

Open

Planning Committee

Agenda

6pm
Tuesday, 18th January 2022
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Planning Committee

Members of Committee:

Chairman: Councillor C Edginton-White

Vice-Chairman: Councillor C J Barnett

Councillor J Aston

Councillor S J Chambers

Councillor P Harrison

Councillor L J Jones

Councillor C Rogers

Councillor V Caulfield

Councillor A Coleman

Councillor M J Hart

Councillor F M Oborski MBE

Councillor L Whitehouse

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 Sian Burford, Assistant Committee Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732766 or email sian.burford@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct (“the Code”) requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members’ Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council’s constitution for full details.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)

DPI’s and ODI’s are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council’s Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

WEBCASTING NOTICE

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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, Solicitor to the Council, or Head of Strategic Growth 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 Head of Strategic Growth.
- 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, 18th January 2022

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 Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered. 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 14th December 2021.	7
5.	Applications to be Determined To consider the report of the Development Manager on planning and related applications to be determined.	10
6.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council 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”.	
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Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

8.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council 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

14TH DECEMBER 2021 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: C Edginton-White (Chairman), C J Barnett (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, G W Ballinger, S J Chambers, A Coleman, P Harrison, M J Hart, L J Jones, and F M Oborski MBE.

Observers:

Councillors: Councillor S Miah.

PL.33 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: V Caulfield, C Rogers and L Whitehouse.

PL.34 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor G W Ballinger was a substitute for Councillor V Caulfield.

PL.35 Declarations of Interests by Members

Councillor M J Hart declared an Other Disclosable Interest (ODI) in relation to application 21/0927/FUL. As the Worcestershire County Council Cabinet Member for Education he had spoken at a Strategic Vision Meeting about the application but came to this meeting with an open mind. Councillor Hart is able to rely on the dispensation given by the Ethics & Standards Committee to play a full part in the meeting, as his interest arises from membership of Worcestershire County Council.

PL.36 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 16th November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PL.37 Applications To Be Determined

The Committee considered those applications for determination (now incorporated in Development Management Schedule No. 597 attached).

Councillor G W Ballinger left the meeting at 6:12pm and returned at 6:14pm.

Decision: The applications now submitted be determined, in accordance with the decisions set out in Development Management Schedule No 597 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 6:38pm.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

14th December 2021 - Schedule 597 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 Development Manager, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster. However, a brief description can be seen in brackets alongside each standard condition, note or reason mentioned.

Councillor G W Ballinger left the meeting at 6:12pm and returned at 6:14pm.

Application Reference: 21/0927/FUL

Site Address: Land Formerly Sladen School, Hurcott Road, Kidderminster
Worcestershire

APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. A6
2. A11
3. B6
4. The recommendations in section 5 of the AIA and the details within the Tree Protection Plan are adhered too.
5. The retained Consulting Arborist makes regular visits to check on tree protection and be present when the perimeter fence and new walkways at the front of the site are being installed.
6. Additional tree planting to be undertaken
7. An establishment and 5 year management plan for the soft landscape to be provided.
8. Drainage strategy to be submitted, approved and implemented.
9. Conformity with Submitted Highways Details
10. Vehicular visibility splays improvements
11. Electric vehicle charging point
12. Accessible Parking Provision
13. Employment Travel Plan
14. Existing access closure
15. Access, turning and parking
16. Highway offsite works and site access
17. Submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan
18. Submission of a Health Impact Assessment
19. Traffic Regulation Order (waiting restrictions/school keep clear marking)
20. Contaminated land Tiered Investigation
21. Submission and implementation of a scheme for the disposal of surface and foul water
22. Details of all boundary treatments to be approved by the LPA.
23. Use of building limited to educational establishment only
24. Installation of defibrillator on site
25. Details of heating system to be submitted and approved by the LPA.
26. Ecological Mitigation

Application Reference: 21/0605/FUL

Site Address: 40 Claughton Street, Kidderminster, DY11 6PU

APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. Full with no reserved matters
2. Approved plans
3. Materials in accordance with submitted details
4. Removal of permitted development rights
5. Highways - Access
6. Highways – Extension of dropped kerb
7. Highways – Cycle Parking
8. Surface water Drainage
9. Permeable paving
10. Small landscaping plan to be submitted.
11. Landscape implementation
12. Ecology mitigation
13. Ecology compliance
14. Vehicle charging points
15. Scheme of for sustainable energy and/or power to be submitted.

Informatives

- A. Highways
- B. Highways

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TO REPORT OF PLANNING MANAGER

Planning Committee

Part A Applications

Ref:	Address of Site	Recommendation	Page No.
21/0389/OUT	Land Adjacent Keys Meadow New Road Far Forest Kidderminster Worcestershire	Delegated Approval	11
21/0783/RG3 & 21/0784/LBC	Former Worcester Cross Factory and Offices, Weaving Sheds & Worcester Cross Worcester Street Kidderminster Worcestershire	Approval	25

Part B Applications

Ref:	Address of Site	Recommendation	Page No.
21/1044/HOU & 21/1045/LBC	Arley Tower Frenchmans Street Arley Bewdley DY12 1XA	Approval	52

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**PLANNING COMMITTEE****18 January 2022****PART A**

Application	21/0389/OUT	Date	17.05.2021
Reference:		Received:	
Ord Sheet:	372920 274700	Expiry	12.07.2021
		Date:	
Case Officer	Helen Hawkes	Ward:	Bewdley And Rock

Proposal: Construction of 4 no. 2 Bed Bungalows (Outline with all matters reserved)

Site Address: Land Adjacent Keys Meadow, New Road, Far Forest, Kidderminster,
Worcestershire, ,

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Prince

Summary of Policy	CC1 CC2 CC7 CP01 CP02 CP03 CP11 CP12 CP14 DPL1 DPL2 DS01 DS04 NPPF PFSD1 UP5 UP6 UP7 Design Guidance SPD National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance
Recommendation	APPROVAL
Reason for referral to committee	Statutory Consultee Objects and Recommendation is for Approval

**DEFERRED FROM NOVEMBER 2021 COMMITTEE
FOR A FULL PRESENTATION**

1.0 History

No Planning History

2.0 Consultations and Representations

2.1 Rock Parish Council – The proposed land falls outside the recently amended emerging settlement boundary contained within the newly produced Wyre Forest DC Local Plan. The Land was never offered for consideration when drafting your soon to be announced New Local Plan. Should development on this land be approved it will put the whole of the surrounding fields under enormous pressure for potential development by hostile builders.

When Rock Council previously considered this application in June this year we pointed out that the existing sewerage pumping station located at Sugars Lane is at maximum

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capacity for the current Far Forest area. Regularly the upgraded pumping station floods into the lane and adjoining fields as it is at maximum capacity.

There are also existing issues with surface water drainage in the area which have been highlighted in the report from the North Worcestershire Water Management. Concerns were also raised about the loss of wildlife habitat and corridor.

Rock PC as considered your report for the last Planning Meeting and noted the reference to the Rock Parish Housing Needs Survey in this submission but would like to point out again that recent approved planning applications around the Parish have clearly already exceeded the needs of that survey for development of bungalows and dwellings as several windfall sites have pushed the approval numbers past 55 now with outline approval for an additional 21 at Long Bank.

In Rock PC opinion, since supplies of dwellings have far exceeded the needs identified in the emerging local plan, there is no requirement for further development in the area at this time

[Officer Comment – the 21 dwellings at Long Bank has not been determined. The applicant no longer wished to pursue this application]

- 2.2 Highway Authority – No objection subject to conditions. It is noted that the proposed development has been submitted as an Outline application with all matters reserved, nonetheless the principle of safe and suitable access for all users must be established at this stage.

The submitted site plans are taken to be indicative only and detailed drawings of the access layout to include connection to the priority road, internal road width, and pedestrian footway connectivity at the access, will be required to demonstrate compliance with policy for a Private Shared Drive in the Streetscape Design Guide.

Visibility splays must be in accordance with actual vehicle speeds on New Road and must be drawn to the nearside edge of the carriageway in both directions. It is noted that there is minimal highway verge across the site frontage and a substantial expanse of hedgerow will need to be set back to achieve the required visibility.

New Road can be heavily trafficked at school times however this is seen as temporary traffic and the on street parking which takes place at other times, serves to reduce vehicle speeds on an otherwise straight section of carriageway from the A4117 to the junction with Church Lane and Sugars Lane.

The junction between New Road and A4117 has also been assessed as adequate for an additional 5 dwellings and based on information available to the Highway Authority, there are no recorded Police incidents associated with this junction and the route on New Road.

- 2.3 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Noise Nuisance) - No adverse comments or objection to make in relation to noise. Should permission be granted, there may be some short-term disruption from noise/dust emissions during the construction phase, as such we have provided guidance for the applicant and their contractor to review.

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- 2.4 Housing Strategic Officer – Support application to meet housing need subject to being restricted to Local Needs Housing only.
- 2.5 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Contaminated Land) – No objection and it is advised that the site has been reviewed for any potential contamination issues; the historical OS maps indicated the development site has been occupied by open farmland/pastures and woodland. As such we do not anticipate any significant contamination issues.
- 2.6 Arboricultural Officer – No objection and advises that the design of this site is very encouraging as it shows the site can be developed in way that retains not only the recently protected trees on the site, but also the old fruit trees and hedgerows. My only concern is that the plot in the northern part of the site is a little tight up against the RPAs of the nearby trees. To allow for the construction scaffold and a better long term relationship between the trees and the proposed dwellinghouse, I feel the location of the house should be moved away by a couple of metres.
- 2.7 North Worcestershire Water Management – No Objection subject to condition as additional detailed drainage details are required. As identified in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, a low surface water flood risk has been identified for a small section of the site plus areas in the vicinity of the site. I note that flood risk and water log issues have also been mentioned in some of the consultation responses received from nearby residing members of the public. As the site is currently a green field, the development will increase the amount of surface water being generated on the site. This extra volume should be kept on site, in order to avoid increasing flood risk elsewhere. The information submitted with this application details that no expert advice has been sought yet regarding drainage and that ground investigations have not yet been undertaken either. I very much regret this as this means that we cannot be certain what drainage methods will be reasonably practicable for the site.

I acknowledge that the intention has been expressed to use infiltration SuDS (permeable pavements and swales in particular). I do unfortunately not share the optimism that drainage via infiltration will be possible (see below), nor that the layout is considered to have sufficient 'green space' in order to accommodate drainage requirements. It is not just the amount of green space that needs to be assessed, but also what other function this green space performs (not all uses are compatible with a drainage function; for instance trees and hedge rows generally aren't) and where this green space is located (it needs to work with the topography of the site to ensure drainage under gravity is possible).

The submitted design and access statement states that suitable infrastructure for storm water could be achieved on site through soakaways. I believe that it is possible that this site will not be suitable for infiltration drainage; according to this website: <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/index.cfm> the soils are generally classed as slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils. And as mentioned above, local water logging issues have been mentioned in consultation responses. On site permeability testing will therefore be necessary to confirm infiltration is indeed possible. If infiltration drainage is not possible then an alternative form of surface water disposal will need to be proposed, with appropriate attenuation to ensure that the development will not result in an increased amount of water leaving the site. We would

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want to understand, even as part of an outline application, how surface water will be disposed of given the before mentioned doubts about the site's suitability for infiltration drainage, the apparent absence of a ditch or watercourse in the vicinity that an attenuated discharge could be directed to and the sewer map not showing a surface water or combined sewer system nearby. A discharge of surface water to a foul sewer system is normally not permitted. If the applicant wanted to go down this route then in principle approval of STW for this discharge will need to be obtained and evidenced as part of the planning application. We require all development to use a 100 year return period plus an appropriate allowance for climate change, to ensure that the development does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Reviewing the sewer map I note that a foul sewer system is shown in New Road so understand the intention is that the properties to connect to this. Where possible a pumped connection should always be avoided. This new connection will require prior Severn Trent Water approval. I note they have been consulted on this application also.

I have reviewed the latest detailed site Plan (20-3670/03b) which now shows 5 individual soakaways as option A and a 150 m³ pond with an outfall to the storm/foul drain subject to full investigation and STW approval as option B. I am concerned that the surface area shown for the pond (roughly 6 by 12 meters at the widest/longest part) would result in unrealistic depth (over 2 meters on average) to accommodate the required volume. In detailed design stage more accurate calculations will need to be made, which might downgrade the amount of storage actually required. If the pond that can be incorporated is not voluminous enough, it might be possible to store some of the water on the plots (in rain gardens) or below ground elsewhere, for instance under the shared driveway.

