatment

25/0510/RES

10. Pedestrian connection
11. Access, parking and turning
12. Cycle parking provision
13. Car Park Management Plan
14. Delivery and Servicing Plan
15. Surface Water Drainage
16. Compliance with submitted Energy Statement
17. Development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans

c. Informatives

- f. Building Regulations
- g. S278 Agreement
- h. S38 Agreement
- i. Drainage details for S38
- j. No drainage to discharge to Highway

c. The completion of a legal agreement to facilitate the adoption and maintenance of the footpath link by Worcestershire County Council.

PART B

Application Reference:	25/0669/FUL	Date Received:	10.10.2025
Ord Sheet:	382723 276810	Expiry Date:	30.06.2026
Case Officer	James Glennie	Ward:	Blakebrook And Habberley South

Proposal: Change of use of building from offices (Use Class E) to 10 No. apartments and associated works

Site Address: Margaret Thatcher House, 35 Mill Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY11 6XB

Applicant: Mr K Gevorkian

Summary of Policy	Policy SP.2, SP.3, SP.10, SP.16, SP.20, SP.23, SP.27, SP.28, SP.29, SP.31, SP.32, SP.37, DM.3, DM.8, DM.24 and DM.26 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD (2024) Worcestershire Streetscapes Design Guide (2025) National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) National Planning Practice Guidance National Design Guide
Recommendation	DELEGATED APPROVAL
Reason for referral to Committee	Major Application

1.0 Planning History

1.1 19/0219/FULL - Conversion of existing office building (B1a) into 4 retail shops (A1) with 9 apartments above (C3) including side extension and associated car parking – Approved 9 April 2020.

2.0 Consultations and Representations

2.1 Kidderminster Town Council – No objection.

2.2 North Worcestershire Water Management – No objection. The development lies within an area at risk of flooding from the River Stour, however the accompanying Flood Risk Assessment makes clear that the proposed finished floor levels will be more than 600mm above the 1 in 100 year plus climate change allowance flood level. This proposed floor level should be conditioned as part of the approval, and an informative should be added to encourage future occupants to construct a Flood Warning and Evacuation plan using the submitted Flood Risk assessment and sign up to receive flood alerts from the Environment Agency.

2.3 Severn Trent Water – No comments received.

25/0669/FUL

- 2.4 Highways Authority (WCC) – No objection subject to conditions. The proposed 12 parking spaces for the development accord with the parking standards outlined in the Worcestershire Streetscapes Design Guide, and the access width has been modified and confirmed at 4.9 metres. Conditions are suggested to require: full provision of parking, access and turning facilities; full provision of the proposed cycle parking provided with the applicant has been provided; and provision of a residential travel welcome pack promoting sustainable modes of access to the development. Informatives are also provided.
- 2.5 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Nuisance Assessment Team)– No objection. The submitted noise impact assessment is acceptable, and the applicant will need to submit details of glazing and background ventilators prior to commencement.
- 2.6 Tree and Biodiversity Officer (WFDC) – Deferral – The submitted PEA for the building itself is acceptable, and demonstrates that the buildings have negligible bat roost potential. BNG can be delivered onsite, as shown in the BNG metric, and other aspects of development can be adequately dealt with via the imposition of planning conditions relating to: external light; a Construction and Environmental Management Plan; and a Weed Management and Eradication Plan. However, further information relating to potential works to the cliff face is required, as these may broaden the necessary scope of the provided PEA and avoidance/mitigation measures required.
- 2.7 Conservation Officer (WFDC) – No conservation concerns.
- 2.8 Crime Risk Manager (WMP) – No objection, though recommend conditions to ensure the development provides security measures including: a suitable external lighting plan for cycle and vehicle parking, bin stores and communal door sets; access controls for the car park; details of physical security requirements for communal entrances and visitor doors. The applicant should aim for Secured by Design accreditation for the development.
- 2.9 Wyre Forest Cycle Forum – No comments received.
- 2.10 Kidderminster BID – No comments received.
- 2.11 Affordable Housing Enabling Officer (WFDC) – No objection. Due to the development’s small scale, only 3 units or equivalent are required to be supplied. 3 units of affordable housing are unlikely to attract a registered provider’s interest, and therefore the Council agrees to accept an offsite contribution in lieu of these 3 units being provided onsite. A commuted sum of £219,312.50 is therefore required (calculated as the open market value of the unit less the affordable housing value).
- 2.12 Kidderminster Civic Society – No comments received.
- 2.13 Senior Sustainability Officer (WCC) – No comments received.
- 2.14 Public Consultation – No comments received.

