



Committee Members present:

Councillor Chris Millar (CM)
– Chair

John Weir (JW)

Nick Thompson

David Dickinson

Cllr Penny Flavell (PF)

Cllr Brian Markham (BM)

In attendance:

John Hill (JH) - Development
Control Manager

Matthew Berry (MB) - Major
Projects Officer

Richard Murdock (RM) - Senior
Development Management
Officer

Amy Sales (AS) - Committee
Secretary

Northampton UDA Planning Committee Minutes

13th July 2010

This Public meeting was held on

13th July 2010

At

Heroes Lounge,
Northampton Saints RFC,
Franklins Gardens,
Weedon Road
Northampton
NN5 5BG

Reference	Minutes	Action
	The Chair opened the meeting at 6pm.	
Item 1	<u>Item 1: Apologies</u> Ann Tate sent her apologies.	
Item 2	<u>Item 2: Declaration of interests</u> Cllr Penny Flavell and Cllr Brain Markham both expressed an interest in Agenda Item 5, as Peter Mair, the Chairman of the trust for the St John residential care home, spoke on the item, and both Cllr Flavell and Cllr Markham are past Board members of the care home.	
Item 3	<u>Item 3: Minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2010</u> 3.1 IT WAS AGREED: That the minutes were to be amended to reflect that Nick Thompson was present at the Committee. The remaining minutes of the meeting held in public on 18 th May 2010 were agreed to be a true and accurate record.	
Item 4	<u>Item 4: Pearce Leather Works</u> Applicant: Lagan Homes Application No: 10/0027/FULWNN Description: Partial demolition of Pearce Leather Works and outbuildings with remaining building to be office use. Erection of new screen wall to enclose retained part of building and alterations to business area parking. Construction of 126 dwellings (including conversion of existing Power house to 6 units), associated highway works, public open space, landscaping and ancillary works. Address: W Pearce & Co Ltd, Wellingborough Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN3 9BG Ward: Billing 4.1 RM introduced the application and presented the update report. (Update report attached as Appendix A) 4.2 The Chair asked the Committee for their views as there were	

	<p>no speakers for the item.</p> <p>4.3 BM informed the Committee that he was in favour of the application as the design and the landscaping of the site was an important feature for Northampton. He went on to say that the land near the application needed to be put into use.</p> <p>4.4 PF agreed with BM, she felt that the architecture was in keeping with the surrounding buildings. She continued to ask about the land outside of the applications border to the north, which was not in use, she asked RM who owned the land.</p> <p>4.5 RM informed PF that the land was in Pearce's ownership.</p> <p>4.6 PF asked RM to confirm if the interior roads were strong enough and wide enough to take the weight of the collection vans which will be using the roads, as she referred to previous applications where the roads have not been strong enough.</p> <p>4.7 RM confirmed that the road width and strength was part of the County Councils consideration that the adoption routes have to be inspected.</p> <p>4.8 DD referenced comments made by NCC on the application, and asked that WNDC review the comments to ensure that it is capable of adoption. He then went on to say that he was pleased with the application.</p> <p>4.9 NT agreed with his Committee members that he was pleased with the architecture of the application. He asked RM if there was an obligation to carry out work to the building within a time frame</p> <p>4.10 RM confirmed that the S106 stated that work carried out to the building would have to be completed within a certain time frame, but this can be negotiated as part of the agreement.</p> <p>4.11 NT asked if it would be negotiated on the basis that the building is let, or is still available speculative for occupation, as there will be a big impact on the end capital value.</p>	
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	<p>4.12 JH informed the Committee that no particular wording had been agreed, however would be willing for the Committee to give a steer on their particular view.</p> <p>4.13 NT advised that safeguarding the building was important, that the developer should be able to create a profit before developing. He believed the S106 should be negotiated to be less flexible for the developer.</p> <p>4.14 JW concurred that he was pleased with the application. However, he felt disappointed that there was no parking available on the road side. He felt that the land to the rear of the Ashmead residents should be utilised within the proposed plots. He believed that the S106 should state that all refurbishment to the listed building be complete prior to the occupation of 50% of the units on the site</p> <p>4.15 JH advised that the land to the rear of the Ashmead residents will be secured to be maintained properly. He advised the Committee if key were concerned with this it could be deferred and brought to the next Committee, or seek to amend it under delegated powers.</p> <p>4.16 PF asked if the land was left unused to act as a buffer.</p> <p>4.17 JH confirmed that the land was a proposed buffer for Ashmead.</p> <p>4.18 The Committee agreed that there should be an amendment to the scheme should be considered under delegated powers.</p> <p>4.19 The Chair then asked the Committee if they agreed that the S106 should state that all refurbishment to the listed building be complete prior to the 50th occupant on the site.</p> <p>4.20 NT did not agree, as he believed that it would not give the officers enough flexibility. He suggested that the developer needed more flexibility for the housing market, therefore the S106 should state that all refurbishment to the listed building be completed prior to 50% of occupation.</p> <p>4.21 The Committee agreed officers to seek to negotiate the</p>	
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	<p>Ashmead buffer zone into the proposed plots, but if this was not accrued, then to revert back to existing situation, securing a robust management agreement to the buffer zone. Also, the negotiations of the S106 to ensure refurbishment to the listed building be complete prior to 50% of occupation.</p> <p>4.22 A vote was taken and the members collectively voted for the application.</p> <p>IT WAS RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the application be APPROVED subject to conditions confirmed by the Committee, and the considerations set out in paragraph 4.21 above.</p>	
Item 5	<p><u>Item 5: Aldi Store</u></p> <p>Applicant: Aldi Stores Limited</p> <p>Application No: 09/0096/FULWNN</p> <p>Description: Erection of a Class A1 Food Retail store and associated car parking.</p> <p>Address: 582 - 592 Wellingborough Road Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN3 3JB</p> <p>Ward: Weston</p> <p>5.1 MB introduced the application and presented the update report. (Update report attached as Appendix A)</p> <p>5.2 Peter Mair spoke against the application as a member of the public. The points he made are summarised as follows:</p> <p>5.2.1 He informed the Committee that he is the Chairman of the trust for the St John residential care home, which is located directly opposite the site of the proposed application.</p> <p>5.2.2 He stated that he was concerned for the residents in relation to noise pollution and increased traffic, which will emanate from the site.</p> <p>5.2.3 The residents and police, in October 2009, were</p>	

