

**Minutes of the Development Control Committee
Wednesday 9th March, 2022 at 6.00 pm
In the Committee Room 2, Council House, Dudley**

Present:

Councillor D Harley (Vice-Chair in the Chair)
Councillors D Corfield, M Hanif, S Mughal, C Neale, W Sullivan, E Taylor, and M Westwood.

Officers: -

H Benbow (Principal Planning Officer), J Fraser (Tree Protection Officer), J Hindley (Highways Officer), P Reed (Principal Planning Officer) (Directorate of Regeneration and Enterprise); P Evans (Principal Environmental Health Officer) (Directorate of Public Health and Wellbeing); G Breakwell (Solicitor) and H Mills (Democratic Services Officer) (Directorate of Finance and Legal).

Also in Attendance: -

4 members of the public

49 **Declarations of Interest**

No Member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

50 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th January, 2022, be approved as a correct record and signed.

51 **Change in order of business**

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 13(c) it was: -

Resolved

That the order of business be varied, and the agenda items be considered in the order set out in the minutes below.

52 **Plans and Applications to Develop**

A report of the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise was submitted on the following plans and applications to develop. Where appropriate, details of the plans and applications were displayed by electronic means at the meeting. In addition to the reports submitted, notes known as Pre-Committee notes had also been circulated prior to the meeting updating certain information given in the reports submitted. The content of the notes was taken into account in respect of the applications to which they referred.

The following persons were in attendance at the meeting, and spoke on the planning applications as indicated: -

<u>Application No.</u>	<u>Objectors/Supporters who wished to speak</u>	<u>Agent/Applicant who wished to speak</u>
P21/1989	Mrs S George	Mr B Robinson
P21/2163		Mr M Rogers

(a) **Planning Application No. P21/1989 – Sedgley Police Station and Car Park, Vicar Street, Sedgley, Dudley – Demolition of existing garages and part police station, erection of 3 no. dwellings on existing car park and conversion of existing police station into 9 no. flats to include single storey extension and associated works.**

In considering the application, Members took into account the concerns raised by the objector as reported at the meeting and as outlined in the report, in particular, the shortfall of car parking spaces for the proposed apartments and the potential for increased on-street parking and traffic congestion in an existing problematic area and the need for further traffic measures to be implemented should the proposals be approved.

Although it was recognised that the 15 car parking spaces proposed were slightly below the standard requirements, Officers were of the view that as the proposed development was within a sustainable town centre location and would be ensuring the long-term viability of a heritage asset within a conservation area, the car parking constraints could not be a sustainable reason for refusal of the development.

Whilst Members welcomed and supported the proposals for the redevelopment of the former Police Station building, they expressed concern with regard to the lack of available car parking; an increase in traffic congestion and the potential hazard of vehicles accessing the gated car park area at a difficult junction. Therefore, Members requested that a site visit be arranged in order for them to assess the issues, prior to a decision being made.

Resolved

That the application be deferred for a site visit.

(b) **Planning Application No. P21/2163 – 336 Hagley Road, Stourbridge – Fell and replace 1 no. Redwood (Sequoia) tree**

In considering the application, Members took into account the comments made verbally at the meeting in support of the application and as outlined in the report, in particular, that the tree had caused past costly damage to the applicants and its neighbours' properties over a number of years and would likely to continue to do so; the tree caused considerable shading to both properties and that the tree was considered to be suffering from a fungal disease.

The Tree Protection Officer commented that he was unable to concur with the agent's diagnosis in that the tree was suffering from a fungal disease and was of the view that the discolouring of the foliage was as a result of a lightning strike. Pruning to remove deadwood could be undertaken as the tree was capable of reshooting and the condition of the tree could be monitored over a period of 12 months, however it did not warrant the complete removal of the tree at this stage.

Although there was a proposal for replacement trees to be planted should the application be approved, Officers were of the view that no amount of replacement trees would mitigate the loss of the high amenity value provided from the established tree, which was considered to be approximately 150 years old. It was further reported that an objection to the felling of the tree had been received from a local Ward Councillor.

During deliberations, Members referred to the potential health and safety risks should the tree be diseased, though were mindful that the tree had not been tested to confirm it was contaminated.

Resolved

That the application be deferred to allow the applicant an opportunity to obtain a Tree Health Diagnostic report to confirm that the tree was diseased.

(c) **Planning Application No. P21/2052 - 9 Alderwood Precinct, Sedgley, Dudley – First floor extension to create 2 no. flats with associated works and installation of solar panels on roof and associated parking.**

Resolved

That the application be approved, subject to conditions numbered 1 to 11 (inclusive), as set out in the report submitted.

The meeting ended at 7:08pm.

CHAIR