

Present: Councillor Naomi Tweddle (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Bob Bushell, Councillor Biff Bean, Councillor
Bill Bilton, Councillor Alan Briggs, Councillor Chris Burke,
Councillor Thomas Dyer, Councillor Gary Hewson,
Councillor Edmund Strengiel and Councillor Jackie Kirk

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Kathleen Brothwell, Councillor
Rebecca Longbottom and Councillor Bill Mara

108. Confirmation of Minutes - 4 November 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2020 be confirmed.

109. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Naomi Tweddle, Chair of the Planning Committee, reported that she had received several emails in relation to the two applications on the agenda for this meeting at land between 1 and 9-11 Greetwell Gate, Lincoln, as local ward member. She reported that she had explained in her responses that she was unable to provide an opinion until the applications came before the Planning Committee at this meeting. She wished that this be placed on record.

110. Applications for Development

(a) West Common New Land Drain - West Parade Entrance

The Council's Open Space Officer:

- a. described the location of the application site, at the West Parade and Rosebery Avenue entrance leading to the West Common in Lincoln, explaining that the West Common fell within the city boundary and was designated as common land, protected by the Lincoln City Council Act;
- b. advised that permission was sought for a new land drainage scheme to improve ground conditions in and around the entrance gates onto West Common from West Parade and Rosebery Avenue;
- c. reported that the proposed drainage system would consist of a 100mm main drain laid along the boundary fence of the common, running under the tarmac footpath, then out to a rougher area of grass away from any paths and into a soak-away;
- d. reported that 75mm laterals would run out of the main drain in front of the feeding area;
- e. reported that the drains would be excavated to a depth of 700-800mm, with perforated drainage pipe laid in the bottom, back filled to the surface with clean pea gravel and then topped-off with sharp sand;
- f. reported that the soak-away would be dug to a depth of 2.5m and be 2m by 2m square. This hole would be filled with a plastic create type soak-away system and wrapped in a geotextile membrane of the manufacturer's recommendation. This would then be covered with 100-200mm of site topsoil;
- g. reported that a silt trap would be installed 10m back from the soakaway within the main drain. This would be 1200mm deep and constructed of a concrete inspection chamber. The inlet and outlet pipes would enter the

chamber 400-500mm above the concrete floor of the silt trap. The chamber would be topped with a heavy duty cover and this would be capped with a cast iron removable inspection cover.

RESOLVED that the proposed works be approved.

(b) Land Between 1 And 9-11 Greetwell Gate, Lincoln

The Assistant Director for Planning:

- a. described the location of the application site at land between 1 and 9-11 Greetwell Road, Lincoln, as follows:
 - it was located in the north of the city on Greetwell Gate, a one-way street running from Wragby Road to Eastgate;
 - to the east of the site was a public house whilst to the west was 1 Greetwell Gate, a Grade II listed house;
 - to the south of the site were residential properties accessed from Winnowsty Lane and Mainwell Mews;
 - on the opposite side of Greetwell Gate was a City Council owned car park and two semi-detached properties on the corner of Greetwell Gate and Langworthgate;
 - the site was located within the Cathedral and City Centre Conservation Area No. 1;
- b. advised that planning permission was sought for use of the site as a temporary welfare centre and use of the existing garages on the site for storage. The application had been submitted by the City of Lincoln Council and the site would be used by its employees in line with their duties for carrying out repairs to council houses;
- c. reported that the application was brought before Planning Committee as the proposal was made by the City of Lincoln Council on Council-owned land;
- d. provided details of the policies pertaining to the application, as follows:
 - Policy LP25 – The Historic Environment;
 - Policy LP26 – Design and Amenity;
 - National Planning Policy Framework;
- e. advised members of the main issues to be considered as part of the application to assess the proposal with regard to:
 - acceptability of use;
 - impact on residential amenity;
 - visual amenity and the impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and adjacent listed building;
 - highway safety;
- f. outlined the responses made to the consultation exercise;
- g. concluded that the proposed use of the site as a temporary welfare centre and use of the existing garages for storage would not cause harm to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area and appropriate conditions controlling visiting hours, the use for a temporary period and monitoring through CCTV would limit harm to residential amenity in accordance with LP25 and LP26 Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Laura Devaney addressed the Committee in opposition to the proposal and said she represented over 100 residents in Conservation Area No. 1. The following points were noted:

- Lincoln was a world class heritage city. It was for this reason, given that the site was located on Greetwell Gate in close proximity to the Cathedral within the conservation area, that she and other residents totally objected to the proposed pilot scheme;
- the scheme did not present any benefits to the historic neighbourhood and the Civic Trust had said that this proposal was inappropriate given its location within the conservation area;
- no other depots operated within conservation areas in the city;
- the Lincolnshire Heritage database had described the area as residential, apart from specifically referencing two schools, two public houses and the workshop associated with the Cathedral;
- the Morning Star public house, immediately adjacent to the site, dated back to the 1700's and offered views of the Cathedral from its beer garden. The proposed depot and activities within it would be visible over the Morning Star's boundary wall, which would discourage trade due to the nature of works taking place on the site. The Morning Star was recognised as an asset in the area with a heritage interest which as of yet was unregistered. It was the intention of the community to ensure that this business continued to operate, something which this proposal would threaten;
- concerns had been expressed in relation to the archaeology that would be required prior to and as part of works commencing on site, given its significant historic nature;
- objections had been made in respect of traffic as the proposal would naturally introduce more vehicles to the area. Two schools and a church in the area had requested that a 20mph limit and traffic reduction be imposed on Greetwell Gate as it was felt that there was already excessive vehicle movement on the road;
- the Council's Vision 2020 and Vision 2025 strategic documents made reference to the quality of the local environment which made Lincoln special. This was fundamental to the lives of residents and visitors, which the proposal did not represent and was incompatible with the application which would degrade the area.

Matt Hillman addressed the Committee as applicant. The following points were noted:

- the site required investment, particularly in respect of the garages, removal of asbestos and re-surfacing and had suffered from illegal occupation, trespassing and fly tipping;
- the Council, in response to the coronavirus outbreak, had to adapt to new ways of working, adhering to new requirements in respect of revised legislation and standards from the Health and Safety Executive. As part of the Council's schedule of repairs, storage of welfare provision for staff together with storage of stock such as grit and sandbags via a mini-depot was required in this part of the city. Other sites had been investigated but were not fit for purpose;
- the mini-depot would essentially be used as a drop-down point for staff which would provide toilet facilities, hand washing facilities and somewhere to prepare drinks and food;
- the proposal would enhance the look and feel of the site which was currently in a poor state of repair. The site would be resurfaced, the garages renovated to include a new roof and doors and a new wall and

- gate was proposed on the boundary of the site, using materials and a design in keeping with heritage requirements;
- the site would only be in operation three weeks in every twelve weeks from 10am until 2.30pm, reducing the site's impact at peak times;
- occasional deliveries would be made to the site;
- a Team Leader would be located on the site and an email address would be provided in order that any concerns regarding use of the site could be reported;
- CCTV would also be used to monitor the operation of the site;
- vehicles would be able to drive forwards onto the site, which had enough space to enable the vehicle to turn around and drive out of the site in a forward gear;
- Covid-19 measures were fully in place by the Council in respect of its staff in order to minimise any risk to the public. There would therefore be no further risk to anyone in close proximity to the site in that respect;
- the Council had been working with the occupant and owner of the Morning Star public house on the proposal and no objections had been received from the establishment.

Members discussed the content of the report in further detail. The following comments/questions emerged:

- the site was very run down and retracted from the environment. The Committee needed to be confident that the proposal would not make the site worse;
- it was expected that no more than 15 vehicles would use the site per day, on those days the site was in operation, which could enter and leave the site in forward gear;
- the operating period of the site was outside of school times and would only be used three weeks out of every twelve;
- no objections had been received from the County Council on highway or traffic grounds;
- the proposed welfare unit was not a portacabin and was much smaller in size, similar to a medium sized caravan;
- the application was temporary and had sufficient safeguards in place for its proposed operation;
- had the Civic Trust made any comments on the proposal?
- the application was for temporary use of the site as a pilot scheme to aid the City Council's operations in that part of the city;
- how had the calculation of 15 vehicles per day been made?
- it would be more concerning from a highways perspective if the proposed wall was located on the boundary line up against the footpath, however, the application sought to set this back, providing for more visibility in terms of vehicles leaving the site. This made it much safer in terms of other traffic and pedestrians;
- the site itself was dilapidated at the moment and did need to be improved;
- a concern was the size of delivery vehicles that would be required to access and leave the site;
- the use of the site as proposed was not right for the area, with the plot being an ideal location for a residential property;
- the site was very close to the Cathedral in a sensitive part of the city, located next to a popular public house and on a narrow road with very narrow footpaths. This did not seem an appropriate location for a Council depot;