25/0669/FUL

3.0 Site Location and Description

- 3.1 The proposal relates to a three-storey, detached office block and associated parking and curtilage on Mill Street in Kidderminster, sited on a 0.13ha parcel of land. The property was built in the mid-late 1970s, originally used as a Conservative Club premises but becoming general office space used by various companies in the intervening period. The property sits in a prominent location in the street scene, sited between mid-density residential properties to the East, and lower density, commercial properties immediately to the West. The street maintains a mixed-use character, with a mix of residential, commercial and civic uses. Two driveways lead from Mill Street to the rear of the property, providing access to a large rear parking area. Also to the rear of the property is a tall rock face with vegetation and established trees separating the property from residential dwellings on Mill Lane which it sits considerably below due to the varied topography. The property sits in close proximity to the River Stour, and much of the site is within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The property has entered a period of disuse following commercial occupation of the property ending sometime between 2018 and 2022. Whilst planning permission was secured in 2019 for a change of use to a mixed-use residential/commercial scheme, there is little evidence that this scheme reached implementation stage.
- 3.2 The proposal is for the conversion of the building into 10 self-contained apartments, utilising all 3 floors of the building to deliver 8 one-bedroom apartments, and 2 two-bedroom apartments. 4 apartments are located on the ground-floor, and the remaining 6 apartments are spread evenly across the first and second floor. Communal staircases in the centre and on the western side of the property provide access to all floors.
- 3.3 Alterations to the external appearance of the property are proposed. On the upper floors, the existing red brickwork is to be retained, and the existing grey powder and red powder panels are proposed to be replaced with render. On the ground floor, cladding is proposed over the existing dark brickwork. The existing windows are being removed and replaced with a more modern design utilising white, flush frames, with the ground floor windows being raised to reflect the higher internal floor level. The windows on the left-hand side of the front elevation are proposed to be elongated to provide additional glazing.
- 3.4 Surrounding the property, the rear car park is to be reduced in size to 12 parking spaces, providing 1 parking space per one-bedroom apartment, and 2 parking spaces for the 2 two-bedroom apartments. A single, widened access is proposed to provide sufficient access and manoeuvring space. On the western side of the proposed apartments there is a bin store and cycle store, with pedestrian/cycle access provided along the western side of the curtilage to the rear and western staircase. New planting and landscaping is proposed around the property, with new soft landscaping proposed on areas reclaimed from hard surfaces associated with the parking infrastructure of the site.

25/0669/FUL

4.0 Officer Comments

4.1 The main considerations for this application are:

- The principle of development
- The design of the proposal and impacts on residential amenity
- The highways and parking impacts of the proposal
- The biodiversity impacts of the proposal
- The flooding impacts of the proposal