2.8 Severn Trent Water - No objections to the proposals subject to the inclusion of the following condition:

- The development hereby permitted should not commence until drainage plans for the disposal of foul and surface water flows have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, and
- The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is first brought into use. This is to ensure that the development is provided with a satisfactory means of drainage as well as to prevent or to avoid exacerbating any flooding issues and to minimise the risk of pollution.

2.9 Conservation Officer – No objection and advises that there are no known heritage assets within the site itself although there is unknown potential for archaeology. WAAS should provide advice about the timing and scope of any desk based archaeological assessment to identify potential for archaeology and inform discussions about the scope and scale of any preservation and mitigation. The applicant has submitted a heritage statement in accord with the NPPF paragraph 189. The most significant undesignated heritage asset in close proximity to the site appears to be the Lea Memorial School WSM71780 built in 1903 which sits to the east of the site on the opposite side of New Road. It is, however, set well back from the road with a substantial and mature hedge screening it from most of the application site. The impact of development on the application site on the setting of the school is likely to be minimal, provided that the height of any development is restricted to two storeys

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maximum which appears to be the norm for development (both historic and modern) in the centre of Far Forest village.

- 2.10 WCC Archaeologist – No objection and advises that this field was formerly part of Lem Hill Farm, a small farmstead of probably 18th century origin. The historic mapping suggests that this field did not contain buildings associated with the farmstead to the west. It is likely that it was woodland prior to being assarted as part of the small holding. There is no evidence in the wider landscape of medieval or prehistoric settlement in this specific area and the site is set back from the Cleobury Road. It is considered that the potential for archaeological remains on this site is low.
- 2.11 Campaign to Protect Rural England – Objects to this application and the following comments have been submitted which relates to this application and application 21/0565/OUT (Orchard House).

The applicant for the first of the above applications (21-0565) says that your council does not have a 5-year housing land supply. I am not sure if this is correct, but if it is. It must be compared to an inflated target, not that required by the current NPPF. This was aggravated by your Council frontloading its housing trajectory and planning for more housing in the early years of the plan and less in the later ones.

Even if there is a lack of housing land, it does not mean that your plan should be thrown out of the window and ignored as if it did not exist. The adopted plan remains just such, but your council is required to grant planning consent sooner than it would have done. The question thus becomes which is the next category of land to become available for development. The answer to that must come from emerging planning policy.

In this case the local plan is subject to review. As you will well know the Inspector conducted an Examination of the Plan in February, at which the allocations for Rock Parish (including Far Forest) went uncontested. This is an allocated site near Far Forest, to which the Parish Council objected, but unfortunately it failed to attend the Examination to support its objection. Accordingly, the emerging planning policy is the Plan that was before the Examination. There are sites in Rock Parish allocated by the emerging plan to meet its needs. The sites proposed by the above applications are not among those allocated.

At the stage the development of the Local Plan Review has reached, it should clearly be given great weight, not no weight as applicant 21-0565 asserts (planning statement, para 14). It is of course true that the Inspector has yet to publish her report, but this application must be judged against emerging policy to the extent that the existing Core Strategy can be ignored as out of date.

Self-build houses are obviously houses. We would guess that they will end off as shared ownership housing, as a result of a developer providing the land and materials and the occupier labour to erect it. This shared ownership would no mean that it was classified as affordable housing, but whether market or affordable, it will still be housing, not some separate ejusdem generis category of development, omitted from the Plan.

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Core Strategy Policy DS04, requires new residential development to meet local housing needs “as established through Parish Surveys”. The applicant for 21-0565 alleges this through data on your council’s website. This seems to refer to an element of the housing list, but housing lists are a notoriously unreliable source for housing need, as applicants can apply for housing in a dozen locations, which is then recorded as a dozen applications when the need is for one house, not 12. No Parish Survey is cited. Indeed, we understand that there have been a very considerable number of windfall planning applications granted in Rock Parish in the last few years, all not to meet market demand, not local need.

Local Housing Need does not appear to be further defined in the existing Core Strategy, but it was compiled to implement the (now revoked) West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. This explicitly defined “local need” as excluding demand generated by migration from elsewhere. The applicant has thus failed to establish that a local housing need exists.

Both the above applications relate to sites outside the village envelope, though adjoining it. Policy DS04 requires sites to be “in” villages or hamlets. Their extents are carefully defined on the policies map by village envelopes. The policy could have said “in or adjoining” villages or hamlets, but it does not.

In the case of 21-0565 only, we would further suggest that it is unsatisfactory to make a new entrance on to an A-class road.

Neither of the above applications conforms to the Adopted Development Plan. Nor does the emerging Plan provide any support. They should therefore both be refused.

2.12 Natural England - No comments.

Neighbour Notification / Site Notice

15 Letters of objection received from nearby occupiers/residents stating the following concerns:

- Affect local ecology
- Close to adjoining properties
- Conflict with local plan
- Development too high
- General dislike of proposal
- Inadequate access
- Inadequate public transport provisions
- Increase danger of flooding
- Increase in traffic
- Increase of pollution
- Loss of privacy
- Noise nuisance
- Not enough info given on application
- Strain on existing community facilities
- Traffic or Highways
- Not enough info given on application

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- Information missing from plans
- Conflict with local plan
- Close to adjoining properties
- Overdevelopment
- Residential amenity
- Inadequate parking provision
- Loss of parking
- Out of keeping with the character of area
- Highway and pedestrian safety issue and will increase the risk of road accidents due to construction traffic and the site being located opposite a school, with many parents parking across driveways and letting their children run free when they come out of the school gates. Also, the road is a country lane with an awkward turn into it from the A4117 and is regularly used by tractors and trailers, by Brays heavy equipment hire and caravans being transported to and from the caravan site on Sugars Lane.
- Unacceptable for school children who will be trying to learn in a noisy environment during the construction phase.
- This small village has limited amenities and the village school is at full capacity and unable to sustain further influx of children generated from this development.
- There is a very limited bus service and not a reliable transport network which would result in more residential vehicles as a result of this development.
- The village is on area of Green Belt.
- The site is habitat for deer, monk jack, bees, amphibians, grass snakes, toads, newts, hedgehogs, badgers and numerous other wildlife and wild plants/flowers and is a link across and through the village from the SSSI sites and Wyre Forest as a whole.
- Development would not improve or enhance the village.
- October 2019 the Far Forest councilors objected to a development at Lem Hill Nurseries or Bill Whites nurseries. The main objection was that to build 20 houses on this land would open up the settlement boundary, which sets a strong precedent for further houses in adjacent fields across to New road and around Church Lane. The same argument can be made against development on the land next to Keys Meadow, New road, as this would open up the settlement boundary setting a precedent for development at Lem hill nurseries
- Fruit trees would be lost that have been there for many many years along with a very old hedgerow. We should be preserving them, planting more trees not discarding them.
- The land itself is OUTSIDE the parish council BOUNDARY and, therefore, in the Wyre Forest itself. This would mean that the planning would not be allowed
- This parcel of land is not infill and should not be classed as such, Any agreement to build would put distrust on any policy made by the Wyre Forest District Council, as it would demonstrate that any boundary as set means nothing and has no value.
- Erosion of green space.
- Detrimental and significant impact on humans and nature.
- No positive gain for the village.
- Increase drainage and surface water problems for neighbouring properties.
- Only a few people have been consulted on this application.
- The already strained sewage plant will not cope with added houses.

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5 further letters of objection received following amended plans to show a change in the housing type proposed, the comments received are generally repeated with the only additional comments being:

- No access would be allowed for emergency services at peak times as additional parking on New Road will make it more narrow and it will become impassable.
- Lack of parking for visitors and will result in displacement of school parking for parents and make them park in even more difficult and dangerous places along New Road.

3.0 Site Location and Description

3.1 The application site is triangular in shape and is approximately 0.41 hectares in area. It comprises an area of grassland with areas of dense scrub and a small building located in the northeast corner of the site. The site is bounded by hedgerows to the north, west and east and there is a wooden post and rail fence to the south, where the site shares a boundary with the residential property known as Key Meadows. The site includes a gated access to New Road that provides vehicular access. The site lies immediately adjacent to the defined settlement boundary for Far Forest and directly opposite is Far Forest Primary School. To the north, the site is adjoined by a dwellinghouse known as Lemcroft and to the west, the site adjoins open countryside.

4.0 Officer Comments

4.1 The main considerations are whether the proposed housing development is acceptable in principle taking into account location, land use of the site and the amount of development proposed, and whether the proposals would have an acceptable impact on landscape character, ecology, drainage and flood risk and upon highway safety. All other details relating to external appearance, scale, layout and landscaping would be considered at reserved matters stage.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

4.2 The site is located outside, though adjacent to, the defined settlement boundary of Far Forest village. Policies DS01 and SAL.DPL1 sets out the Council's strategic approach to development and seeks to direct new homes on previously developed land within the urban areas of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn before applying a sequential approach to other preferable sites. Policy SAL.DPL1 advises that when a site does not fall within one of the preferable locations for new residential development, it will not be supported unless it accords with Policy SAL.DPL2 for rural housing or SAL.UP1 for green belt developments. In this case, the relevant policy is SAL.DPL2 which permits new rural housing in exceptional circumstances providing the development safeguards the landscape character of the countryside.

4.3 The proposal would not replace an existing dwelling and is not subject to a community right to build order or is for a rural worker's dwelling. The only other exceptional circumstance which could apply is whether the development would be an acceptable exception site. However, I note that the Parish Council has recommended refusal of

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the application and has not identified the site as an exception site to meet an identified local housing need. Notwithstanding this, Policy SAL.DPL2 allows developments that would meet a local housing need that has been identified by a Housing Needs Survey for that area. The supporting text to Policy SAL.DPL2 also states that the "... housing development must seek to address the needs of the community by accommodating households who are existing residents or who have an existing family or employment connection to the area". Such housing is permitted within or adjacent to settlement boundaries.

- 4.4 The proposed development has been revised to provide 4 no. 2-bed bungalows which has been identified as being required within the Rock Parish Housing Needs Survey. The Housing Needs Survey was conducted in 2019 and identified a total of 35 additional properties of various tenures within the Rock Parish Council. In order to boost the Council's 5-year housing, supply a number of permissions have been given outside of the Green Belt in order to meet this aim, mainly within the Rock Parish boundaries. When permissions for new residential development are considered, excluding specific housing schemes such as conversions or Live Work Units, a total of 41 additional units have been provided. However, it should be noted that not all permissions given were designed to meet the specific housing need and none were secured for Local Needs Housing or provided at a discounted rate. When an analysis is taken of the need against the provision, there is still a requirement for 4 no. 2 bed bungalows. The applicant has been cognisant of the Parish Council's concerns and tailored their proposal specifically to meet this need.
- 4.5 The applicant has agreed to enter into a S106 Agreement to ensure the bungalows are only occupied by people with a local connection to people already living within the Parish or are in full employment within the Parish, and that they will be sold at least a 20% discount of the open market price to make them affordable. This restriction will remain in perpetuity. The proposal would therefore comply with Policy DS04 of the Adopted Core Strategy which requires that within the rural settlements and other rural hamlets, new residential development will be to meet local housing needs only.
- 4.6 It is accepted that this will as a whole provide an oversupply of residential development as a whole, but it will ensure that a specific need for 2 bed bungalows is provided within the Parish. The additional units will not undermine the housing strategy provision and will in fact provide help continue to provide a robust housing supply for the District.
- 4.7 As set out above Policy DPL2 is supportive of Local Needs Housing that is within of adjacent to the settlement boundary. The adopted policy is considered to have full weight as part of the consideration of this application. Policies 6F, 8C, 18B of the emerging plan also fully support windfall site to provide Local Needs Housing to support the existing communities. Although it is accepted that these policies seek to support such housing where it is within the settlement boundary. As an emerging policy, whilst some weight can be given, it cannot be given full weight until it is adopted. The Council has not yet received the Inspectors report and whilst the plan is in an advanced stage, all the policies listed have been the subject of the latest consultation and are being reviewed by the Inspector. As such I consider that some weight can be given to the policy as a direction of travel but the principal leading of development policy should be given to the adopted policy. As such the position of the

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application site directly adjacent to the settlement boundary is in accordance with Policy DP2 of the Adopted Local Plan.

- 4.8 Having taken account of the emerging policies in conjunction with the main thrust of adopted policy, I consider the principle of residential development is therefore considered to be acceptable and the development is considered to be an acceptable rural exception site. Paragraphs 78 and 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides additional weight, where there is any doubt, where Government Policy supports housing developments that reflect local needs where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Taking all these matters into account I consider that consideration of the location of the development is acceptable and in accordance with Development plan when taken as a whole.
- 4.9 The comments from the Parish Council in respect of other applications will be considered based on the prevailing policies framework at the time, any housing needs and other detailed matters. Consideration must be given to this specific application and the material considerations on this case.

CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

- 4.10 The site comprises open sloping arable land located immediately to the northwest of a dormer bungalow known as Key Meadows, which lies within the settlement boundary of Far Forest. The existing development on the east side of New Road and south of the development comprises a mix of two-storey and dormer bungalows set on deep building lines behind mature front gardens and front driveway, whilst the land to the northwest has a prevailing semi-rural character. There are several dwellings on the west side of New Road, to the north of the site, however, these are more scattered than the development to the northeast, east and north of the site. I note that the prevailing pattern of development in this settlement comprises a large cluster of dwellings on both sides of Cleobury Road and then a second cluster of dwellings around Oakleaf Rise which extends out to New Road. Although the site lies adjacent to the dwellinghouse at Key Meadows, it does have rural characteristics that makes a positive contribution to the setting of Far Forest. I also note that there are hedgerows and trees around the perimeter of the site, however, I acknowledge that views into the site can be obtained from the roadside fronting Key Meadows and from the adjoining fields to the northwest of the site.
- 4.11 The site falls within 'Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings' Landscape Type which is described as having an intimate, densely settled landscape characterised by strings of wayside cottages and associated smallholdings. The advice note states that the conservation of the character, particularly the scale and detailing, of the cottages and smallholdings, and their pattern and setting should be a priority, through the enforcement of appropriate planning controls and design guidance. The retention and appropriate management of open spaces within the settlement matrix should be encouraged, paying particular attention to the areas of permanent pasture and hedgerow structure. It recommends that the location and orientation of new buildings can create intimate areas, particularly if regular patterns are avoided.
- 4.12 The proposed development would result in loss of openness and visual connection with the open countryside and would amount to encroachment into the countryside, however, I consider that the harm to the rural character and landscape as a result of

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the proposed development would be appropriately mitigated by additional landscaping on the site, including new hedgerow planting and the location of the bungalows, set back behind private a driveway and dispersed within the site, would create intimate areas within the site and help to retain the rural characteristics of the area. Also, given the containment of the site by the existing hedgerows and trees, I am of the view that with additional landscaping to provide visual screening of the site, the urbanising effect of the proposals would be limited and that the proposed development would not result in any harm to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The development therefore accords with Policy 12 of the Adopted Core Strategy and Paragraph 174 of the Framework.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 4.13 The adjoining dwelling at Key Meadows is located approximately 8.6 metres from the application site. Key Meadows has first floor windows on its side elevation facing the application site and to protect the privacy of the residents of Key Meadows the proposed development has been amended to include a 2 metre landscaped buffer along the southern boundary adjacent to Key Meadows. The dwelling at Lemcroft is screened from the application site by tall mature trees and hedgerows and would not be overlooked by the development. The proposed development would therefore not result in any adverse impact on the neighbouring residents in terms of overlooking. The indicative site layout submitted with this application shows that the site can accommodate 5 bungalows with good spacing between the buildings and adequate rear gardens to ensure an acceptable living environment can be provided for the prospective occupiers of the proposed bungalows.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

- 4.14 The Highway Authority have made a robust assessment of the application and I have taken into account all the objections raised by local residents and the Parish Council about the congested nature of the road during school pick up and drop off times and that this development would result in additional traffic on the road and undermine highway safety. As part of the application, a new pedestrian refuse would be provided to ensure pedestrians can cross the road safely and the site would have adequate parking provision to ensure no overspill of parking on the road. The proposed vehicular access provides acceptable visibility for vehicles and pedestrians. The Highway Authority are satisfied that no adverse impacts would result in respect of highway safety. Therefore, based on the views of the Highway Authority, I am satisfied that the development would not result in a significant adverse impact on highway safety and that there are no reasons to warrant a refusal on highway grounds.

DRAINAGE AND FLOOD RISK

- 4.15 I note that concern has been raised by local residents about the existing infrastructure within Far Forest and that this development would put pressure on foul drainage. The proposed development shows that an attenuation pond would be provided within the open space to the front of the site and whilst the North Worcestershire Water Management Officer has raised concerns about whether this would have sufficient capacity to store all of the surface runoff and whether Severn Trent Water would approve outfall from the pond to the store/foul drain, they are not of the opinion that this application should be refused on flood risk or drainage grounds and are satisfied

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that a condition can be attached to require a detailed surface water drainage strategy to be agreed which would ensure suitable drainage of the site is achieved. I concur with this view and consider that it is necessary and reasonable to attach a condition to finalise the surface water drainage of the site prior to the commencement of development. I accept that residents and the Parish Council may have concerns in respect of these matters, but given the application is in outline form these matters can be finalised through detailed considerations at the Reserved Matters stage and through conditions. Consideration at this stage is based on the principle of development only.

BIODIVERSITY

- 4.16 The application has been submitted with an updated Preliminary Ecological Assessment by Focus which has identified that the site is within 1km of Wyre Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Ranters Bank Pastures (SSI) and Buckeridge Meadows (SSSI). A number of local wildlife sites have also been identified within close proximity of the site. The Assessment advises that given the relatively small scale nature of the proposed development footprint and its separation from designated sites within the local area, it is considered that the provided standard construction procedures are followed during the works the proposed development is unlikely to impact on the functionality or integrity of these designated sites, or affect their conservation status. I consider that subject to further ecological surveys, mitigation and enhancement measures as recommended in the Assessment that there are no biodiversity reasons why a suitable layout for 4 properties cannot be accommodated on this site in principle and that further considerations will be made when the reserved matters details are submitted for landscaping and layout to ensure the development delivers net biodiversity gains on this site.

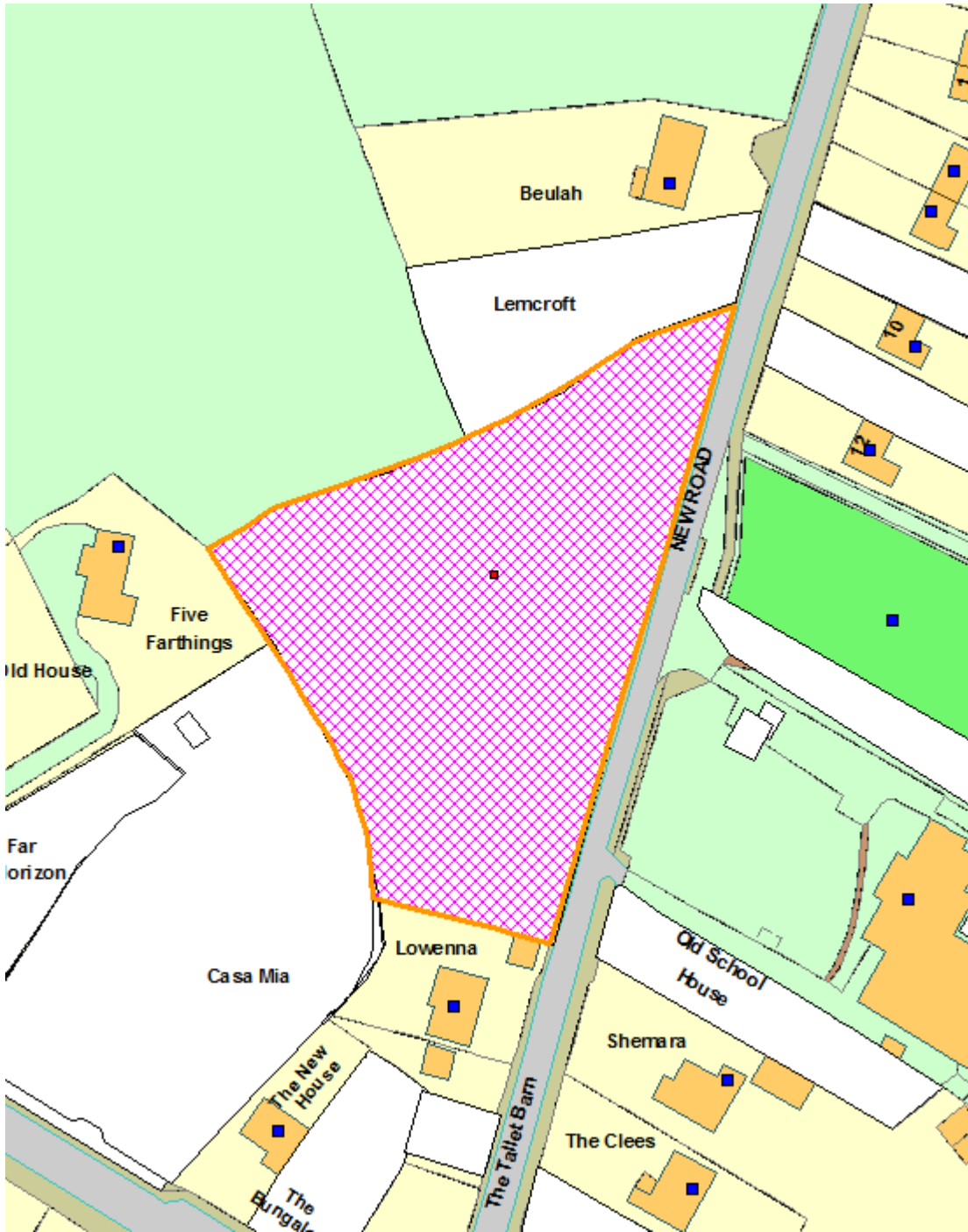
5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

- 5.1 The applicant has agreed to enter into a S106 agreement to ensure the proposed bungalows are occupied and only sold to people with a local connection and at a discounted price. This would ensure there is a mechanism in place to ensure that the proposed bungalows would meet a local housing need in the Parish or subsequently within the District. The proposed housing type meets a local housing need as set out in the Parish Council's Housing Needs Survey and I am satisfied that the application site is well located in relation to the existing settlement and that the urbanising effect of the development would only result in moderate harm to the open countryside, any harm would be appropriately mitigated by new planting to help reduce the visual impact on the side landscape and from public viewpoints. The proposal would therefore make a positive contribution towards providing housing within this part of Rock Parish to help meet an identified local housing need. The proposals would also result in economic benefits from spending from the occupants of the bungalows and construction jobs and expenditure. The proposals would also deliver ecological enhancements through new bat and bird boxes and other wildlife habitat provisions. Overall, I consider that the development would provide a sustainable development and would accord with the Development Plan.

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5.2 I therefore recommend **delegated APPROVAL** subject to the signing of a S.106 agreement to secure Local Needs Housing and the following conditions;

1. A1 (Standard Outline Time)
2. A2 (Standard Outline – Reserved Matters)
3. A3 (Submission of Reserved Matters)
4. Access & Visibility Splays
5. Parking for vehicles and cycles
6. Surface Water Drainage Strategy
7. Detailed Foul and Surface Water scheme
8. Tree Protection
9. Hedgerow Protection
10. Additional Ecological Surveys
11. Lighting Management Plan and Details of Lighting
12. Ecological Mitigations and Enhancement
13. Removal of PD rights for domestic extensions
14. Electric Vehicle Charging Points
15. Details of Sustainable Energy Equipment



Economic Prosperity and Place Directorate

Land Adjacent Keys Meadow New Road Far Forest Kidderminster Worcestershire

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PART A

Application Reference: 21/0783/RG3 & 21/0784/LBC
Ord Sheet: 383404 276426

Date Received: 11.08.2021
Expiry Date: 10.11.2021

Case Officer: Paul Round

Ward: Blakebrook and Habberley South

Proposal: Redevelopment of site, including restoration of weaving shed (with part demolition of listed element), refurbishment and change of use of existing building to create a three-storey office building and multi-purpose community facilities / creative hub and bar (Use Classes E, F.1, F.2 & Sui Generis), together with landscaping and external works

Site Address: Former Worcester Cross Factory And Offices, Weaving Sheds & Worcester Cross , Worcester Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire

Applicant: Wyre Forest District Council

Summary of Policy	DS01, DS03, DS04, CP01, CP02, CP03, CP04, CP05, CP07, CP11, CP12, CP13, CP14 (AWFCS) DPL1, CC1, CC2, CC6, CC7, UP1, UP4, UP5, UP7, UP9 (SAAPLP) PFDS1, DPL2, GPB2, GPB3, GPB5, GPB7, CC1, CC2, CC3, UP1, UP2, EG5 (KCAAP) 6B, 6E, 7A, 8A, 8B, 9, 11A, 11C, 11D, 14, 15A, 15B, 15C, 15D, 16A, 16C, 18A, 20B, 20C, 24B, 25, 27A, 27C, 33.16 (EWFLP) Design Guidance SPD National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance National Design Guide
Recommendation	APPROVAL
Reason for Referral to Committee	'Major' Planning Application The Applicant is Wyre Forest District Council

1.0 Planning History

1.1 None of relevance

2.0 Consultation and Representations

2.1 Kidderminster Town Council - No Objection

2.2 Highway Authority – The Highway Authority has undertaken a robust assessment of the planning application. Based on the analysis of the information submitted, the Highway Authority concludes that there are no justifiable grounds on which an objection could be maintained and has no objection subject to conditions and a financial obligation.

