

## Planning Committee

Wednesday, 25 October 2023

7.00 pm

### Present:

Cllr Lee Croxton (Chair)  
Cllr Rajinder Atwal (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Ejaz Aslam  
Gary Harding  
Samir Jassal  
Alan Metcalf  
Lyn Milner  
Alison Williams  
Deborah Croxton

**Note:** Councillors: Burden, Hart and Mochrie-Cox were also in attendance

Shazad Ghani	Head of Planning
Richard Hart	Team Leader (Development Management)
Laura Caiels	Assistant Head of Legal Services
Karen Gingles	Committee Service Officer (Minutes)

### 21. Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Peter Scollard and Cllr Deborah Croxton attended as his substitute.

### 22. To sign the Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 27 September were signed by the Chair.

### 23. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

### 24. Planning applications for determination by the Committee

#### 24.1 20230366 - Clifton Slipways, West Street, Gravesend, Kent

The Committee considered application 20230366 - Clifton Slipways, West Street, Gravesend, Kent. The application was for variation of condition 2 and 7, attached to planning permission reference no. 20191122 previously granted, for the erection of two buildings to provide residential units (Use Class C3) with associated vehicle parking, cycle storage, highway works, and landscaping.

Members were informed the application has been submitted as a section 73 application to amend conditions 2 (Approved plans) and 7 (Highways Works). The changes being sought were primarily due to the previously permitted proposal no longer being viable and to ensure that the scheme met fire regulations brought in by the Government, as a result of the Grenfell disaster.

The Team Leader explained that the Committee were to consider only the proposed changes to the conditions stated and not to reconsider the principle of the development, which had been previously approved by the Committee in 2020.

The Team Leader drew Members attention to sections 1.6 and 1.7 of the report, which outlined the proposed changes to conditions 2 and 7. The key changes highlighted to the Committee were:

- External changes to the façade of the top 3 levels of the building to create a more distinct finish.
- Level 0 car parking would be reduced by 55 spaces enabling 9 new accommodation units.
- Removal of the basement at the lower ground floor (level -2).
- Reduction of the building footprint of level -1 meaning a reduction of 23 car parking spaces.
- Internal changes that would enable the creation of a second staircase to comply with updated fire safety regulations.

The Committee were informed that Kent Highways and Gravesham Highways officers were consulted on the proposed reduction of car parking spaces and there had been no objections from either consultee. It was felt due to the site's location being in close proximity to Gravesend Town Centre, it was served well by public transport. No concern in respect of the layout of the car park provision was raised either.

Members were updated that since the most recent permission was granted in 2020 the original proposal was no longer viable. An independent viability assessment had been undertaken to confirm this, with the findings explained in section 6.57 of the report. Members were informed that due to the scheme being unviable the financial contribution to improvements of leisure services was no longer being sought.

The Team Leader concluded that the section 73 application complied with the development plan and subject to the completion of a deed of variation planning permission was granted.

Members were invited to ask questions for clarification:

- Members queried whether planners were content with the overall sizes of the rooms in the new proposed residential units. The Team Leader advised that all units in the reconfiguration of the scheme were acceptable.
- Concern was raised regarding fire risk and fire suppression due to the car parking being alongside the development of additional flats on level 0. It was felt there may have also been greater risk with implementation of electric charging points for vehicles with residential units on the same level. The Head of Planning assured Members that there was no increased risk to residents living on the same level.

The Committee queried whether a fire suppression system would be in place as part of the plan. The Team Leader advised that this was not part of the planning scheme and that a fire suppression system would be hard to monitor, as there would be different systems required for both petrol/diesel vehicles and electric vehicles. He went on to say that a suppression system could be included as an informative and therefore addressed by Building Control.

- Members questioned whether any of the new proposed ground floor units were lifetime homes offering accessibility for all long term. The Team Leader advised that they were not.
- More clarity was sought regarding the applicant's request to remove the leisure contribution element from the Section 106 payment. The Team Leader mentioned how the applicant had provided a viability appraisal which presented a viability gap, so had requested that the leisure contribution be removed from the payment. He went on to say it had been suggested that a viability review is built into the deed of variation and if the scheme was deemed to be viable then contributions could be potentially clawed back.

The Committee heard to views of registered speaker in favour of the application and had their questions answered:

- The Committee queried if approval was received when the works would begin. The speaker advised that work had begun since the permission in 2020 was granted and the SAMMS payment had been made. Once finance for the project was in place the scheme would move forward further. It was anticipated this would be next year.
- Members asked if more grant funding was available whether the applicant would consider increasing the number of affordable housing units. The speaker agreed that if more funding was available there could be flexibility on this. The Head of Planning informed the Committee that it was possible a condition could be incorporated enabling this in the future if additional funding were to become available.

The Committee heard the views of Councillor Milner, Ward Councillor for Town Ward.

The Committee heard the views of non-board Members.

The Committee were invited to make any further comments:

- Members were in support of more residential development and the increased revenue this would bring to town with residents using the local amenities.
- There was some concern from Members regarding the ratio of car parking to accommodation and how the allocation of the parking provision would be controlled for residents. The Team Leader informed Members there would be a condition for a Parking Management Plan to be implemented, for the applicant to specify how the parking is allocated.

**RESOLVED** that the application to be delegated to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, to grant Planning Permission, subject to finalisation of planning conditions and completion of a deed of variation to the Section 106 agreement attached to

20191122. In the event of the deed of variation not being completed, the planning application will be reported back to Planning Committee for redetermination.

**25. Planning applications determined under delegated powers by the Director (Environment)**

A schedule showing applications determined by the Director (Environment) under delegated powers had been published on the Council's website.

**Close of meeting**

The meeting ended at 7:43pm