POLICY CONTEXT AND PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all planning applications to be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Council benefits from an adopted development plan which has been found to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and is a material consideration to be given weight in determining applications.
- 4.3 The Council's development plan consists at this time of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (April 2022) and adopted Neighbourhood Plans.
- 4.4 When considering the principle of development, Policies SP.2, SP.3 and DM.3 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan have been considered, along with the NPPF.
- 4.5 Policies SP.2 and SP.3 set out the general spatial development strategies for the District. Policy SP.2 states that the spatial development strategy for the District places an emphasis on encouraging the effective use and re-use of accessible, available and environmentally acceptable brownfield land, focusing development in and adjacent to the urban areas of the District, where housing needs and accessibility to more effective public service provision are greatest. In this regard, Kidderminster is identified as a key area for housing delivery, particularly where it utilises appropriate brownfield sites. This largely embeds Paragraph 125 of the NPPF in a local context, which states that substantial weight should be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes.
- 4.6 Policy SP.3 builds on the above and highlights that Kidderminster will be the strategic centre of the District and provides a focus for new housing.
- 4.7 Policy DM.3 provides specific guidance on flat conversions, and states that proposals for the conversion or sub-division of existing buildings into flats will be considered having regard to the intensity of the proposed use and the accessibility of the location to shops and other services. Proposals will be supported provided that:
- a. Conversion is not detrimental to the appearance of the building and the building and plots are of a suitable size for conversion
 - b. Appropriate provision is made for car and cycle parking, private amenity space and refuse storage
 - c. The proposal will not be detrimental to the character of the area
 - d. The internal layout minimises noise disturbance and overlooking to neighbours

25/0669/FUL

- e. It can be demonstrated that development and the site location provides appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes
- 4.8 The proposal involves the re-use of a disused building on brownfield land within the Kidderminster settlement in a highly accessible location. The location of the proposal in an edge-of-centre location along Mill Street and in close proximity to the town centre is considered to be a highly suitable location with regard to accessibility, being approximately 5 minutes' walk from the town centre and associated amenities, and adjacent to the Crossley Retail Park. In addition, the location is well situated with regard to sustainable transport access, being located in very close proximity to transport corridors such as the Proud Cross Ringway which is served by a number of regular services, as well as being only a 10-minute walk from Kidderminster Bus Station to access local and regional bus services. The property is 0.9 miles from Kidderminster Train Station (around a 20-minute walk), allowing access for future residents to regional and national rail services. Future residents are therefore considered to have comprehensive access to sustainable travel modes both locally and regionally and would have ample access to nearby amenities and local services by virtue of its location adjacent to the Park Butts Ringway.
- 4.9 The design of the proposal maintains much of the original qualities of the properties, though modernises the external finish in a way that removes some less aesthetically pleasing/poorly aged elements (such as red powder/grey powder rendering). It is considered that, overall, the proposed changes maintain the external combination of brick and render, whilst allowing for a visually improved external appearance through use of cladding, render and retention of the existing red brickwork. The change in the design of the windows is similarly considered to represent a sympathetic modernisation to facilitate the change of use, and the location and scale of the new windows is largely identical to the existing windows.
- 4.10 Mill Street is characterised by a number of mid-density residential apartment complexes, notably venture court directly east of the property in question, and Ideal Buildings/Ideal House opposite. The proposal would therefore not introduce an alien or unsuitable residential use into an otherwise non-residential area.
- 4.11 There are not considered to be serious concerns with regard to overlooking, as the windows of the current building are being maintained in terms of size and location, and no new windows are proposed in a location that would overlook neighbouring land or properties. With regard to the property to the east, Venture Court, the rear gardens are sufficiently screened by existing trees (to be retained) and have no primary windows located on the side elevation facing the development site. To the rear, a large cliff face and existing vegetation prevents overlooking of properties on Mill Lane. There is therefore not considered to be a significant impact on neighbouring properties with regard to overlooking. It is also noted that the property is separated from neighbouring properties by open space/amenity space within its curtilage, providing a significant separation distance.
- 4.12 The internal layouts provide internal floor spaces above those required according to the National Described Space Standards (NDSS), and the bedrooms provided are similarly in accordance with these NDSS with regard to floor area. All ground floor apartments have a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of 2.3 metres in line with the NDSS,

25/0669/FUL

with the first and second floor apartments having internal floor-to-ceiling heights of 3 metres minimum. It is therefore considered that future residents would have an acceptable level of amenity.