	<p>concerned in relation to increased crime in the area.</p> <p>5.2.4 He continued to say that there is the potential for graffiti.</p> <p>5.2.5 Therefore, there is a need for secure fencing, roller shutters and laminated glass.</p> <p>5.2.6 He stated that he is concerned about the increase in traffic by the entrance to St John's, as buses frequently use the road, which will cause further congestion.</p> <p>5.2.7 He believed that a refuge would be needed for cars wanting to use the entrance to St John's.</p> <p>5.2.8 He does not believe that the barriers for the site car park, which the applicants have suggested, will deter unwanted use to the car park.</p> <p>5.2.9 He stated that should the application be approved, then hard and soft landscaping should be used to conceal the front of the building from the care home, and the noise evasion scheme should be used.</p> <p>5.2.10 If needed, he believed that the applicant should make a contribution to this.</p> <p>5.3 DD asked Peter Mair if he believed that planting trees on the care home's property would benefit the separation between the application site and the care home.</p> <p>5.4 Peter Mair believed that it would help to prevent noise and the view of traffic.</p> <p>5.5 DD asked Peter Mair if holding a portion of money from the S106 to contribute to planting would help.</p> <p>5.6 Peter Mair said that it would.</p> <p>5.7 Councillor Stephen Legg spoke against the application as the County Councillor for Weston. The points he made are summarised as follows:</p> <p>5.7.1 He informed the Committee that the site is the last major site remaining in Weston Favell village.</p> <p>5.7.2 He believed that the store will be more appropriate</p>	
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	<p>within a retail park rather than the chosen site.</p> <p>5.7.3 He proposed that the site be left vacant to see whether any other businesses wish to develop it for another use.</p> <p>5.7.4 The application will bring no extra amenities to the local residents as the proposed Aldi store will only be half a mile from the existing Lidl store at Weston Favell.</p> <p>5.7.5 He feels that the area is a major gateway into Northampton and by bringing another budget food store to the same area will create negative connotations to the town.</p> <p>5.8 Jonathan Neale spoke for the application as the applicant. The points he made are summarised as follows:</p> <p>5.8.1 He informed the Committee that he is the Property Director of Aldi Stores Ltd, and would like to mention that he and his team spent a lot of time and care to provide the best solution to the brown field site.</p> <p>5.8.2 The land was formally used by a car dealership, he believed that the proposed store would be the best solution, and provide amenities and highway safety to the area.</p> <p>5.8.3 A number of pre-application meetings have been held with the WNDC officers and a public exhibition was held in July 2009, to obtain comments from local occupiers.</p> <p>5.8.4 He stated that he was overwhelmed at the level of support received from the local occupiers, which appeared greater than the level of rejection.</p> <p>5.8.5 A design workshop was held in December 2009 with Councillors from NBC, in order to ensure the design was fully supported by the Council.</p> <p>5.8.6 He informed the Committee that comments made by</p>	
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	<p>Councillors or residents have been taken into account and amendments have been made to the design of the store, which included amending the layout to improve highway safety.</p> <p>5.8.7 He stated that they have been informed by comments made by residents that there was a strong demand for the store.</p> <p>5.9 DD asked Jonathan Neale if there was a possibility for a portion of money within the S106 to be set aside to contribute to soft landscaping for the care home.</p> <p>5.10 Jonathan Neale replied that he was surprised that it was the first time he had heard of the issue, but would be prepared to consider this.</p> <p>5.11 DD asked whether there would be sufficient lighting in the car park to help prevent antisocial behaviour, and if lighting is to be provided, then how would light nuisance be avoided.</p> <p>5.12 Jonathan Neale informed DD that they have had discussions with the potential neighbours of the site, and acoustic fencing will be erected.</p> <p>5.13 He stated that Aldi would provide a retractable bollard to the entrance of the car park, which will be used out of hours and would prevent any vehicles accessing the site, however he proposed that the lights to the site are to be turned off when not in use. He stated that in his experience, this has not encouraged antisocial behaviour. He welcomed alternative suggested solutions.</p> <p>5.14 PF asked Jonathan Neale if the proposed design of the application is a standard design for Aldi.</p> <p>5.15 Jonathan Neale responded that Aldi do not have a standard design, stores may look similar, but Aldi proposes a variety of different designs in keeping with the area.</p> <p>5.16 PF asked if the design was approved by WNDP planning</p>	
