

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

MONDAY 11TH MAY 2026 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. Marshall (Vice- Chairman in the Chair), A. Bailes, J. Clarke (during minute nos. 81/26 to 83/26), D. J. A. Forsythe, E. M. S. Gray, B. Kumar (substituting for Councillor R. E. Lambert), S. R. Peters, J. Robinson and K Taylor (substituting for Councillor H. J. Jones).

Officers: Ms. R. Bamford, Mr. D. M. Birch, Ms. J. Chambers, Mr. J. Pavey-Smith, Mr. C. Perkins, Mr. G. Day and Mr. J. Swann.

Also Present: Mr. M. Howarth (Legal Advisor - Anthony Collins Solicitors) and Mr. B. Simm (Highways Development Management and Control Manager - Worcestershire County Council).

77/26 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. J. Baxter , H. J. Jones (Chairman), R. E. Lambert and J. D. Stanley.

Councillor K. Taylor was in attendance as the substitute Member for Councillor H. J. Jones and Councillor B. Kumar was in attendance as the substitute Member for Councillor R. E. Lambert.

78/26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor A. Bailes declared an Other Disclosable interest in regard to Agenda Item No. 5 – Planning Application 25/00900/S73, Land at Whitford Road, Bromsgrove, in that he had represented residents at the public inquiry and appeal. Councillor A. Bailes left the meeting room for the duration of this agenda item and took no part in the Committee’s consideration nor voting on this matter.

Councillor J. Robinson declared an Other Disclosable interest in regard to Agenda Item No. 6 – Planning Application 26/00195/FUL, Holly House, 1A Hollybank Drive, Bromsgrove, in that he was predetermined. Councillor J. Robinson left the meeting room for the duration of this agenda item and took no part in the Committee’s consideration nor voting on this matter.

79/26 **UPDATES TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS REPORTED AT THE MEETING
(TO BE CIRCULATED PRIOR TO THE START OF THE MEETING).**

The Chairman announced that a Committee Update had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting commencing, with a paper copy also made available to Members at the meeting.

Members indicated that they had had sufficient time to read the contents of the Committee Update and were happy to proceed.

80/26 **25/00492/FUL - MATERIAL CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO USE AS A
RESIDENTIAL CARAVAN SITE FOR 5 TRAVELLER PITCHES,
INCLUDING THE LAYING OF HARDSTANDING AND CONSTRUCTION OF
A 1.8M TIMBER FENCE (RETROSPECTIVE). LAND AT WASSELL GROVE
LANE, HAGLEY WORCESTERSHIRE, DY9 9JH. MR P DONAVAN.**

It was being reported to the Planning Committee for consideration at the request of Councillor R. E Lambert, Ward Councillor, in accordance with the Council's constitution and due to its classification as a major planning application.

Further information was included in the Committee Update, with regards to an Arboricultural Survey which had been supplied by Arb Tech, along with the Officer response, as detailed on page 1 of the Committee Update. The update also detailed that one additional objection had been received.

A copy of the Committee Update was provided to Members and published on the Council's website prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Officers presented the report and in doing so highlighted that the application was for a material change of use of land to use as a residential caravan site for 5 traveller pitches. It was noted that this included the laying of hardstanding and construction of a 1.8m timber fence and that the planning application was retrospective in nature.

Officers presented the presentation slides, as detailed on pages 25 to 34 of the main agenda pack and outlined that the site was considered Grey Belt and was previously an open parcel of land (a paddock), on the west of Wassell Grove Lane, with access from the carriageway.

Officers highlighted that the site was located in close proximity to Wassell Grove Farmhouse, which was a Grade II listed building, and buildings associated with this development. It was further outlined that the site would detract from the rural setting of the listed building.

It was highlighted to Committee Members that further changes had been made to the site which had not been listed in the report at time of publication, and these included the installation of access gates and the erection of lighting columns.

83 objections had been received which included the Parish Council, the main area of concern was in relation to the objection received from Worcestershire County Council, as the highways authority.

The highways authority had concluded that the proposals had the potential to have a detrimental impact upon the safe operation of the highways network. Of particular concern to the highways authority was that visibility for motorists on the carriageway could not be achieved without the removal of a significant amount of well- established hedgerow. Furthermore, access to the site in a manner which was safe and suitable in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework had not been demonstrated by the applicant and due to the rural nature, pedestrians would likely access the site via traversing the 30mph highway.

Further information, including relevant planning history and Council's identified need for further Gypsy and Traveller pitches across the District was relayed to Committee Members.

It was noted that the planning application was recommended for refusal.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Iain Martin, a business owner who owned the site opposite spoke in objection to the application. Councillor S. T. Nock (on behalf of Councillor R. E. Lambert, Ward Councillor) also addressed the Committee in opposition to the application. Having addressed the Committee, Councillor S. T. Nock then left the room.