- 4.13 With regard to cycle and car parking, the development provides 12 parking spaces and provides a further 12 cycle spaces in a newly created store on the western side of the property. A bin store is also proposed on the western side of the property, and existing car parking spaces are to be removed and repurposed for soft landscaping to provide rear amenity space. New soft and sympathetic hard landscaping throughout the site is considered to soften the impact of the building and its parking area in the street scene, providing a building more integrated into the street scene.
- 4.14 Overall, the proposal is considered to represent a sympathetic and well-suited re-use of a disused former office block on brownfield land, close to Kidderminster town centre and with ample access to local services, amenities and sustainable transport routes. The proposal does not involve the introduction of a wholly new or incongruous use into the area and is not considered to result in overlooking or impacts on residential amenity when considered in the context of the existing building and its spatial relationship to other properties along Mill Street. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable with regard to Policies SP.2, SP.3 and DM.3 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan.

DESIGN

- 4.15 When considering design, Policies SP.20 and DM.24 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan have been considered.
- 4.16 Policy SP.20 states all development within Wyre Forest District will be expected to exhibit high quality design, and that it will need to integrate effectively with its surroundings, in terms of form and function, reinforce local distinctiveness. Policy DM.24 builds on this, and states that development should demonstrate the above through the following matters:
- a) Siting and layout
 - b) Relationship to surroundings and other development
 - c) Neighbouring amenity
 - d) Settlement character
 - e) Scale, height and massing
 - f) Links, connectivity and access
 - g) Detailed design and materials
 - h) Appropriate facilities
 - i) Landscaping
 - j) Creating a safe and secure environment
- 4.17 The proposal largely preserves the existing design and external properties of the building, with changes to materials and minor changes to window materials/locations being the primary design changes. The existing external appearance of the property is not considered to be of a high design quality, due to use of outdated, powder finishes. The proposal to retain the red brickwork and provide a new render finish and a new cladded ground-floor element are considered to be sympathetic modernisations that preserve much of the original qualities of the building whilst improving on lower quality

25/0669/FUL

elements in its existing design. Full external material finishes and details will be required to be submitted via attachment of a pre-commencement condition, to ensure the materials chosen are of a high design quality.

- 4.18 The rear of the site will feature new landscaping and habitat, as secured via the BNG process, and the front of the site will be bordered with a green buffer featuring new planting to soften the appearance of the property in the street scene. The use of low, 0.4 metre retaining brick walls to the front of the property clearly demarcates the edge of the public realm and the development, whilst ensuring the openness of the street is preserved. The retention of parking in a tucked away position to the rear of the development is considered to allow the building to make a visual contribution to the street scene in an open and inviting manner.
- 4.19 Secure bin and cycle storage is provided to the side of the property, which allows natural surveillance from Mill Street to prevent antisocial behaviour. Conditions will be attached to the permission to require submission of security measures and prevent unauthorised access to the rear parking area and premises.
- 4.20 The windows of the ground-floor apartments have been shifted upwards to reflect this internal floor height change, though the resulting window head height is at 1700mm above internal floor levels (lower than usually expected of developments). Whilst this does not conflict with any formal guidance in the NDSS, it is considered to be a lower design standard than would usually be expected of development and would reduce the penetration of sunlight/daylight into the rooms of ground floor apartments.
- 4.21 However, when considering the low overall height of the windows for internal occupants, Paragraphs 124 and 130(c) of the NPPF have been considered.
- 4.22 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes whilst ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Paragraph 130(c) of the NPPF builds on this and states that when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).
- 4.23 With regard to light, whilst the low window head height has the potential to reduce the diffusion of daylight and sunlight in the ground-floor apartments, the shallow depth of the rooms is considered to ensure that the low windows do not seriously diminish the amount of light that will likely be enjoyed by future occupants, and Your Officers are satisfied that occupants of the ground floor apartments would enjoy an acceptable level of daylight and sunlight.
- 4.24 Overall, the development is considered to exhibit high-quality design in a way that respects and maintains the significance of the original building and its contribution to the street scene, whilst improving on lower quality existing materials due to the property's age. Whilst there are some concerns relating the low positioning of windows relative to the internal floor level, it is considered that the planning merits of the proposal in full utilisation of a brownfield site/disused building outweigh the minor design concerns and it is considered that the scheme will, on balance, deliver an