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Access

There are currently two vehicular accesses to the building fronting Worcester Street, with one located at the western extent and another located at the eastern extent of the building frontage. In addition, there are three pedestrian access points, the middle of which forms a double width access and the remaining two, located either side, are single width.

Amendments to the pedestrian access arrangements along the site frontage are proposed to improve access to the buildings. A new pedestrian access is to be formed at the western end of the site frontage, to serve the extended office building but would be formed to the rear of the existing public footway, as steps are to be provided. The eastern vehicular access will operate more as a pedestrian access. The area of hardstanding to the east of the site currently provides access to a vehicle access and a pedestrian access along the eastern boundary of the site building. It is proposed to stop up the existing vehicle access but provide a new vehicle access along the eastern boundary, towards its northern extent, as well as an additional pedestrian access towards the southern extent of the building.

The existing off-street parking area that currently provides space for up to nine cars to park would be used for loading and unloading instead of car parking. It is the intention of the Applicant to operate the site as a car-free development.

Sustainable Transport

The Manual for Streets (MS) states that 'walkable neighbourhoods' have a range of facilities within 800m. Guidance on the preferred maximum walking distances to amenities is also given in the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation's (CIHT) Planning for Walking (2015). This guidance suggests that for journeys of up to 1 mile (up to 1.6 kilometres) the majority of people will walk (79%), while the proportion of people walking decreases beyond the 1-mile threshold (26% between 1-2 miles).

The TA notes a person's willingness to walk is dependent on many factors including safety, road congestion, weather, gradients, parking, health, direction of route and journey purpose. Research reviewing walking distances considers the National Travel Survey data for 2010-2012 (How far do people walk? WYG Research Paper, 2015) which suggests that walking should be considered suitable for distances up to 1.95 kilometres.

The site is situated within a well-established urban area, with good provision for active travel (walking and cycling), with a range of cycle infrastructure measures already in place, as well as a good pedestrian environment provided. Pedestrian infrastructure includes regular street lighting columns, appropriate pavement widths and dropped kerbs at suitable controlled and uncontrolled crossing points which are located along key desire lines. The TA also notes that Worcester Street and the majority of the main walking routes in the town centre (to the north-west of the town centre) have recently been improved, creating an excellent environment for trips to be made by foot to/from the site.

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The TA advises that there are a range of local amenities located within walking distance of the site that would be available to future occupiers / users of the proposed development. These include a range of high street retail facilities located to the west, within Kidderminster's town centre. Table 4.1 of the TA shows that regular day-to-day amenities are within five-minute walking distances. In addition, bus stops are located within a one-minute walk of the site, the bus station within six minutes and Kidderminster railway station within seven minutes.

The site is located within the middle of a designated Cycleway, which extends along The Ring way and Comberton Hill to the east of the site and along Worcester Street to the north-west. National cycleway (NRN 54) runs through Kidderminster, to the west of the site, extending in a north-south orientation and follows the River Stour. A local cycleway (numbered 49) also extends from NRN 54, through Brinton Park and continues further south-west to connect with NRN 45. The Highway Authority consider the site to have good sustainable provision, in regard to walking and cycling.

The TA notes that a significant number of bus services can be accessed within convenient walking distances of the site. Typically, future site users travelling by bus would be able to use the Oxford Street bus stops located approximately 50m walking distance from the site, or the bus stop on Prospect Hill, which is located approximately 110m to the west of the site. However, it is noted that there are also a significant number of additional bus stops in and around the town centre within acceptable walking distances of the site. The site benefits from being located within a short walking distance of Kidderminster Railway Station, which is located approximately 570m to the east of the site. The station is served by a number of rail services operated by West Midlands Trains. Train services operating to and from Torrington and Whitlock's End to the east, Stratford Upon Avon to the south-east, and Worcester Foregate Street to the south can be accessed from the station. Intermediary stops such as Birmingham Moor Street provide access to the wider rail network including Chiltern Railway services to London (via Marylebone Station), as well as Smethwick Galton Bridge for West Midland Trains to Liverpool Lime Street. It is noted that services run into the later half of the evening on weekdays.

The Highway Authority consider the site to be well served by public transport Monday to Saturday, with one Sunday service. It is noted that the Oxford Street and Prospect Hill bus stop services tend to stop running early in the evening. Whilst this is unlikely to impact on the majority of the proposed office workers, it will affect travel mode choice for people attending evening events at the site. However, a number of limited alternative services are available and evening rail travel is an option.

Traffic Generation

Trip generation, by all modes of travel, has been estimated throughout a typical weekday (when the proposed office space would be operational) and Saturday (when a large performance or event would likely take place). The trip rates and modal split percentages have been based upon available data (including survey data contained within the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) database), taking into

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account the characteristics of the site such as its location, public transport provision and parking availability. The proposed development would incorporate approximately 1,720m² of office floor space. The TRICS category '02-Emploment A - Office' has been used to consider suitable trip rates. This predicts that the proposed office space would generate approximately 60 two-way person trips per hour during the morning and evening peak hours.

The 2011 Census 'Method of Travel to Work' data for daytime populations can be accessed via the Nomos website. This data provides an indication for the main mode of travel used by people working within a specified area. The application site falls within the workplace middle layer super output area referenced 'E02006770: Wyre Forest 004'. The data demonstrates that the majority of people that work in the area surrounding the application site travel to and from their place of work by car (66% as driver, with 7% as car passenger) but also that around a quarter of people travel to and from work by sustainable / non-car transport modes.

Using the 2011 Census journey to work data, it is estimated that the proposed office space would generate approximately 36 two-way car trips and 18 public transport, walking and cycling trips during the morning and evening peak hours. The Highway Authority consider these values to robust, given the size of the office development and its location within a town centre.

Trip generation associated with the proposed flexible performance/events space has been derived using first principles. The mode shares of people arriving and departing the performance venue will depend on when the performances or events take place, with the larger events and some medium sized events likely to take place in the evenings and the smaller events likely to take place during the day.

It is anticipated that the performance venue would host around 20 large events per year, with a maximum capacity of 320 people and up to two medium sized events per week for up to 210 people. These events are likely to take place in the evenings and would, therefore, generate a negligible number of trips during the morning peak hour. On the basis that there are limited bus services operating after 18:00 then a significant proportion of people would travel together by car and taxi.

The TA suggests that only a small proportion of inbound trips would occur during the evening commuter period and, therefore, the effects of the development during peak hours would be negligible. The Highway Authority would question this assumption, as it will depend on the time of the event, such that there could be a number of car trips during the weekday PM peak period. However, it is agreed that some trips to the performance venue would be linked with trips to the town centre, and that a proportion of taxi trips would be made using taxis that are already on the local road network / passing through the town centre or operating on the surrounding roads.

It is anticipated that the (more regular) smaller performance events would take place during the daytime. Given that there are a significant number of bus/rail services during the day modal choice is considered to be good. Furthermore, with an average capacity of 30 people this would likely generate circa 15 inbound car- borne trips and

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15 outbound car-borne trips, of which a negligible proportion would occur during the morning and evening commuter peak hours. In addition, it is anticipated that the development will generate up to 10 delivery and servicing movements per day (5 inbound and 5 outbound).

The Highway Authority note that the traffic impact analysis provided within the TA focuses on the office element during the weekday AM and PM peak periods. However, reference is made to the events which suggests that these would have a negligible impact on the AM peak period and little impact on the PM peak period.

Due to existing restrictions and no-off street parking it is considered that the majority of private vehicles are unlikely to access Worcester Street, with yellow lines provided along the majority of its length and loading/unloading restrictions applying throughout the day. Any on- street parking is limited to a maximum of 30 minutes between 08:00 - 18:30, seven days a week. It is considered that vehicular traffic associated with the development will primarily be limited to drop off/pick up, taxis, servicing/delivery vehicles and Blue Badge holders.

Taking the above into account, the Highway Authority is of the opinion that the development is unlikely to generate traffic levels that would demonstrate a significant and potentially detrimental impact on the surrounding highway network, which would be considered grounds for refusal or requiring appropriate mitigation measures.

Car-free Development

It is understood that the development will operate as 'car free', with no off-street parking provided. To offset this, the development will provide 108 cycle parking spaces, with 64 provided within the site and the remaining 44 located within Coronation Gardens (which will also be available to the public). The existing on-street parking bays will remain which can be used by Blue Badge holders. The Highway Authority has no objection to the principle of the development, subject to a satisfactory layout being provided and the car-free element being justified and meeting the requirements of the WCC Streetscape Design Guide (see further comments below). Given the location of the site, being within Kidderminster town centre and the provision of a range of alternative modes of travel within walking distance, it is considered to be a suitable site for operating as 'car-free'.

Parking

The development will provide no off-street car parking spaces as part of the proposals. The TA states that employees and visitors will be encouraged to travel to the site by non-car modes via a Framework Travel Plan. The TA concludes that, given the wide range of bus and rail services that operate within close proximity to the site and the site's town centre location, it is considered that there is significant scope for employees and visitors to travel to/from the site by non- car modes, either as a single purpose trip or a combined trip with the town centre and other nearby uses.

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The TA acknowledges that the development will generate some car trips. Reference is made to a parking study which was undertaken in May 2018, on behalf of WFDC, in order to understand the existing parking provision within the vicinity of the development. The 'Strategic Review of Public Parking in Kidderminster' report, prepared by WYG (August 2018), assessed 18 town centre car parks. Of the 18 town centre car parks that were surveyed in May 2018, eight are within a 6-minute walk time of the application site, with three being within a 2-minute walk. Each of the eight car parks are operated by WFDC and offer short and long stay parking opportunities. Based on the results of the May 2018 parking survey, the maximum parking utilisation across the eight car parks was recorded to be 57% between 11:00 and 12:00 noon on a weekday. During the busiest period at the weekend, the parking utilisation was recorded to be 39% (at around 12:00 noon to 13:00). The parking study indicates that there is significant spare capacity in the car parks located near to the site with approximately 612 parking spaces available during peak times on a weekday and approximately 934 parking spaces available during peak times at the weekend.

Following pre-application discussions with the Highways Authority with regard to the car-free proposal, a further parking survey was carried out by an independent specialist survey company at the end of June 2021. The parking survey covered the five nearest car parks to the site and all existing on-street parking bays located within a 300m walking distance of the site. The surveys were carried out in order to understand if parking demand has changed significantly since the previous 2018 parking surveys were undertaken and to cover the missing late afternoon/evening periods when parts of the site would be operational.

The results of the June 2021 parking survey suggest that the parking occupancies are not significantly different to those recorded at the same time and day of the week in 2018. It is also clear that there is significant spare capacity within the car parks and on-street parking bays that are within close proximity to the site. The results show that there are in excess of 400 parking spaces available within walking distance of the site at peak times, with parking occupancies reducing in the afternoon and evening. It is also noted that at around 6pm there are approximately 650 parking spaces available within walking distance of the site.

The TA advises that 108 cycle parking spaces are to be provided. Drawing No. 1581-KCH-BFF-ZZ-00-DR-A-0251/PL1 'Proposed Ground Floor Plan' shows the locations of the cycle parking in three general locations

16 cycle racks (32 spaces) are to be provided within the east courtyard, which will also function as a beer garden, loading/unloading area and a vehicular access to the internal courtyard area; 22 cycle racks (44 spaces) are to be provided within Coronation Gardens and accessible from Worcester Street; and Two groups of double cycle storage are to be provided within the internal courtyard, totalling 32 spaces. The Highway Authority request that all on-site cycle provision is covered and secure. This will form a condition as part of any successful planning consent.

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Refuse and Servicing

The Highway Authority are pleased to see that the applicant has agreed to implement a Delivery and Servicing Management Plan (DSMP) as part of the development. It is understood that all delivery and servicing activities (including waste management) would be carried out from the dedicated loading/unloading area located along the south-east facing elevation of the building. This space would be accessed via the modified turning area which has been designed to accommodate the turning requirements of the largest vehicles anticipated to access the site.

The Highway Authority has no objection to the delivery and servicing proposals. However, we raise a concern with the potential conflict between delivery/servicing vehicles and customers sitting at the beer garden tables or users of the cycle parking. The Highway Authority request that this is addressed within the DSMP which will form a condition as part of any successful planning consent.

Worcester Street Modifications

Initial proposals, put forward as part of pre-application discussions, involved alterations to Worcester Street to restrict vehicular access on Highway sections along the site frontage. The Highway Authority note that these proposals no longer form part of the application. Instead, no alterations to Worcester Street are proposed, aside from some minor modifications to the turning area at the south-eastern end of the road, to accommodate the turning requirements of delivery and servicing vehicles. The Highway Authority has no objection to the proposed access arrangements. Alterations to the existing turning area at the south-eastern end of Worcester Street will require the Applicant to enter into a suitable S278 Agreement with WCC, which will form a condition as part of any successful planning consent.

