

**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**

Date: Wednesday, 3 April 2019

Time: 6.30pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** Councillors: David Cullen (Chair), Doug Bainbridge, Lloyd Briscoe, Michael Downing, James Fraser, Michelle Gardner, Jody Hanafin, Liz Harrington, Lizzy Kelly, Graham Lawrence, John Lloyd and Graham Snell.

**Start / End**      Start Time:    6.30pm  
**Time:**            End Time:       7.15pm

**1      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Maureen McKay.

There were no declarations of interest.

**2      MINUTES - 5 MARCH 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 5 March 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**3      19/00063/FPM - 21 - 29 TOWN SQUARE, TOWN CENTRE, STEVENAGE**

The Committee considered an application for the change of use of units 21 to 23 Town Square from Class A3 (Restaurant) to either Class A1 (Retail) or Class A3 (Restaurant and Cafe) space at ground and first floor level, conversion of existing office (Class B1(a)) and Employment Agency (Class A2) at first and second floor level of units 25 to 29 Town Square to a mixed use of offices (Class B1(a)) and gallery (Class D1) and replacement of existing betting shop (Sui Generis) with a ground-floor communal lobby; external renovation works, use of rear roof-terrace as events and amenity space and associated plant.

The Principal Planning Officer drew attention to the revised description of the application, which now made reference to the conversion of the Employment Agency (Class A2), as well as the existing office (Class B1(a)), at first and second floor levels of units 25 to 29 Town Square.

Members noted that the application was required to be considered by the Committee as the Council was the applicant and landowner. In addition, the application was classed as a major commercial development.

The Principal Planning Officer gave an introduction to the Committee. He advised that the main issues for consideration in the determination of the application were its acceptability in land use policy terms, visual impact on the conservation area, impact upon neighbouring amenity, impact on the highway network, parking provision and development and flood risk.

The Principal Planning Officer concluded that the principle of the development would be acceptable, as it would help to improve the vitality and viability of the town centre and would help to bring vacant premises back into operation. In addition, subject to conditions, the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the historic character of the Town Square Conservation Area or the setting of the nearby listed clock tower and associated pool and the joy ride statute. Furthermore, subject to conditions, the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of nearby businesses and operators; and would not prejudice highway safety nor would generate or was susceptible to flooding.

Accordingly, the Principal Planning Officer considered that the proposed development accorded with the Policies contained within the adopted Local Plan (2004), the Council's Emerging Local Plan (2016), the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents, the NPPF (2019) and NPPG (2014).

In response to a number of Members' questions, the Principal Planning Officer commented as follows:

- The proposed art gallery would be in addition to, rather than a replacement for, the art gallery at the Gordon Craig Theatre/Leisure Centre;
- It was clarified that, in addition to stairs, the proposals included the installation of a lift in the new lobby area, allowing access to First and Second Floor levels;
- From a planning perspective, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) would need to provide robust reasons for the change of use of Class A1 or A2 units. However, there was no obligation on the LPA to provide replacement premises for Sui Generis use Class units (eg. betting shops) that were "uprooted" as a result of a change of use;
- "Curtain wall" glazing could also be defined as "full height" glazing;
- It would be the responsibility of the Council, as landowner, to ensure that the external appearance of the converted units was maintained to a high standard of decoration;
- The application was essentially the first phase of the redevelopment of the Town Square; other phases were included as part of the Town Centre Regeneration plans;
- The whole of the second floor would comprise the art gallery, which would be accessed via the new lobby area;
- The existing canopy above the new lobby area would be removed; the remaining canopy would be refurbished; and
- The comments of the County Council regarding the proximity of the site to the Bus Station would equally apply should the Bus Station be re-located to the site currently allocated adjacent to the Gordon Craig Theatre/Leisure Centre.

It was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be granted, subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:  
  
AA7916-2000; AA7916-2001; AA7916-2002; AA7916-2100 A; AA7916-2101 A; AA7916-2102 A; AA7916-2103 A; AA7916-2105 A; AA7916-2106 A; AA7916-2200 B; AA7916-2201 B; AA7916-2202 A; AA7916-2203 A; AA7916-2205 A; AA7916-2206 A.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 3 Prior to the undertaking of external concrete cladding works to the application building, samples of the materials to be used to replace the concrete cladding of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4 Prior to the undertaking of external fenestration works to the application building, drawn details of the replacement fenestration showing the detail and proportions of glazing bars compared to existing fenestration for the front elevations to Danestrete, Town Square and Queensway shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 5 Prior to the first occupation of a Class A3 (Restaurants and Cafes) as detailed in the submitted application, a scheme for the installation of equipment to control the emissions of fumes and smell from these premises shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first use of the premises as Class A3 (Restaurants and Cafes). All equipment installed as part of the scheme shall thereafter be operated and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- 6 Before any plant and/or machinery is installed on the premises as detailed in the application submission, details of the acoustic louvered screen shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The acoustic screen shall be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to the first operation of the plant and/or machinery.
- 7 No demolition of construction work relating to this permission shall be carried out on any Sunday, Public or Bank Holiday nor at any other time, except between the hours of 0730 and 1800 on Mondays to Fridays and between the hours of 0830 and 1300 on Saturdays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These times apply to work which is audible at the site boundary.
- 8 Prior to the occupation the building, details of measures to address adaptation to climate change shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These measures shall then be implemented and

permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

- 9 Prior to the occupation of the building, details of cycle parking shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking shall thereafter be erected in accordance with the approved details.

#### 4 **19/00097/FPH - 4 HAMMOND CLOSE, STEVENAGE**

The Committee considered an application for a single storey side and rear extension.

Members noted that the application had been referred to the Committee as the applicant had a connection with a Borough Councillor.

The Principal Planning Officer gave an introduction to the Committee. He advised that the main issues for consideration in the determination of the application were visual impact, impact upon neighbouring amenity and parking provision.

The Principal Planning Officer concluded that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the property or the visual amenities of the street scene. In addition, the proposed development would not harm the amenities of neighbouring properties. Furthermore, the conversion of the garage to a study did not require planning permission from the Council so there was no control in relation to off-street parking. The application therefore complied with relevant policies contained within the adopted Local Plan (2004), the Council's Emerging Local Plan (2016), the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents, the NPPF (2019) and NPPG (2014).

In response to a Member's question, the Principal Planning Officer confirmed that the proposed development sought to convert a part of the garage to a study. As such, this would remove one parking space which served the application property, and the proposal did not seek to provide replacement off-street parking to compensate the loss of the garage. However, as the property had its permitted development rights intact, planning permission was not required from the Council to convert the garage to a study. Therefore, in this instance the Council was unable to refuse planning permission due to the lack of a replacement parking space following the conversion of the garage.

It was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be granted, subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:  
  
PL-001B; PL-002B; PL-003D.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

- 3 The development hereby permitted shall be constructed in accordance with the details which have been specified in the application.
- 4 No access shall be provided to the roof of the single-storey rear extension by way of windows, doors or staircases and the roof of the extension hereby permitted shall not be used as a balcony or sitting out area.

5 **INFORMATION REPORT - DELEGATED DECISIONS**

Report noted.

6 **INFORMATION REPORT - APPEALS/CALLED IN APPLICATIONS**

Report noted.

7 **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

Stevenage Local Plan

The Chair reminded Members that the Government's Holding Direction on the Stevenage Local Plan had been lifted. The Plan would progress through consideration by the Executive and Overview & Scrutiny Committee, with final approval anticipated to take place at the Annual Council meeting on 22 May 2019.

8 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required.

9 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**