25/0669/FUL

acceptable level of amenity for future occupiers. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policies SP.20 and DM.24 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan. As per the previous application, conditions have been attached to require details of the external materials and to require the existing war memorial plaque to be retained.

HIGHWAYS AND PARKING IMPACTS

- 4.25 With regard to highways and parking impacts, Policy SP.27 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan states that proposals must demonstrate that:
- a) the location and layout of development will minimise the demand for travel
 - b) they offer viable sustainable transport choices, with an emphasis on active travel modes
 - c) they address road safety issues
 - d) they are consistent with the delivery of the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan objectives
- 4.26 It also states that travel plans will be required of all major developments, setting out measures to reduce demand for travel by private cars and measures to support and promote increased walking, cycling and public transport use. New development should have regard to the principles and design criteria set out in the Worcestershire Streetscapes Design Guide (2025).
- 4.27 As outlined above, the property is in a highly sustainable location, in close proximity to Kidderminster Town Centre for access to local services and amenities, and 0.9 miles and 0.4 miles respectively from Kidderminster Train and Bus Station. It is therefore considered that the location of the development would offer viable sustainable transport choices and will minimise the demand for travel by making pedestrian or cycle access to the Town Centre a viable choice for future residents. Provision of Travel Welcome Packs will be conditioned to ensure that sustainable travel options are highlighted for new residents, to encourage uptake. The development will provide 12 parking spaces and 12 cycle spaces, in line with Worcestershire Streetscapes Design Guide guidance requiring one space of each per bedroom.
- 4.28 The access to the rear and parking area is sufficiently wide to allow for adequate manoeuvring and for vehicles to pass in each direction. Worcestershire County Highways have confirmed that the dimensioned site plan (HGD25-54-5.3) is acceptable and accords with Highways standards. Whilst visitor parking is not provided, there is on-street parking available on Mill Street and parking restrictions to prevent parking in sensitive/undesirable areas.
- 4.29 It is therefore considered that the development is acceptable in line with Policy SP.27 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan and delivers a development in a highly sustainable location with a varied choice of sustainable travel options, with provision of adequate private parking and car access in accordance with Worcestershire County Highways standing advice.

BIODIVERSITY IMPACTS

- 4.30 When considering biodiversity, the starting point according to the adopted Local Plan is Policy SP.23, which states that the Council will expect proposed developments to deliver measurable net gains in biodiversity through the promotion and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks, and the protection and recovery of legally

25/0669/FUL

protected and priority species populations. Enhancements for wildlife within the built environment will be sought where appropriate from all scales of development.