- drivers tended to use the road as a cut-through and, anecdotally, speeding also occurred along this road;
- the National Planning Policy Framework stated that planning applications should take account of heritage assessments, with any new development demonstrating that it made a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area. This application would have a negative effect from that perspective;
- use of the site, despite there being a Team Leader in place when in operation and monitoring via CCTV, would be difficult to police;
- what would happen if a Council employee needed to use the facilities outside of the operating hours of the depot?
- what would happen if more than two vehicles sought to enter the site at any one time, in view of there only being enough room on the site to accommodate two parked vehicles?
- when would deliveries to the site occur?
- it was misleading to claim that the garages were redundant or unoccupied. They had been in regular use prior to the Council taking ownership of the land, with the current state of the site, including it being fenced off, being down to the actions of the applicant;
- was the operation of the site solely in relation to Covid-19?
- the proposed use of this site would reduce the number of vehicle movements by the Council across the city, with a depot located in the north of the city meaning that regular trips back and forward to Hamilton House were not necessary. This also had environmental benefits in terms of a reduced carbon footprint;
- there was nothing to stop the previous occupiers of the site having large vehicles provide deliveries or use the site, with the public house immediately next door also requiring its deliveries from large vehicles;
- the site struggled with anti-social behaviour as it was an open, un-used site so the fences were installed as a preventative measure.

The Assistant Director provided the following comments in response to the points and questions raised by members of the Committee:

- the Civic Trust had provided a response to the application, objecting to the use of the site but having a neutral view in respect of the proposed wall and gate;
- the calculation of fifteen vehicles per day was based on the number of operatives that would be permitted to use the site. This would be monitored by the on-site Team Leader;
- deliveries would be made by nothing larger than a 3.5 tonne flatbed transit vehicle. In view of the neighbouring public house, deliveries from similar sized vehicles were not uncommon in the area;
- in terms of the assessment of impact of the conservation area and heritage assets, a key aspect of consideration was also preservation as opposed to enhancement. It was the view of officers that the proposal would at the very least preserve the character of the conservation area;
- the site could only be in operation from 10.00am until 2.30pm, three weeks out of every twelve. Deliveries would be required to fall within these specified times of operation;
- in terms of previous use and condition of the site, consideration of the application had to be on the basis of the current condition and impact of the site;

- the application was temporary so, if approved, the operation of the site would cease at the end of March 2021 unless another subsequent planning application was submitted. A new application would need to be submitted and approved in order for the same operation to continue after March 2021.
- it was the understanding of officers that the Covid-19 pandemic had resulted in the Council having to change the way in which it managed its operations, so this proposal was both a pilot but also partly in response to the pandemic.

Further discussion ensued by members and additional comments were made as follows:

- the application should make a positive impact on the distinctiveness and character of the area;
- the addition of 15 vehicle movements entering and leaving the site would have a detrimental impact on that area of the city;
- the operation of the site was solely to assist in scheduled works, mainly to be used by staff at scheduled break and lunch times. The site would not be used as a main depot for the constant delivery and collection of stock or equipment. The work of the repairs team was pre-planned and strategic, meaning that all necessary equipment would be pre-loaded from the main depot at Hamilton House;
- the proposal was a temporary pilot scheme and would be managed properly by a designated Team Leader and monitoring via CCTV;
- residents should be canvassed as to whether operation of the site had been positive or negative;
- if an extension or more permanent arrangement was required by the applicant, a new planning application would need to be submitted and considered. The current application, if approved, would only allow operation on the site until 31 March 2021.

RESOLVED that the application be granted subject to the following conditions:

- The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years;
- The development must proceed in accordance with the approved drawings;
- CCTV shall be installed at the site;
- Hours of operation for operative visits shall be between 10:00am and 2:30pm every three weeks out of twelve;
- The use shall be until 31 March 2021.

(c) Land Between 1 And 9-11 Greetwell Gate, Lincoln

The Assistant Director for Planning:

- a. described the location of the application site at land between 1 and 9-11 Greetwell Road, Lincoln, as follows:
 - it was located in the north of the city on Greetwell Gate, a one-way street running from Wragby Road to Eastgate;
 - to the east of the site was a public house whilst to the west was 1 Greetwell Gate, a Grade II listed house;