As the development is to operate as 'car free', it is considered appropriate to encourage employees and visitors to walk to/from the site, thereby reducing the number of possible car trips. Whilst the Highway Authority agree that the site is well served with good pedestrian/cycle infrastructure, it is understood that the Crime Prevention Team is of the opinion that the existing pedestrian/cycle subway, to the south east of the site, is unattractive and should be upgraded. Given that the development is likely to generate increased footfall/cycle trips in this area, a financial contribution of £20,000 is requested towards these proposed improvements. This will form a planning obligation as part of any successful planning consent.

Travel Plan

A Framework Travel Plan (FTP) has been produced and submitted as part of the planning application. A copy of the FTP is included in Appendix H of the TA. The initiatives and measures that form part of the FTP are a mixture of 'hard' and 'soft' measures. The 'hard' measures include the provision of on-site facilities such as safe and secure cycle parking. The 'soft' measures include initiatives such as Travel Information Packs, identifying cycle training courses, and providing information on public transport services, walking and cycling routes.

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The Highway Authority welcome the draft FTP. It is requested that the finalised Travel Plan is uploaded onto Mode shift STARS (www.modeshiftstars.org) where the Applicant will first need to register. The Applicant should achieve green level before occupation and bronze within one year of occupation. The requirements for each level are set out in the Travel Plan guidance documentation which can be downloaded from the WCC website or obtained from the WCC Travel Plan Officer. Some of the initiatives should be aimed at promoting the sustainable travel options to the site to the various users e.g. on the website and through information in the foyer.

The Travel Plan should also include the production of a Travel Information Pack, approved by WCC. A copy of this information pack should be provided to all staff as part of their induction. These requirements will form a condition as part of any successful planning consent.

Construction

As the development will involve partial demolition of an existing building, new building work and the possible connection of new services that will impact on the existing public highway, a Construction Environmental Management Plan, setting out the proposed hours of operation, routing, access proposals, materials storage and site details is required and will form a condition as part of any successful planning consent.

- 2.3 Conservation Officer – No Objections. This is a complex application affecting two designated heritage assets, both listed buildings, and some undesignated heritage assets attached to the Worcester Cross Factory. The applicant has produced a comprehensive set of supporting information which clearly and convincingly explains the rationale for the projected works primarily via a heritage statement, but also an archaeological desk-based assessment, a Design and Access Statement and a Planning Statement. Those documents when read together with the "as existing" and "as proposed" drawings explain the extent to which changes are proposed and the impact of those changes on the built fabric and its significance. The Design and Access Statement should be the starting point for getting to grips with the scheme and what is being proposed. It summarises the history of the site, describes the vision for the project and the approach taken by the designers to re-purposing the building.

Worcester Cross Factory

The former Worcester Cross Factory was added to the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) on 23rd July 2018 following an application for a certificate of immunity from listing made by the District Council. That process enabled Historic England to review the significance of the building and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State regarding any special architectural and historic interest it possesses, with the result that the building was listed Grade II. The building comprises (briefly): the offices fronting Worcester Street designed by JG Bland for Willis Carpet Manufacturer 1878-9; Weaving Sheds (probably post-1883) built for Woodward Grosvenor; The Showroom (post-1883) built for Woodward Grosvenor; Later extensions to Bland's original offices; C20 façade to Worcester Street and ramped access; boiler house; C20 extensions (various).

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The Heritage Statement describes the various elements of the building and assesses their significance via evidential, historical, aesthetic and social & communal values. It also provides a comprehensive review of the history of the site, why the buildings were built and who they were used by, chronicling the various uses up until the last occupants moved out. Although the building was listed recently and the NHLE entry is extremely detailed compared to most entries, not every part of the building has equal significance. The heritage statement has employed a traffic light system to identify those areas which have high, medium, low or neutral significance values, and has done this for each floor level. It has also identified those areas which are detrimental to the significance of the listed building.

The Design and Access Statement at page 5 sets out the rationale taken arising from the assessment of significance undertaken within the Heritage Statement:

The existing buildings have been studied and assessed both for re- use and for architectural significance. The following decisions regarding the overall strategy regarding existing buildings were made:

- The original listed buildings fronting onto Worcester Street to be retained and restored.
- The later single storey addition on the North West side is to be demolished to make space for a new three-storey office wing. (NWO)
- The Eastern section of the building is in a dilapidated state and will be replaced with a smaller new build. (LINK)
- A later addition (c.1980's) on Worcester Street will be retained and converted as ancillary space for the 1st floor venue and
- bar. (ANNEXE)
- Additions to the carpet factory associated with the holding cells for the Magistrates Court will be removed, and that area of the Weaving Sheds will be restored.
- Small sections of the Weaving Sheds are proposed to be removed to allow for the new additions i.e. a new landscape strip along the rear of the sheds to the retaining wall at the rear. This will bring fresh air flow into the building and allow access for maintenance to the roofs

The demolitions are highlighted within the Design and Access Statement at page 11 and are comprehensively detailed within the project drawings. The impacts of the proposals (works to the listed building) are analysed in more detail in section 6 of the Heritage Statement which divides the building by level into a series of discrete areas. I generally have no objections to the proposals however I provide more detailed comments on selected elements of the scheme below where these have medium or high impacts:

Basements (HS pages 41-42) Most of the works are deemed to impact on fabric dating from 1878-9 of medium significance, however the impacts are low or neutral. Medium impacts include the insertion of a new lift and the provision of new grilles to the plant room. I suggest that these are justified in the context of the impact on the building as a whole.

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Ground Floor (HS pages 43-46) New Office - 1. removal of rear of the weaving shed roof structure as shown on drawings demolition elevations 01, 05 and 11 and demolition sections EE and FF (as well as other drawings). This is justified by its extremely poor condition and later construction date. Recording is an appropriate mitigation for its loss.

Street Block - 3. Provision of new lift - the public benefits of provision of access for all outweigh any less than substantial harm to the existing structure of the building.

Street Block - 11. Alterations to staircase necessitated by vandalism and a new handrail to new design is considered to be appropriate here.

Weaving Sheds - 1,2,3. The proposed reduction in size of the roofed area is to permit access to the rear of the building for future maintenance and to create a light well. There are clear benefits from this approach which if not undertaken will greatly complicate future maintenance to the point where it may not be carried out.

Street Block - 1. Side Wing -1. Re-covering roof using salvaged and new materials will clearly impact on the appearance of the building but will secure a water-tight structure without which the building cannot function.

Weaving Sheds - 3. Roof and structure cut back 5 metres allows future maintenance of weaving shed roof - the benefits of this outweigh the loss of some post 1883 fabric.

Weaving Sheds - 3. Roof removed one bay from east and west to create access to maintain street block and to create a light well. Public benefits outweigh the less than substantial harm to the listed building.

I agree with the conclusion of the heritage statement that:

"The proposed works to Former Worcester Cross Factory and Offices and weaving sheds, will bring the buildings back into use while implementing a sustainable approach to conservation:

- Where possible, existing materials will be reused. This approach will be implemented when replacing damaged bricks and when salvaging existing clay roof tiles where possible.
- The proposed works will improve the thermal performance of the existing building.

They include retrofitting insulation within the existing roofs and generally improving the performance of the existing fabric by carrying out needed repair to existing timber windows and doors. The clay roof tiles will be retained where possible and replaced with like-for-like material as necessary."

Insofar as any less than substantial harm caused by the removal of some less significant elements of the building which are exhibiting decay (and in some cases are beyond repair) I consider that these are outweighed by the benefits of bringing the remainder of the building into full repair and beneficial use, and without which the

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future of the building would be uncertain. The works to the listed building appear to me overall to comply with WFDC Policy SAL.UP6

Worcester Cross

This is a separate listed building and the works are deemed high impact but will secure the repair and restoration of this significant monument within the Townscape.

- 2.4 Arboricultural Officer - I have no objections to the proposals within this application as there are no high amenity arboricultural features impacted. I'm also satisfied with the proposed landscaping masterplan which includes a number of new trees. My only concern is that suitable soil volume is allowed for all the new trees being planted, so I'd like to see the proposed tree pit design condition as part of an approval given.
- 2.5 Countryside and Technical Services Manager - No Objections. We have an appropriate ecological study that sets out recommendations, mitigation and enhancement measures highlighted in chapter 7. These can be conditioned to ensure implementation. Adequate surveys have been undertaken to establish the mitigation levels for bats.
- 2.6 North Worcestershire Water Management - No Objections. To my knowledge this site is not at risk of flooding from any source. I note that the development includes some aesthetically pleasing, ornamental water features such as new surface water rill, cascade and mirror pond proposed adjacent to the restored fountain at Worcester Cross. These features are very much welcomed.

The submitted planning statement details in paragraph 7.4 that the proposed development constitutes a sustainable development within the terms of the NPPF by meeting the challenge of climate change by reducing surface water run-off rates through sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). However, the submitted Drainage and SuDS strategy (Appendix F, Aksward, June 2021) details that no changes are proposed at all to the existing foul and surface water drainage systems that serve the property. I appreciate that the proposal is for conversion of the existing building and that it may therefore be unreasonable to expect this development to fully incorporate SuDS for the disposal of rainwater as per the Council's policy. However, given the aspiration detailed in the planning statement and the fact that the development seems to include landscaping also, I would have hoped and expected that the opportunities available within the wider development site would be utilised.

I note that the proposed development includes a number of new paved areas, including resin in pedestrianised area of Worcester Street and the garden areas and also the block paved area in the Brewery Yard. Both resin and block paved areas can be constructed in a permeable or impermeable way, depending on the actual products used and the substrate used below the top layer. I would welcome confirmation that these new areas will be paved permeably. Depending on the existing surface this may actually provide a betterment from a surface water runoff point of view.

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The application form details that foul water will be discharged to the combined sewer, as per the existing situation.

I conclude that the development in its current form does not include any drainage implications and that therefore it is unlikely that the development would result in an increased flood risk off the site.

2.7 Worcestershire County Council (Archive and Archaeology Services) - No objections subject to conditions.

The development site lies within the town of Kidderminster. Worcester Street was a primary route into the medieval town, alongside which a planned medieval suburb was developed. Cartographic sources indicate that the site was previously occupied by defined tenements, likely developed from medieval burgage plots, until the mid-19th century. From the mid-19th century, the north-eastern extent of the site was occupied by the former Worcester Cross Factory and Offices and weaving sheds. The south-western section of the site was built over with large storage buildings used as stabling and warehouses for the London and North Western Railway. These buildings remained until the 1950s when they were demolished to make way for the Coronation Gardens. The factory and offices are now designated as a Listed Building (NHLE 1457827), as is the Worcester Cross Fountain (NHLE 1348611) in the south east of the site.

Comments are restricted to the potential below-ground archaeological deposits and the need to record above and below-ground alterations that impact archaeological remains/structures. I am not commenting on the impact to the designated structures and their settings. The application is accompanied by an archaeological desk-based assessment and a heritage statement, which follow pre-application discussions. As detailed in these documents, the site contains upstanding heritage assets, designated and undesignated, that will be altered or removed to facilitate the development. There is also the potential for below ground archaeological remains from the medieval period onwards. These remains are likely to be truncated by later development, but islands of survival are expected.

The application site is judged to impact heritage assets of archaeological interest that would be significantly altered or lost through the development, both above and below-ground. The positive benefits of bringing the designated buildings back into use outweigh the harm, which can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. On this basis, should the LPA be minded to grant planning permission for this scheme it is recommended that a programme of archaeological works should be secured and implemented by means of suitably worded conditions attached to any grant of planning permission. This would include a programme of building recording/structural watching brief as development progresses, alongside a programme to monitor the below-ground impacts. The exact nature of the monitoring can be designed as the development progresses and will be informed by the results of the current watching brief on geotechnical works. This could include evaluation, open

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area excavation or archaeological watching brief. A lot of the building recording work has already been undertaken and this will inform the structural watching brief requirements.

- 2.8 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Air Quality) - The proposed site is just within the Horsefair AQMA consultation zone. The proposed development will be car free with occupants & customers encouraged to use the existing public car parks. 108 cycle spaces will be provided. WRS have no adverse comments to make with regards to air quality.
- 2.9 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Contaminated Land) – No Objection subject to 'reporting unexpected contamination' condition. Although the site has been used as a factory for a considerable length of time, ground disturbance is restricted to partial demolition of the existing structures only. Soft landscaping consists of enhancing that which is already there and is relatively minimal. In addition, the proposed use is not particularly sensitive (office/community facility). There is the potential for contaminated made ground to be found during the demolition stage.
- 2.10 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Nuisance) - No Objections subject to conditions;

The noise report submitted appears to have been carried out in line with relevant British Standards and guidance. Noise breakout from entertainment noise (amplified music) and Building Services Noise has been considered within the report. The report concludes:

'Our assessment of potential noise impact is that proposals can avoid 'adverse' or 'significant adverse' impacts on health or quality of life as a result of noise based on reasonably practicable means when considered in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and its associated guidance.'