- 4.31 It also states that proposals for development will need to be supported by an appropriate level of up-to-date technological assessment if necessary.
- 4.32 Since April 2024, all non-exempt development has been subject to mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) under Schedule 7a of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) (as inserted by the Environment Act (2021)). This requires all non-exempt development to deliver a measurable 10% net gain in biodiversity compared to the onsite baseline prior to development.
- 4.33 The application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), and BNG metric that demonstrates that 10% net gain can be achieved through onsite habitat creation, through removal of large areas of hard surfacing and replacement with soft landscaping. The application has therefore satisfied the statutory requirements of Schedule 7a of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990). Ongoing management and monitoring of the onsite biodiversity gain will be agreed through signing of a unilateral undertaking at the discharge of conditions stage.
- 4.34 A bat survey was undertaken in May 2026 to establish whether there is any possibility of bats using the empty building for roosting purposes given the proximity to the River Stour wildlife corridor and the ability to enter the property at the upper floors through broken windows. This bat survey ruled out roosting potential, and therefore your officers are confident that no harm will result to protected species through disturbance of bat roosts.
- 4.35 With regard to other biodiversity measures, the development also incorporates 2 bat boxes and 2 bird boxes as ecological enhancements. The provided Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) identifies two Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) onsite: Buddleia Davidii and Himalayan Balsam. These are proposed to be removed as part of onsite enhancements, and a condition to require an invasive species eradication and management plan will be added to the planning permission to ensure these species are removed in a controlled manner.
- 4.36 The Tree and Biodiversity Officer has stated that reassurance is required with regard to the cliff face to the rear of the property to eliminate the possibility of potential stabilisation works impacting protected species in the cliff. It is noted, however, that works to the cliff face are not proposed as part of the application, and the applicant will be made aware via an informative that any works to the cliff face (e.g. stabilisation works) would constitute development according to Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) and would require separate planning permission. Impact on protected species would be assessed at the stage that a separate application for works to the cliff face are proposed. The Tree and Biodiversity is otherwise satisfied with the provided ecological supporting information in the PEA and bat survey and is satisfied that BNG can be achieved on site.
- 4.37 As a result, notwithstanding the concerns of the Tree and Biodiversity Officer with regard to potential works to the cliff face, it is considered that the development is acceptable with regard to Policy SP.23 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan, and can

25/0669/FUL

deliver Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with Schedule 7a of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).

FLOOD RISK

- 4.38 When considering flood risk, Policy SP.31 states that the Council will steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding, and ensure that, where development is proposed in areas at risk of flooding, the accompanying Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) demonstrates that the development can be made acceptable through measures to mitigate the impacts of flooding.
- 4.39 The proposal has been accompanied by an FRA that confirms that the proposal is located largely in Flood Zones 2 and 3 of the nearby River Stour. As the proposal relates to a change of use, the sequential and exception tests are not required to demonstrate the acceptability of the location of development in principle. Instead, the development must demonstrate that the form of development will be safe for its duration.
- 4.40 The submitted plans show a finished floor level of 34.62m AOD, which is in line with the standing advice provided by the Environment Agency (EA) with regard to the minimum floor levels required above the 1 in 100-year flood level with climate change allowance. This raising of the internal floor level will ensure the safety of future occupiers from flooding in line with EA standing advice and will be conditioned to ensure the development is safe from flooding for its duration.
- 4.41 The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy SP.31 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 4.42 Policy SP.10 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan requires an affordable housing contribution of 25% of development on major sites/schemes. Whilst the development was accompanied by a Design and Access statement and other supporting material outlining that the apartments will be affordable, the scheme does not deliver any affordable apartments onsite.
- 4.43 It is noted that Policy SP.10 also states that vacant building credit will apply to brownfield land where empty or redundant buildings which have not been abandoned are being reused or redeveloped. In assessing whether a building benefits from vacant building credit, the Council will have regard to the following:
1. The building is not in use at the time the application is submitted.
 2. The building is not covered by an extant permission for a materially similar development, or a permission for a materially similar development expired within six months of the date of submission of the application.
 3. The building has not been made vacant for the sole purpose of redevelopment.
 4. Planning applications that seek to utilise Vacant Building Credit as part of any proposal will be required to provide evidence to demonstrate eligibility.
- 4.44 In this regard, it is considered that the proposal qualifies for vacant building credit as it involves the redevelopment/reuse of an empty building on brownfield land that is not in use at the time of the application; is not covered by an extant permission for a materially similar development, or a permission for a materially similar development

25/0669/FUL

that recently expired; and, the building has not been made vacant solely for the purposes of redevelopment. Based on the Council's independent verification of historic mapping and the local planning history, the site is considered to definitively meet the criteria for Vacant Building Credit.

- 4.45 The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy SP.10 despite the lack of affordable housing provision, and will not be required to provide a commuted sum in the absence of onsite housing provision as suggested by the Affordable Housing Officer.