- to the south of the site were residential properties accessed from Winnowsty Lane and Mainwell Mews;
 - on the opposite side of the Greetwell Gate was a City Council owned car park and two semi-detached properties on the corner of Greetwell Gate and Langworthgate;
 - the site was located within the Cathedral and City Centre Conservation Area No. 1;
- b. advised that planning permission was sought for the construction of walls and gates to a Council-owned former garage site. The walls would sit at two varying heights with a lower wall to the front boundary with Greetwell Gate and part of the side boundary to the east. A higher wall and gates opening into the site would be positioned with a setback of 6.5 metres from the footpath to Greetwell Gate;
 - c. reported that the application was brought before Planning Committee as the proposal was made by the City of Lincoln Council on council-owned land;
 - d. provided details of the policies pertaining to the application, as follows:
 - Policy LP25 – The Historic Environment;
 - e. advised members of the main issues to be considered as part of the application to assess the proposal with regard to:
 - visual amenity and the impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and adjacent listed building;
 - archaeology;
 - highway safety;
 - f. outlined the responses made to the consultation exercise;
 - g. concluded that the proposed wall and gates would be a visual improvement to the existing site and would therefore enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area in accordance with LP25 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Laura Devaney addressed the Committee in opposition to the proposal. The following points were noted:

- she was very disappointed that the Civic Trust had insinuated that the walls and gates were valid;
- the principle of her objection was about use of the site and the proposed walls and gates should not be used to justify the site's use;
- it was very obvious from the photographs and video clip shown at the meeting that they had not been taken during conditions she would refer to as normal. Traffic could be very bad along Greetwell Gate which the photographs and video did not reflect;
- the City Council's Archaeological Officer had confirmed that the site would be thoroughly assessed. Mrs Devaney would also make contact with the County Council's Archaeological Officer to seek further reassurances. The required works would hold up building works in respect of the walls and gate;
- properties in this part of the city sold for up to £1.5 million. It would be much better for the area if the site had been developed for residential purposes;
- a three foot wall at the front of the site could be dangerous in terms of school children who may climb on it;
- the conservation area would be enhanced by the walls and gates, but this should not justify the proposed use for the site;

- the lighting proposed to be used on the wall either side of the gates may be too bright, having a detrimental impact on the area, particularly to the Morning Star public house or the residents of number 1 Greetwell Gate;
- residents had not been consulted properly on the application, with some people being unable to provide responses until after the deadline had passed;
- the number of vehicles expected to use the site was concerning.

Matt Hillman addressed the Committee as applicant. The following points were noted:

- in respect of the boundary wall, advice had been sought from the Council's Conservation Officer. This had been reflected in the materials proposed for use, including the wall top, brick and mortar finish;
- the original proposal included a six foot wall on the boundary of the site, however, members of the community had raised their concerns in relation to this so the application had been amended to include a three foot wall enabling visibility to be improved in terms of vehicles leaving the site. Planting works would also take place to soften the landscaping of the area and its impact on the neighbourhood;
- Mr Hillman had been liaising with the owners and occupants of the Morning Star public house as part of the proposed development;
- all advice in relation to archaeology and the necessary processes that needed to take place would be followed. A desk based assessment to evaluate the area would be undertaken shortly.

Members discussed the content of the report in further detail. The following comments/questions emerged:

- in relation to the previous application at the same site considered at this meeting and it's temporary nature, the erection of a wall and gate was a more permanent structure. What would the site be used for if the operation set out in the previous application ceased on 31 March 2021?;
- the site needed a wall and a protective boundary around it, particularly to prevent anti-social behaviour and ensure that the garages remained secure;
- this was a sensitive site in very close proximity to the Cathedral so from an archaeological perspective needed to be treated very carefully;
- the conservation area would be enhanced by the erection of walls and gates on this site, taking into account the design and materials proposed to be used;
- reassurance was sought following a claim that the public consultation process had been inadequate;
- the erection of the walls and gates would bring an improvement to the area;
- the applicant had been working with the Conservation Officer who was confident the walls and gates would be of good quality and in keeping with the area;
- the desktop archaeological assessment could take some time which would delay the building of the walls and gates;
- the walls and gates would be a vast visual improvement to the area.

The Assistant Director provided the following comments in response to the points and questions raised by members of the Committee:

- the two applications in relation to the site at Greetwell Gate had to be considered as two separate, standalone planning applications;
- whether or not the site continued to be used for the purposes set out in the previous application, this would not impact the specifics of the application before Committee in respect of the erection of walls and gates;
- with regard to archaeology, officers would ensure that this was dealt with properly;
- the consultation process went above and beyond what would normally be expected, given the sensitive location of the site. Site notices and press advertisements were put in place, with 60 houses in the surrounding area having been notified of the application.

RESOLVED that the application be granted subject to the following conditions:

- The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years;
- The development must proceed in accordance with the approved drawings;
- Details of the bricks, coping stones, bond and mortar are approved before construction;
- Standard archaeology conditions.