WRS are happy to support the conclusions reached and advise that the recommendations of the report are implemented and retained. We would advise the rating levels for external plant be conditioned such that any external plant installed does not exceed values as per table 8.3 of the submitted report. The report identifies that a scheme of mitigation is likely required to ensure noise from rooftop mounted plant does not impact upon receptors at the Boars Head premises nearby. An outline strategy has been provided which we broadly agree with, as measures should ensure that noise emissions do not cause any adverse impact. Once the details of the mitigation measures are confirmed we advise these be submitted to the LPA for review and approval.

With regard to breakout from entertainment noise, the assessment indicates that ' proposals associated with the use of amplified music in the venue are unlikely to cause 'adverse' or 'significant adverse' impacts on health and quality of life as a result of noise.'. WRS are happy to support this conclusion as the assessment uses a reasonable worst case scenario and realistic assumptions of sound reduction values.

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In short, noise should not preclude this development from gaining planning permission as the submitted noise assessment indicates that impacts can be controlled to avoid adverse impacts.

2.11 Crime Risk Manager - No objection to this application. I don't have any issues with the basic design. Many of the existing problems in the area are because of the present state of the building. This development will make the area far more active and hopefully will reduce many of the problems. Our licensing officer has expressed some concern about possible issues with the music venue aspect of this application. This issue may well be managed in the future with appropriate licensing conditions.

2.12 Kidderminster Civic Society - While Kidderminster Civic Society welcomes the investment in the Town and the refurbishment works to be carried out to this building to bring it back to constructive use and also recognises the effort having been put in to this project thus far we have the following comments:

1. We wonder whether the "carpet weave" brickwork should exclude the window panel as this detracts from the idea but we like the general carpet weave addition
2. Although we are not too concerned at the rear we are concerned that the aspect will be seen by people walking down Comberton Hill and cars so want a streamlined entrance from the hill down
3. We want gallery and exhibition space included
4. We are concerned that this will compete with the Town Hall and Museum of Carpet and wonder whether such activities will be over catered for in the Town making each unviable
5. We have to wonder about the demand in Kidderminster for the high quality office space that the scheme sets out to provide. We think that we have the evidence of the ambitious and high quality refurbishment in Green Street suggesting that take up might be limited and slow?
6. We wonder how this building is to be managed in the future? Is it to be placed in a trust, similar to Town Hall and Bewdley Museum etc or be publically run - is there any scope/ prospect for it being brought into the Trust being created for the Town Hall? This might ensure that the two projects proceed on a basis that are complementary.

2.13 Victorian Society (initial response) – Object - The Victorian Society supports these proposals in principle. The former Worcester Cross factory, offices, and weaving sheds, are important survivals near to the centre of historic Kidderminster. The main block is the work of the Birmingham architect, J. G. Bland, who worked extensively in the town. It is an imposing red-brick presence in a pared-back Queen Anne style, and offers an interesting contrast to Bland's earlier, more classical work at Stour Vale Mills on Green Street. The listing includes several later phases, and the extensive weaving sheds to the rear. The buildings have been unused for some years, and the proposals will result in their repair and reuse. The proposed mix of uses seems appropriate to the site and the constraints imposed by the typologies of the buildings — the proposals to reroof and reuse the weaving sheds are particularly positive, given the

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typical difficulties with reusing this type of building. Although the interventions proposed are reasonably extensive, we judge that they are mostly consistent with the conservation of the listed buildings. The proposed restoration of the Worcester Cross is wholly welcome.

We nonetheless have two concerns, one general, one particular, which we think your authority should address before granting consent.

The former has to do with the extent of demolition. The present scheme involves the demolition of a single-storey extension which is explicitly excluded from the listing, as well as a small section of the characteristic saw-toothed roofs of the listed weaving sheds and the entirety of the long range immediately to the north west, to enable the construction of the proposed new office block. The provenance and function of this long range is unclear. It is not discussed in the Heritage Statement, or clearly identified in the list description, but from the photos provided it is plausibly of the same phase as the similar buildings at the very north-western corner of the site, which are not included in the listing. The list description mentions the extension of the weaving sheds in the 1890s, and it seems possible that all the ranges to the north-west of the principal sheds with the saw-toothed roofs are part of this extension.

We appreciate that the construction of the new office block is likely necessary for the viability of the overall scheme, and that it will entail some demolition. This argument, however, has not been made in detail in the submitted application, nor has the extent of demolition been clearly and convincingly justified, as is required by the NPPF, para. 194. The significance of the range to be demolished has not been clearly described, as required by the NPPF, para. 189. Given that the demolition of this range is likely to harm the significance of the listed building through the loss of historic fabric and the loss of evidential value, the lack of explicit assessment is unacceptable, and we urge your authority to withhold consent and seek further analysis and justification.

Our second concern relates to the proposals for the principal staircase. This staircase is in two distinct parts: a section from street level to the ground floor, which has been altered and has art-deco handrails; and the main open-well staircase from the ground floor upwards, which retains its original cast iron balusters and carved handrail. The proposals for this staircase are not specified in detail and there are no detailed drawings, but the documents strongly imply that the original balusters are to be removed and replaced by a handrail in the style of the later art-deco insertion. Given that the earlier balusters seem substantially complete and are original to the building, this would cause a great deal of harm to significance and has not been clearly justified. Even if the balusters are damaged, they are unlikely to be beyond sensitive expert repair. We strongly recommend that your authority seeks clarification about this part of the proposals, and, if necessary, revisions to the plans. If the intention is to remove the original balusters, please consider this letter a formal objection to the application.

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Victorian Society (2nd response) - No objection. As far as the staircase balustrade goes, the addendum provides good clarification about the current condition. I'd be interested to see the detailed drawings of the new insertions, and to know how or if balusters in good condition are going to be moved about — I presume some rationalisation of the surviving historic balusters is going to go on, so that there are complete runs. But this is just for my interest. It's clear that the balustrade is in a worse condition than the initial documents might have suggested, and the proposed approach seems honest and appropriate.

With respect to our other concern, the addendum offers no more information. We remain concerned that the significance of the weaving sheds has not been clearly articulated and the extent of demolition proposed has not been clearly justified. You will know a lot more than we do about the exact situation and the viability of any alternative options, so are much better placed than us to judge whether or not the harm is outweighed by the benefits, or if the extent of demolition is strictly necessary. We still think, however, that there ought to be some publicly available analysis of the significance of the parts to be demolished, and some explicit justification, in terms of viability, for the demolition proposed. Given that the survival of the weaving sheds is noted explicitly in the list description as one of the reasons for listing, it's especially important that the loss even of part of them is convincingly justified.

- 2.14 Theatres Trust – No Objection. This application has come to the attention of the Trust through press reports because it is proposing new performance spaces within the site's redevelopment as a multi-purpose creative hub.

We are supportive of the principle of this development and of investment in the arts locally. The new performance spaces will enhance and diversify the local offer.

Accompanying documents show there are two performance spaces. There is a specific small performance space located to the first floor within the former courtroom. It will have a seated capacity of around 100 and 120 for standing events. The Weaving Sheds provide opportunity for occasional larger-scale events.

Although the Weaving Sheds could facilitate larger events in terms of space and scale, there is a lack of supporting infrastructure necessary to practically host large numbers of people. Therefore, consideration would be needed as to how and whether additional WCs can be provided along with sufficient front and back of house facilities and technical infrastructure. The smaller performance space appears to be flexible so could be utilised for different purposes and in different configurations. It must be ensured that wheelchair places are made available. It is served by a bar/foyer area with WCs a level below. However other than a green room there is limited back of house provision with no obvious dressing rooms. Operationally the applicant should consider what types of performances and events they envisage for this space and in turn whether the building's current layout and facilities would achieve their objectives and business plan. There are a number of offices around the area of the small venue which could potentially be repurposed.

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In conclusion we are supportive of the overall principle of this project and welcome positive restoration and re-use of this heritage asset. However, we urge the applicant to consider our comments to ensure their aspirations for performance provision can be delivered. The Trust can provide further advice and guidance on these matters should the applicant require it.

3.0 Site Location and Description

- 3.1 The Former Magistrates Court is a grade II listed building within the ownership of the District Council. The site is located on land within Kidderminster town centre at the south-eastern end of Worcester Street, approximately 570 metres west of Kidderminster Rail Station. Worcester Street is a single carriageway road, operating as a cul-de-sac at its eastern end. Access to Worcester Street is gained via a priority junction with Unicorn Hill to the south. Pedestrian and cycle access is provided at its eastern end through bollards, connecting to a subway running under the A451 Ringway roundabout junction with the A448 and Oxford Street.
- 3.2 The site has a number of vacant buildings that comprise the former magistrates' court, former weaving sheds and the offices associated with a former carpet factory. An area of hardstanding is located at the south eastern end of the site which incorporates space for approximately nine cars to park off-street. This parking area is accessed off Worcester Street. The site also includes an area of public realm on the opposite side of the road, known as Coronation Gardens, which includes areas of hard and soft landscaping, drinking fountains, water troughs and a Grade II listed clock tower.
- 3.3 The immediate surroundings of the site include a sub-station to the south-east, the Boars Head public house to the north-west and the Lion Fields area located to the north-east.
- 3.4 The site falls within the eastern boundary of Kidderminster town centre, with the north-western part of Worcester Street, Coventry Street and Vicar Street forming the main high street roads. The range of standard town centre amenities are available in Kidderminster, with a post office, a range of high street banks, fast food and dining establishments and retail stores.
- 3.5 The planning and listed building applications proposals seek to create a cultural and creative hub for Kidderminster town centre, incorporating recording studios, production, performance and events spaces and extended office floor space. The proposal includes for approximately 1,220m² GIA office space (Class E), 1,175m² GIA community space (Class F2) and some combined 500m² GIA for a bar, café, theatre/lecture venue and music rehearsal/recording facilities.
- 3.6 The proposals will retain the existing parking along this stretch of Worcester Street fronting the former Magistrates building on Worcester Street. Secure bicycle storage is proposed in the eastern corner of the site and overflow within the weaving shed. Appropriate waste and refuse storage is provided adjacent to the substation building with access to refuse vehicles at the end of Worcester Street. The building will be

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single storey with a grass roof designed to be hidden when viewed from A481 or the approach from the railway station.

- 3.7 The planning application is submitted under the 'General Regulations' as a 'regulation 3' application for development which is applied for and carried out by the District Council.

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 These applications provide an exciting start to development proposals with Kidderminster Town Centre as part of the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) proposals and the overall vision of the Town Centre as adopted by the Council. The re-use of the Former Magistrates Court (Worcester Cross Factory) has been ambition of the Council for a number of years. The statutory listing of the building in 2018 highlighted its importance for both the history and the regeneration of the Town, giving the project prominence in the Council's FHSF bid. This is an important start to the Town Centre proposals which have an ambitious delivery time as required through the funding arrangements.

- 4.2 This mixed use proposal is supported by extensive drawings and relevant reports. Pre-application consultation was undertaken with various stakeholders and two public consultation events have been undertaken since the application was submitted.

POLICY CONTEXT AND PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 4.3 The site sits within the Eastern Gateway designation as part of the wider Lion Fields development site. Policy KCA.EG5 of the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (KCAAP) deals specifically with Phase 1 of this development parcel which includes the former Wyre Forest Glades site, the Heath Centre, Bromsgrove Street Car Park, the Former Magistrates Court and Coronation Gardens. This specific allocation provides for a range of uses that are considered to be appropriate to the position of the site within the Primary Shopping Area. These includes offices, non-residential institutions (such as education facilities, health centres etc.) and community facilities. As the site lies outside the Primary and Secondary shopping frontages, Policy KCA.GPB3 also allows for the provision of assembly and leisure uses.

- 4.4 Policy KCA.EG5 sets out seven criteria that must be considered when dealing with planning applications within the wider development parcel. The criteria are set out below, although it will be appreciated that not all are applicable to the current application;

- i. Retain and enhance the former Magistrates' Court frontage and Worcester Cross fountain.
- ii. Provide direct and/or enhanced links to Worcester Street via Prospect Hill to the former Magistrates' Court building, Step Entry or retail developments to the north.
- iii. Create a high quality public realm including enhanced public spaces.
- iv. Provide new and improved access to the ring road with new direct access to Bromsgrove Street to be explored.
- v. Create a positive and active frontage to Comberton Hill Island.