OPEN SPACE

- 4.46 Policy DM.8 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan states that the Council will require any major development to make provision in accordance with the following principles:
- a. On-site provision which meets local needs for open space, sport and play;
 - b. Off-site contributions instead of an on-site contribution where it can be demonstrated that on-site provision is not feasible or viable;
 - c. Contributions towards the enhancement of existing open space and/or creation of new areas of open space and/or sports facilities where the development would otherwise lead to a deficiency;
 - d. Provision of open space in the most accessible possible locations including access by cycle routes and provision for walking and cycling;
 - e. Play and recreation spaces for children and young people including the provision of play equipment for special needs children;
 - f. Creation of historic and/or environmental interpretation features, where appropriate; and
 - g. Street trees (where appropriate and subject to long-term maintenance arrangements)

- 4.47 Due to the small size of the site, and the small number of child bedspaces (two), it is not considered that onsite provision is the best route for satisfying the open space requirements of the development. As a result, an offsite contribution of £1534.08 is required in accordance with the Planning Obligations SPD to secure a contribution towards the maintenance of open space at St George's Park in Kidderminster, as suggested by Kidderminster Town Council. The targeted infrastructure is considered necessary to mitigate the cumulative impact of new residents on local recreational facilities, and it is directly related to the development due to proximity, with the park being approximately 12 minutes' walk from the site and highly likely to be utilised by future residents as one of the nearest parks/open spaces.

- 4.48 The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy DM.8 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan, subject to signing of a Section 106 agreement to secure the above contribution.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 4.49 Policy SP.18 states that development should help minimise negative health impacts and maximise opportunities to ensure that people in Wyre Forest District lead healthy, active lifestyles and experience a high quality of life. Proposals for changes of use to residential institutions will be required to provide a Health Impact Assessment screening.

25/0669/FUL

- 4.50 The submitted HIA screening assessment outlines that the scheme will provide benefits to health and wellbeing in a number of ways, including:
- a) Incorporation of renewable energy and EV charging points
 - b) Enhancement of biodiversity through new soft landscaping
 - c) Largely internal works, minimising disruption from construction
 - d) Promotion of sustainable and active travel options
 - e) Provision of high-specification ambulant steps featuring shallow 170mm risers, 350mm goings, and 900mm handrails for ambulant users in line with Approved Document M
 - f) Provision of internal door openings of 838mm clear width to facilitate ease of movement for less able occupiers
- 4.51 It is considered that the HIA screening has identified that the project has neutral or net-positive impacts on health and wellbeing. In addition, the Nuisance Assessment Team (WRS) have stated that the submitted noise impacts assessment is acceptable, and that full insulation/ventilation details can be submitted at conditions discharge stage to ensure that the development delivers an acceptable level of insulation and ventilation to minimise impacts of the nearby ring road. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy SP.18 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- 4.52 Policy SP.37 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan states that all new developments, and where possible redevelopment of existing buildings, should consider location, design, siting and orientation to maximise the use of natural heat and light and the potential for renewable energy micro-generations. Where possible, in appropriate locations, solar panels should be fitted, and all new residential development should include electric vehicle charging points.
- 4.53 As the development involves the reuse of an existing building, deliberate design with regards to orientation, location and siting are considered to be largely irrelevant to the consideration of the planning merits of the proposal. The proposal includes new solar panels on the roof, and 4 electric vehicle charging points in the rear parking area. A condition will be applied to require full submission of renewable energy/sustainability measures prior to occupation, along with an energy statement demonstrating that a minimum of 10% of the energy requirements of the new dwellings can be met from renewable or low carbon sources.
- 4.54 The proposal is therefore considered to deliver renewable energy improvements in line with Policy SP.37 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5.1 The proposed development seeks the full utilisation and conversion of a prominent, vacant, three-storey property on Mill Street to provide 10 self-contained apartments. The principle of development is heavily supported by Policies SP.2 and SP.3 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan and Paragraph 125 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which accord substantial weight to the effective re-use of accessible, sustainable brownfield land within settlement boundaries for housing

25/0669/FUL

delivery. The residential use is compatible with the mixed character of Mill Street, which features established, mid-density residential developments.