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	<p>officers.</p> <p>5.17 Jonathan Neale informed PF that it was.</p> <p>5.18 PF asked if the surrounding buildings were taken into account when designing the building.</p> <p>5.19 Jonathan Neale replied that they were taken into account, and the proposed design is the outcome of discussions with officers.</p> <p>5.20 NT asked Jonathan Neale what Aldi proposed to do with the surplus land around the building</p> <p>5.21 Jonathan Neale informed NT that they will look to erect secure transparent fencing, and wild seed will be planted in front of the fencing, to create an area which is visually acceptable.</p> <p>5.22 The Chair asked the Committee for their comments.</p> <p>5.23 JW stated that he was minded to approve the application, however he was disappointed in respect of the aesthetics of the building. He felt that it would have benefitted from a more contemporary feel.</p> <p>5.24 NT asked if there had been any communication with Legal and General into the impact of the scheme to the town centre.</p> <p>5.25 MB advised that Drivers Jonas had submitted an objection on behalf of Legal and General. AECOM, WNDC's consultants, advised that applying such conditions to floor space, division of the units and a comparison offer from a discount retail store, would have a negligible impact on the town centre. Aldi retail trade for the year would be £5.1million, which is a 10% drawback trade from the town centre.</p> <p>5.26 DD felt disappointed that the design was less convincing than the designs given to the proposed Aldi store in Towcester, however he felt it was a good use of a brown field site, but more attention to aesthetics would be</p>	
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	<p>needed.</p> <p>5.27 PF agreed with DD. She also felt that the aesthetics needed improvement and thought that it would not be beneficial to Northampton to have the proposed building design on a gateway to the town centre. She stated that she was not against the store in principle, but disliked the design. She suggested the possibility of the planning officers rethinking the design.</p> <p>5.28 BM also disliked the design, and felt concerned for the residents of St John's care home. He felt the site could have been utilised as residential use. He agreed with PF for the planning officers to rethink the design.</p> <p>5.29 The Chair asked JH to comment on the committee members dislike of the design of and the husbandry of the site.</p> <p>5.30 JH suggested a site visit for the Committee members to provide a steer on the renegotiation of the design.</p> <p>5.31 MB advised the Committee that NCC and WNDC held a design workshop in November 2009, to agree a design resolution, and they came to the same consensus. In January the applicant resubmitted the design and consultations were sent to 355 individual properties. On the 13th January 2010, NBC considered the scheme, where design was not an issue. MB felt that Aldi have reflected local characteristics to the design but Aldi must work within a business model.</p> <p>5.32 JW felt that the design will only be paying lip service to the local characteristics of the surrounding buildings. He suggested that just the finishing needed reviewing, not the actual design, which could be delegated to officers.</p> <p>5.33 JH requested Committee to clarify if they wanted to renegotiate height, width and depth or just the materials.</p> <p>5.34 PF replied that the complete design of the building should</p>	
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	<p>be re-considered</p> <p>5.35 JW commented that he felt that only the finishing materials needed to be addressed as a delegated matter, but he supported the idea of a site visit.</p> <p>5.36 PF requested for a deferral, so that the architects could look at the design again. She felt it was not good enough for Northampton.</p> <p>5.37 A vote was taken and the members collectively voted for the application to be deferred to enable a site visit.</p> <p>IT WAS RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the application be DEFERRED for a site visit to be undertaken.</p>	
	<p>8. Future meeting dates were agreed to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14th September 2010 • 5th October 2010 • 9th November 2010 • 7th December 2010 	
	<p>AOB</p> <p>There being no further business, the meeting closed at 18:10pm</p> <p>Amy Sales Committee Assistant</p> <p>Signed by the Chairman</p> <p>_____</p>	