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- vi. Where practicable front onto public streets and spaces.
- vii. Enhance the quality of public car parking.

4.5 The emerging Local Plan also includes a specific allocation for the land at Bromsgrove Street under Policy 30.5. This also seeks to retain and enhance the Former Magistrates Court, along within immediate environs. In respect of potential uses, the emerging policy allows greater flexibility, allowing proposed uses to be considered on their merits.

4.6 The following uses are proposed as part of this application;

- Office (Class E)
- Ground Floor Venue Space (Class Sui Generis)
- Community Space (Class F.2) (Weaving Shed)
- Ancillary Café (Class E) (Ancillary to Weaving Shed)
- Bar (Class Sui Generis)
- Theatre/ Lecture Venue (Class Sui Generis)
- Music Rehearsal Space (Class Sui Generis)

4.7 The proposed mixed use development that provides a flexibility of uses within the Primary Shopping Area of the Town Centre is wholly in accordance with the specific allocation and town centre policies as set out within the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan. The proposed retention and enhancement of the existing building and the provision of uses that will support the vitality and viability of the Town Centre fits squarely with the Development Plan as a whole, including aspirations of the emerging Local Plan. As such the proposal is acceptable in principal and in accordance with the specific allocations within the development plan. It falls, therefore to consider the detailed aspects of the proposal.

DETAILED PROPOSALS

4.8 The proposal for the building are comprehensive and involve a number of elements. The central element is the retaining and restoring the maximum amount of the existing building as it possible through careful design.

4.9 Demolition of the single storey additions to the west façade protruding to the weaving sheds is proposed to allow for the new three-storey office building to be introduced. The building adjacent (and linked) to the Boar's Head Pub will be demolished to allow for an architecturally designed replacement building adjoining the listed building. This will provide a main entrance to the site which will facilitate the office and community uses. Behind the front new proposed façade, the building will remain three-storeys providing open plan flexible office space at ground, first and second floor levels. There is currently a single storey extension to the weaving sheds occupying this part of the site and will be demolished, this is not part of the listed building.

4.10 The proposed link block will replace an existing later addition to the carpet factory that is currently dilapidated beyond repair. The new building will be separated at ground floor level by a vehicular access to the weaving sheds that also provides a level access for other users and a fire escape. This removal of the later addition allows the existing listed building to be viewed as it was originally and the separation in the

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facade at ground floor is replicated at first floor with glazing. The link block and annexe building are located in the north-east of the site. The building will be repurposed as the entrance to the venue and bar on the first floor. The building shell is to be retained but as the internal condition of this building is considered to be in poor condition, it will be stripped back and new stairs, a lift and new partitions will be installed. The link will be a modern intervention in the same style as the office block. The building will be a brick and glass building providing a link from the annexe to the venue and provide a bar at first floor with toilet facilities at ground level.

- 4.11 A portion of the weaving shed will be removed to allow for further office accommodation to be provided in the northwest of the site. Within the weaving shed, the structure and roof are proposed to be cut back by 5 bays in the western corner and one bay to the east. Repair and refurbishment are proposed to all remaining elements of structure within the shed. Approximately 10% of the weaving shed is to be removed. The weaving sheds structure has distinctive cast iron columns and beams, north lights and timber panelled soffits and will be retained. The existing roof material is corrugated asbestos which will be replaced with corrugated steel. The broken glazing will be replaced with a polycarbonate sheet which will be less susceptible to vandalism. The entire cast iron structure will be redecorated in original Victorian red oxide red colour. The proposals will create a large open plan single story area within the weaving shed for a flexible community use. The moveable 'pods' are proposed to be housed in the weaving sheds to serve as workspaces, meeting rooms or showrooms. A larger pod will form a temporary stage for performances. The pods are proposed to be built using timber and glass and will be insulated as the weaving sheds is an unheated space.

HERITAGE MATTERS

- 4.12 The development proposals directly impact upon two listed buildings. Firstly, the Former Magistrates Court which was Listed as Grade II in July 2018 and secondly, the Worcester Cross fountain which was Listed as Grade II in January 1980. The fountain was presented to the town of Kidderminster by John Brinton October 21, 1876.
- 4.13 As set out within the Listing Description the Former Magistrates Court, was previously a carpet factory and offices built in 1878-1879 for H R Willis and designed, in the Queen Anne Revival style, by the architect J G Bland of Birmingham, with late C19 additions. The building was owned by Woodward, Grosvenor and Company from 1883. In 1971 the Factory and Offices were sold to the borough council, and part of the main building was converted to house the Magistrates' Court with the remaining premises used as office accommodation for various council departments. The weaving sheds to the rear became a covered market until the mid-1990s. In the mid-2000s the law courts moved to a new site. Specifically excluded from the Listing are the mid-C20 single-storey addition to the north-west end of the principal elevation, the mid-C20 extensions to the rear range, and the mid-C20 detached, single-storey building to the rear (north-east).
- 4.14 Sections 16 and 66 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets a statutory duty when considering development which affects a listed building or its setting that special regard must be given to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

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- 4.15 The Council's Conservation has provided detailed comments at paragraph 2.3 following his full assessment of the scheme. A no objection response is provided, fully agreeing with the conclusion of the heritage statement;

"The proposed works to Former Worcester Cross Factory and Offices and weaving sheds, will bring the buildings back into use while implementing a sustainable approach to conservation"

- 4.16 It will be noted that Civic Society are also supportive of the scheme. Their main comments relate to the use and management of the facility. These have been passed to the Applicant but have no physical bearing on the consideration of the planning application.
- 4.17 The Victorian Society's original objection related to the removal of the handrail and balustrade within the building. Additional information has been provided to the Victorian Society, which has overcome their objection in this regard. They remained concerned, although not objecting, to the amount of demolition of the weaving sheds. Further justification has been provided that has demonstrated that 65% of the original weaving sheds will be retained and that the demolition is required to allow a viable space that can be self-financing to be provided. Without this approach the scheme as a whole would be put in jeopardy. The Conservation Officer, supports the scheme as a whole including demolition.
- 4.18 The re-use of heritage assets is a fundamental plank of Government policy, reflected in the Council's own Local Plan. The weight attributed to bringing forward the optimum viable use of the building is significant. The physical works to the Listed Building, including the areas of demolition, have been considered and found to be appropriate and that an acceptable approach to its conservation has been adopted. It is accepted that as a whole there will be some impact on the significance of the asset, but I agree that this will be less than substantial and at the lower end of the impact. The public benefits of its restoration and the uses that will be provided materially and substantially outweigh any harm that can be attributed.
- 4.19 The restoration works to the listed Worcester Cross Fountain are detailed fully and are acceptable. These additional works add to the public benefits of the scheme, in establishing an area of quality public realm with the fountain as the focal point.
- 4.20 Although the heritage nature of the building adds a heightened consideration of the scheme, the approach that has been adopted has been carefully considered and found to be wholly appropriate. The proposal is therefore fully in accordance with the heritage policies of the Development Plan and Government guidance within the Framework. Conditions will be required to control the materials used and the restoration works to the Listed building, along with archaeological conditions in line with County Council's response.

DESIGN AND IMPACT ON LOCAL CHARACTER

- 4.21 The design approach to the proposal, in particular the three-storey office extension, has been set out with the Planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement. It explains how the development strategy was refined during the design process. In particular, how to retain the existing building fabric even where severe degradation

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has taken place; which existing structures (generally later additions) could be demolished without damaging the listed building, and how to optimise and utilise the historic fabric uses whilst respecting and retaining the buildings character.

- 4.22 The areas of new build extension have been provided so that they are sympathetic to and respect the existing building in scale and height. The office wing is proposed to be three storeys. It is a similar volume and scale to the original street block. The change in ground level across the site is the equivalent of a two storey building so we are able to link to the land at the rear of the site at the second floor of the proposed office wing, providing a link to the wider Lion Fields development parcel. The difference in levels allows the office extension to appear as single storey when viewed from Prospect Hill.
- 4.23 In respect of the proposed elevations of the new build, the Design and Access Statement states that “[t]he new interventions are contemporary, but in sympathy with the existing buildings and context. New bricks are a different colour and the features are clearly modern. The new office block and main entrance signal a new use and an exciting intervention in the town centre. The glazed link between the venue and the existing Annexe lights up at night to signal exciting events within. The interventions in the existing buildings are described in detail by block below. Bricks have been chosen for the new façades as a traditional local material but they are used in an unusual way referencing the carpet weaving that used to take place in the main space. The new intervention between the existing building and the Boars Head will have the biggest impact on the townscape and that has been designed to be a similar scale to the surrounding buildings but prominent enough to signal the main entrance and new centre.”
- 4.24 This approach is considered to be acceptable and provides the ability to provide modern facilities whilst maintaining the historic nature of the buildings. The more modern approach to the office building does not detract from the overall streetscene, and in my view provides an exciting adjunct to the main building, clearly showing new from old without compromising design quality. The proposals represent a high quality design to restore, refurbish and redevelop this prominent and important site which will provide significant community facilities servicing a wide and diverse community demographic, with employment opportunities for office accommodation and associated community use employment generation.
- 4.25 The proposals also include the sensitive redesign the area of public realm around at Coronation Gardens which are of poor quality and underused. The landscaping proposals and improvements to the space will allow increased use by the community and contribute to the townscape locally and will complement the aspirations of the eastern gateway between the main town centre and the railway station. The proposals will also improve the setting of the listed Worcester Cross Fountain located in the eastern corner of Coronation Gardens, and the wider setting of the main building fronting Worcester Street.
- 4.26 The approach to the design of the proposed restoration, new building works and works to the public realm are appropriate in this context providing an exciting design for this gateway site, setting a clear direction for further redevelopment within the area. The proposals are clearly in accordance with the design requirements of the Local Plan,

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the Framework and the National Design Guide, being fully justified and supported by an appropriate design strategy.

HIGHWAYS AND ACCESS

- 4.27 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan. Given the sites position with the Town Centre, a 'car free' development is proposed, which is an appropriate response taking account of the accessibility of the site to public car parks, railway station and other forms of public transport. Within and surrounding the site a total of 108 cycle spaces will be provided to support sustainable means of transport. This approach to travel and parking is supported by the Highway Authority.
- 4.28 The Transport Assessment has been fully considered by the Highway Authority and their detailed comments are provided at paragraph 2.2. The additional level of traffic movements that will be generated by the development can be accommodated on the surrounding highway network and within the Town Centre as a whole. In addition, it has been fully demonstrated that the demand for public car parking can be easily met within the existing arrangements.
- 4.29 Access for servicing will be provided via an access from the modified turning head on Worcester Street. A Delivery and Servicing Management Plan has been agreed to be implemented as part of any permission. This can be provided through a suitable condition, allowing full consideration the exact provision by the Highway Authority and the Council's Operational Services team.
- 4.30 The location of the site is considered to be highly sustainable and allows the redevelopment of the site in a car free environment. The proposed uses and their associated traffic generation, along with service provision, have been fully considered by the Highway Authority and have been found to be acceptable in all respects. On this basis the proposal is acceptable in respect highway safety and parking and complies with the relevant policies of the Development Plan.
- 4.31 The Highway Authority have requested a sum of £20,000 as a contribution towards the upgrading of the subway at Comberton Hill island. It is accepted that this route does need to improved. However, it is not considered such contributions are fairly related to this development. Whilst the proposals will direct pedestrian flows toward the application site it is not considered that these are such that require mitigation of the subway route or contribution towards. It is a clear position that this proposal is vital to the town's regeneration and to secure the use of an important heritage asset. As with all heritage proposals, the viability of the scheme is tight and is reliant on public funding streams. Therefore, I consider that even if it is demonstrated that the contribution is justified, which I do not believe that it is, that to divert funding away from this development that is reliant on grant funding would impact on the viability of the scheme that has to be implemented in a timely fashion. On this basis, no contributions are sought.

PUBLIC AMENITY AND SURROUNDING USES

- 4.32 The site lies adjacent to the Boars Head Public House. A daylight & sunlight report has been submitted with the application to assess the impact on the proposals. It is evident that the existing situation results in an impact on the property with built

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development already wrapping around the neighbouring curtilage. The replacement of the existing extension with a new three storey office extension, will have a greater impact. Of the twelve windows that are to the rear of the property, just three are orientated so as being reliant on sunlight from the application site. The ground floor of the building is commercial in nature and the floors above are understood to be in use as storage and overnight staff accommodation for the public house below. The increased impact will not result in adverse impact on light to habitable room windows or windows that require significant amount of daylight. In addition, a noise assessment has been carried out and assessed by Worcestershire Regulatory Services, who are satisfied that no adverse impact in respect on surrounding properties will occur. Based on the nature of the area and the assessments that has been carried out, I am satisfied that no undue impact will occur to any of the surrounding properties.