- 5.2 By raising internal ground floor levels to 34.62m AOD, the scheme satisfies Environment Agency standing advice to ensure long-term occupant safety from the River Stour flood risks. The resulting internal steps and accessibility standards are safely contained within the internal envelope of the property, satisfying planning criteria while leaving finite structural mechanics to the Building Regulations framework without risking post-determination planning amendments.
- 5.3 Minor design compromises resulting from the flood mitigation layout, specifically the lower window head height of 1700mm within the ground floor apartments, are considered to be acceptable due to the shallow depth of the habitable rooms. In line with the flexibility afforded by Paragraph 130(c) of the NPPF, this minor design detraction is significantly outweighed by the planning benefits of bringing a vacant sustainable site back into active use.
- 5.4 The scheme delivers an acceptable standard of residential amenity for future occupiers, complies with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS), and provides policy compliant vehicle and cycle parking. Potential impacts on neighbouring residential privacy are mitigated by separation distances and existing physical boundaries. Eligibility for Vacant Building Credit has been verified against Policy SP.10, while localised cumulative infrastructure impacts on green space are mitigated via an off-site Section 106 financial contribution to St George's Park. Measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is considered to be achievable onsite and will be secured through a separate unilateral undertaking as part of the discharge of conditions stage.
- 5.5 Accordingly, the development represents a sustainable, sympathetic, and policy compliant regeneration scheme that aligns with the Wyre Forest District Local Plan taken as a whole. In the absence of any overriding material considerations, the application is recommended for approval.
- 5.6 Officers therefore recommend **DELEGATED APPROVAL** subject to:
- a) Signing of a Section 106 agreement requiring an open space contribution of £1534.08; establishment of a management company and funding model for ongoing site management; management of the site in accordance with the approved LEMP once submitted; and, payment of monitoring fees to the Council amounting to £2,500
 - b) The following conditions
 1. Standard 3-Year Time Condition
 2. Details of all external materials
 3. Details of all hard landscaping
 4. Submission of a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)
 5. Submission of a lighting strategy (biodiversity)
 6. Submission of communal areas management scheme
 7. Submission of water efficiency measures

25/0669/FUL

8. Submission of soft landscaping scheme
9. Submission of weed management and eradication scheme
10. Submission of a lighting strategy (general)
11. Details of security measures for site access
12. Details of security measures for door access
13. Details of sustainability measures
14. Details of noise mitigation measures
15. Details of refuse storage facilities
16. No external plant or equipment shall be installed
17. Provision of access, turning and parking in accordance with approved plans
18. Provision of cycle parking
19. Provision of travel pack
20. Finished floor levels to be no less than 34.62m AOD
21. War memorial plaque to be retained unless agreed in writing by the LPA
22. Details of glazing and background ventilators
23. All hoardings shall be removed and the land made good prior to first occupation
24. Submission of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)
25. Development to be implemented in accordance with the approved plans

c) The following informatives

1. The applicant is reminded that any works to reinforce, support or stabilise the cliff face to the rear of the building are not given permission under this application, and will require an application if such works are necessary.
2. Parts of the application site and the road bordering the site are at risk of flooding from the river Stour. Future occupants are therefore strongly advised to construct a Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan, using the details from the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (Woodsyde, July 2025), and to sign up to receive flood alerts from the Environment Agency, see <https://www.gov.uk/get-flood-warnings>.
3. This permission does not authorise the applicant to carry out works within the publicly maintained highway since such works can only be carried out by the County Council's Approved Contractor, Ringway Infrastructure Service. Applications can be made online via the Worcestershire County Council website. The applicant is solely responsible for all costs associated with construction of the access