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26 January 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

PLANNING COMMITTEE SUPPLEMENT

Please find attached supplementary papers for Planning Committee on **WEDNESDAY, 26TH JANUARY, 2022 at 6.00 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER**, District Council House, Lichfield.

Access to the Council Chamber is via the Members' Entrance.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine Tims'.

Christine Tims
Chief Operating Officer

SUPPLEMENT

4. Planning Applications

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SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

PLANNING COMMITTEE (26th January 2022)

OBSERVATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED SINCE COMPLETION OF REPORT

Page 7

20/01374/FULM -Refurbishment, extension and conversion of Westgate House (Grade II listed) to create 4 no apartments and 1 no townhouse, conversion and extension of existing outbuilding to create 1 no detached dwelling, conversion and extension of Westgate Cottage (Grade II listed) to provide boutique hotel (12 no guest suites) and spa and 6 no apartments erection of detached apartment building to provide 13 no apartments, erection of 3 no dwellings and detached garages, erection of garaging and 2 no apartments over, basement car parking, bridge over Leomansley Brook, hard and soft landscaping, access and associated works.

20/01375/LBC – Refurbishment, extension and conversion off Westgate House (Grade II listed) to create 4 no apartments and 1 no townhouse; conversion and extension of existing outbuilding (curtilage listed) to create 1 no detached dwelling; conversion and extension of Westgate Cottage (Grade II listed) to provide boutique hotel and spa and 6 no apartments and ancillary alterations to associated curtilage listed building works to boundary wall between Westgate House and Westgate Cottage (amended description).

Land and buildings at Angel Croft & Westgate, Beacon Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7AA

Additional Consultation Responses

Lichfield Civic Society – Continues to support the proposals. The Society observes that the proposal has raised strong feelings for and against the scheme. Those against principally on heritage grounds and those in favour on the grounds of various benefits arising. Whilst respecting the heritage objections are significant note its most unusual to have ‘so many neighbours of a major development supporting it.’ The principal objectors are heritage bodies including the Conservation Officer, who oppose development between Angel Croft and Westgate referring to historic open space between the buildings being important, which is disputed as development has occurred elsewhere on open space in Lichfield.

Positive comments have been received from officers in the District Council including the Economic Development Officer and Major Developments Project Manager. They refer to The Staffordshire Accommodation Study (2019) highlighting the lack of boutique hotels and the suitability of Lichfield for them and the welcome improvements to a dangerous road junction on Beacon Street and the new cycle and pedestrian link between Beacon Park and Beacon Street.

Whilst the Conservation lobby oppose the new link, those in charge of the Grade I Listed Buildings (Darwin House and the Cathedral) consider it will be beneficial and draw visitors and will remove an unattractive car park which is visually unappealing and will help increase footfall as Beacon Street becomes more visually attractive.

Society considers the objections exaggerate the degree of harm and underestimate the potential benefit. The Society notes many supporters feel the development will enhance the area.

Perceived benefits include – employment of local workers during the development and longer term unskilled and skilled jobs once up and running.; Local materials will be used; Boutique hotel will encourage more overnight stays thereby increasing tourist trade which is important for the local economy; Highway improvements will be beneficial to vehicular traffic and pedestrians. Lastly notes that Erasmus House and the Cathedral support the applications. (25/01/2022)

Additional Letters of Representation

Leomansley Residents Association – Fully supports the proposal as being in keeping with the area and due consideration given to the design of the development to ensure it is sympathetic to the existing area. Considers it of great benefit to the community in general, will enhance the area and become a considerable asset for Lichfield. (23/01/2022)

Dean & Executive Director of Lichfield Cathedral– Supports the application. Fully supports improved access to The Close without deferring from the views, vistas or character of the Cathedral, Close or Darwin House. There is considered not be an understanding of the importance of tourists to the Cathedral. There is no issue with the proposed density of the development nor the loss of the car park as studies show an overprovision of car parking in Lichfield and there is a desire to encourage pedestrians.

Destination Staffordshire report has confirmed that suitable sites should be identified in the city centre for conversion to boutique hotels. The Cathedral had commented on the City Centre Masterplan (January 2020) that the Friel proposal wasn't referenced and consider this would have provided an opportunity to better co-ordinate and partner with the developer. There was a concern that development would be steered to the other side of the City and exacerbate the Cathedral's falling number of visitors which was already occurring pre-covid.

Whilst the sensitive context of the site is rightly and properly highlighted it fails to consider the wider context around Lichfield. Proposal offers a mix of uses, much needed economic benefit in keeping with its surroundings. Urges Planning Committee to consider whether refusal is the right course of action. (21.1.22)

Neighbour Letters – 3 further letters of support have been received from neighbours commenting as follows:

- Attended initial developer meeting and they took notice of attendees views of the type of development that was preferred, traditional design.
- Recommendation is contradictory and refusal reasons vague.
- Proposal will provide sympathetically built family housing.
- Small boutique hotel will provide local employment.
- Supports the nature of buildings and residences it surrounds.
- Westgate Cottage extension will compliment the building and secure its future.
- Personally look forward to seeing the development become part of the community.
- Development will enhance a tired but important part of the City.
- Will be the best development produced in the City.
- Not everyone wants rabbit hutches/retirement homes to live in and the flats will be spacious and in keeping.
- Will benefit the area and tourism and will integrate over time.
- Is the only scheme to improve Lichfield's assets in recent years.

Amended Scheme Details

Following the publication of the main report, amended plans have been received which revise details in relation to the basement car park to increase its capacity to 60 car spaces. EV car charging points included within parking areas. The car parking spaces to the rear of the dwellings are reallocated. Drop off space are provided to the front of the hotel (on the proposed new street) and the coach house (garage block with flats over) is amended to include sliding doors to each garage space and an internal reconfiguration of the garage spaces internally.

Observations

The amendments submitted and additional representations received have been reviewed, but are not considered to alter the officers' recommendation to both the planning and listed building applications.

The public support of the proposals are duly noted, but is it considered that the currently proposed scheme is not acceptable for the reasons set out in the main report.

LIST OF SPEAKERS

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

26 January 2022

20/01374/FULM & 20/01375/LBC

Jamie Christie (<i>Beacon Street Area Residents Association</i>)	Supporter
Cllr Councillor Andy Smith	Ward Member
Will Brearley (<i>CT Planning</i>)	Applicant's Agent
Bill Friel (<i>Friel Homes</i>)	Applicant