- 4.33 The introduction of additional event space will result in additional members of the public within this part of the Town. Comments received from West Mercia Police confirm that they have no objections to the proposal are content that the licencing arrangements for the venue will be adequate to manage any issues that may arise in respect of public order. I would agree with this position, there are no issues that have been highlighted that would result in any concerns from a planning perspective.

OTHER MATTERS

- 4.34 Ecological assessments have been undertaken which have established a need to mitigate for protected species. The recommendations provide for habitat retention and protection; biodiversity enhancement; roosting bats; terrestrial mammals including badgers and hedgehogs; and nesting birds. Such measures can be secured through appropriate conditions.
- 4.35 Both surface water and foul drainage will utilise existing systems. The proposed drainage strategy will maintain the existing internal and external drainage arrangement, features and connections points, wherever possible due to the listed nature of the building. The proposed drainage system will maintain the existing brownfield discharge rates no other measures are proposed due to the nature of the building and the lack of available area for the implementation more restrictive drainage flow. The drainage channels that drain on Worcester Street will be maintained. North Worcestershire Water Management have no objections to the proposal, although they would encourage additional restrictions of surface water flow if possible. This can form a suitable note to guide the development going forward.
- 4.36 An Energy Statement has been prepared to support the application. The proposed Strategy allows the new office building to deliver CO₂ saving through the implementation of an Air Source Heat Pump with boiler backup. A similar scenario is proposed with the proposed community venues. It is not possible that proposed office refurbishment will produce CO₂ savings given its complexities. PV panels are proposed as part of the new office development, which meets the 10% requirement of the development plan. The overall package of proposals will ensure the proposal achieves CO₂ savings along with the provision of energy generation on-site.
- 4.37 An accessibility statement has been provided. Accessibility and by association inclusivity have been at the forefront of the design strategy to include the needs of the widest range of people, removing unnecessary barriers to enable everyone to use and

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enjoy the site on equal terms. The design has carefully balance heritage constraints alongside accessibility to ensure public realm improvements, entrances, circulation, access to floors, access to WC's, flexible seating, and emergency egress have been responded to and incorporated into the development. Vehicle access will be maintained to the development for passenger drop-off and the existing on-street blue-badge parking spaces close to the western entrance to the development.

4.38 The comments of the Theatres Trust are noted. There is general support for the project but some concern in respect of the detailed infrastructure to support the numbers of visitors. The applicant has provided the following in response;

- Weaving Sheds – the Trust are right to outline that the Weaving Sheds offer the potential for larger events and this has been considered as part of the evolution of the design. There is toilet provision that is available within the main building, located to the west near the smaller conference space, and can be accessed directly from the Weaving Sheds. In addition, the servicing of the site will allow for temporary provision to be made to accommodate any larger events that may require additional facilities.
- Regarding the smaller event space, the proposal is for this to be primarily used for conferencing, exhibitions, and smaller events i.e. Comedy Show and smaller music recitals. It is considered, given the type of event that is envisaged to be held, that the proposed space provided to accommodate this should be sufficient. There is another venue in Kidderminster, the Town Hall, which is due to be refurbished at the same time as this facility and the Town Hall will be the primary venue for larger scale events. The chairs shown within the layout are not fixed and so there is flexibility built in to the design and this means that sufficient wheelchair places can be accommodated for any event.

I am satisfied that in planning terms the response deals with the concerns that have been highlighted. It is a matter for the owner/operators to manage attendance levels in accordance with the facilities that are provided.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 The proposal represents an exciting restoration of a gateway site and an important heritage asset for the Town. The provision a cultural hub will enhance the Town Centre offer and kick start the regeneration of the Town as part of the Future High Street Fund. The proposals are acceptable in principle and in the detailed considerations. The works to the Listed Building are wholly appropriate and secure its viable use for future generations. Any harm is outweighed through the substantial public benefits of the proposal. The works to replace existing extensions provide an appropriate response to the design and massing of the existing building and streetscene, ensuring that there is no adverse harm created. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is acceptable and enhances the already sustainable location of the site. The proposals provide sustainable development within a challenging site, which will result in an enhancement to the public realm and the Town Centre as a whole. There are no matters as part of these considerations that have highlighted any harm that would prevent the scheme from proceeding.

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5.2 I therefore recommend **APPROVAL** to **21/0783/RG3** subject to the following conditions;

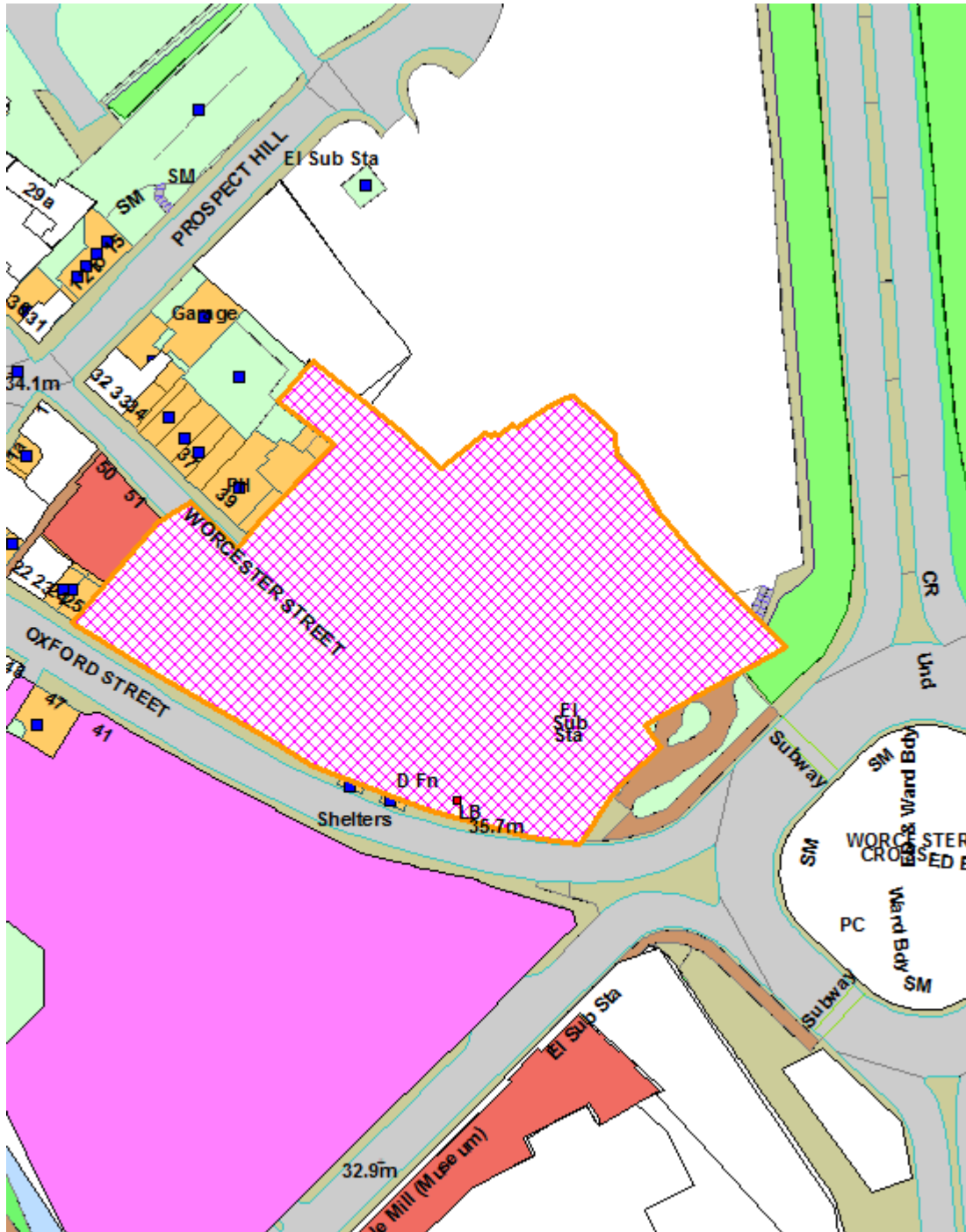
1. A6 (standard time)
2. B1 (Materials)
3. Material Sample Panels
4. Archaeology
5. Landscaping Scheme and Implementation
6. Tree Pit Design
7. Highways – Cycle Parking
8. Highways – Delivery Management Plan
9. Highway – Travel Plan
10. Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Measures
11. Heating provision to be ASHP with boiler back up
12. Provision of PV panels

Informatives

- A. S.278 Works
- B. Provision of SuDS if possible
- C. Archaeology

5.3 I also recommend **APPROVAL** to **21/0784/LBC** subject to the following conditions;

1. A7 (Listed Building Consent)
2. B1 (Materials)
3. Material Sample Panels
4. Archaeology
5. Detailed Heritage Matters



Economic Prosperity and Place Directorate

Former Worcester Cross Factory And Offices, Weaving Sheds & Worcester Cross Worcester Street Kidderminster Worcestershire

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PART B

Application Reference:	21/1044/HOU & 21/1045/LBC	Date Received:	05.11.2021
Ord Sheet:	376461 280238	Expiry Date:	25.01.2022
Case Officer	Kelly Davies	Ward:	Wribbenhall And Arley

Proposal: New window in timber screen to front elevation, new external stair to rear courtyard, replacement flat roof covering.

Site Address: Arley Tower , Frenchmans Street, Arley, Bewdley, DY12 1XA

Applicant: Mrs Sarah Hinton

Summary of Policy	CP11 (AWFCS) UP7 UP8 UP6 UP1 (SAAPLP) Design Guidance SPD National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance
Recommendation	APPROVAL
Reason for referral to committee	The applicant is a serving Wyre Forest District Council Officer or is made on land owned by a serving Wyre Forest District Council Officer

1.0 History

1.1 WF/765/81 – Extension to provide toilet

2.0 Consultations and Representations

2.1 Parish Council – No Objection

2.2 Worcestershire County Council (Archive And Archaeology Services) - There are no archaeological concerns or issues with this application

2.3 Conservation Officer – No Objections

Neighbour/Site Notice Representations

One neighbour comment received:

- Further information sort on materials proposed for balcony and stairs
- Concerns over the removal of the asbestos

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3.0 Site Location and Description

- 3.1 The application property is two bedroom, Grade II listed tower in the village of Arley. The host dwelling is of a sandstone constructed with a turreted staircase. The host is full of architectural features and detailing.
- 3.2 The application site is bounded on either side and has quite a large plot for such a modest building. The area is allocated within the Arley Conservation Area and is also washed over by the Green Belt.
- 3.3 The application proposes new window in timber screen to front elevation, new external stair, and balustrade to rear courtyard, replacement flat roof covering.

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 The proposed alterations are considered minimal in the context of the building as a whole. The balcony will be extended and incorporate a new staircase from the lower level. The impact from the increase in balcony floor level is considered to be acceptable due to the separation distance between the host dwelling and the neighbour nearest affected. Furthermore, there is already a balcony present on the host dwelling, no further harm will occur from the increase.
- 4.2 The patio covering is made from asbestos tiles, these will safely be removed by specialist contractors and replaced with fibreglass resin. This will not only be safer for the occupants but also increase longevity of the balcony.
- 4.3 The new stairs proposed to the balcony and replacement balustrade's will be in black metal. These alterations are considered to add a sleek and modern look to the Heritage building, whilst not detracting from the overall look of the tower.
- 4.4 The introduction of a window in the front timber doors is considered to be minor and will not detract from the heritage asset.
- 4.5 The property is a Grade II listed building, the Conservation Officer and County Archaeology have raised no objections to the proposal. It is therefore considered that the works will harmonise well with the Listed Building and will add a modern touch which we ensure longevity of the building and patio area as a whole.
- 4.6 The site is both covered by the Arley Conservation Area and also West Midlands Green Belt, the additions and alterations will not detract from either of these designations and area considered acceptable in accordance with relevant development plan policies.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5.1 The application proposes alterations to the property that are well designed and will assimilate well within the streetscene. The alterations/additions will not adversely impact on the Green Belt or cause harm to the Arley Conservation Area. Overall the

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proposal is fully in accordance with the Development Plan policies. Both planning and listed building consent applications can be supported.

5.2 I therefore recommend **APPROVAL** to **21/1044/HOU** subject to the following conditions:

1. A6 (Full with no reserved matters)
2. A11 (Approved plans)
3. B6 (Materials, approved plan)

5.3 I also recommend **APPROVAL** to **21/1045/LIST** subject to the following conditions:

1. A7 (Listed Building)
2. A11 (Approved plans)
3. B6 (Materials, approved plan)