Members then debated the application. From the comments and questions by members of the Committee, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted:

- It was acknowledged that the site had harmed the significance of the Grade II listed Wassell Grove Farmhouse.
- Members expressed concern relating to the impact of the development upon the highways network.
- It was accepted that the current entry and access point for the site was challenging to traverse for large vehicles such as caravans.
- The Bromsgrove District Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2024/ 25 outlined that there was a shortage of available pitches with 17 pitches required to be provided by 2029/ 30.
- It was noted that a right- of- way footpath ran through the field to the rear of the site.

Members were particularly concerned about the implications on highway safety, following objections from Worcestershire County Council as the highways authority. It was noted that to achieve compliance with both the requirements of the Manual for Streets and the Worcestershire Streetscape Design Guide, a substantial amount of hedgerow would have to be removed. Members agreed that this would undermine the character of the lane and could increase vehicle speeds due to the better visibility which would undermine highway safety objectives.

Concern was also expressed about the rural nature of the site, and the increased likelihood of pedestrians walking on the carriageway to access local services.

On being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that having had regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, the application be refused subject to the reasons as detailed on page 22 of the main agenda pack.

Following consideration of the above matter referred to at Minute No. 80/26, Councillor J. Clarke joined the meeting.

81/26 **25/00900/S73 - VARIATION OF CONDITION 27 OF PLANNING PERMISSION 24/00516/S73. LAND AT WHITFORD ROAD, BROMSGROVE. BELLWAY HOMES LTD.**

As detailed in the preamble above, Councillor A. Bailes left the room for the duration of the agenda item and took no part in the debate or decision thereof.

It was being reported to the Planning Committee for consideration due to its classification as a major planning variation/ application.

It was noted that there was no Committee Update for this item.

Officers presented the report, and in doing so highlighted that the application was for a variation of Condition 27 of planning permission 24/00516/S73, to increase the threshold for the number of dwellings permitted to be occupied from 99 to 250, before the junction improvements at Whitford Road, Bromsgrove must be completed.

Officers presented the presentation slides, as detailed on pages 45 to 53 of the main agenda pack and outlined that the site, although predominantly for residential dwellings also incorporated a retail unit and signalised junction, to be installed at the junction with Kidderminster Road and Perryfields Road.

An objection had been received from the Bromsgrove Society and a member of the public, in relation in traffic congestion at the Whitford Road junction with Kidderminster Road.

Worcestershire County Council as the highways authority and engineering consultants Mott MacDonald had not objected to the proposed variation of Condition 27 of planning permission 25/00798/S73.

The proposal would support continued housing delivery in the District.

Further information, including relevant planning history, the Bromsgrove District Plan, and housing availability considerations was relayed to the Committee.

It was noted that the application for variation of previously granted planning permission was recommended to be granted. In addition, it was recommended that delegated powers be granted the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services, following consultation with the Planning Committee Chairman, to agree the final scope and detailed wording and numbering of Conditions as laid out in the report.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Chris O'Hanlon, representing Bellway Homes Limited and David Dixon, representing WSP, addressed the Committee in support of the application. Councillor D. Hopkins also addressed the Committee in his capacity as Ward Councillor, in opposition to the application. Having addressed the Committee, Councillor D. Hopkins then left the room.

Members then debated the application. From the comments and questions by members of the Committee, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted:

- The highways authority had determined that this variation would not result in a severe enough cumulative impact upon the highways network as to breach the severity requirement under paragraph 116 of the NPPF. In addition, the variation did not present a risk to highways safety.
- It was reported that Bellway Homes Ltd had conducted an assessment of an increased number of vehicles accessing the highways network from the development site which was further scrutinised by County Highways and Mott MacDonald. The assessment had concluded that the disruption to the highways network would not be severe.
- It was highlighted that the District would benefit from an increased provision of affordable homes.
- Additional conditions had previously been mandated in relation to this site, which remained in force, these included alterations to the junction at Fox Lane and Rock Hill, as well as an acoustic barrier.

Members discussed the impact of the proposed variation upon the highways network in the locality.

On being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that having had regard to all the information before them and all other material considerations

(a) that planning permission be granted;

(b) that delegated powers be granted to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services, following consultation with the Planning Committee Chairman, to agree the final scope and detailed wording and numbering of conditions, as set out in the report.

Following consideration of the above matter referred to at Minute No. 81/26, Councillor A. Bailes returned to the room.

82/26 **26/00195/FUL - FIRST FLOOR EXTENSION TO EXISTING DWELLING TO CREATE ADDITIONAL STOREY. HOLLY HOUSE, 1A HOLLYBANK DRIVE, BROMSGROVE, WORCESTERSHIRE, B61 0FT. MR G DEOL.**

As detailed in the preamble above, Councillor J. Robinson left the room for the consideration of the item and took no part in the debate or decision thereof.

It was being reported to the Planning Committee for consideration at the request of Councillor R. J Hunter, Ward Councillor, in accordance with the Council's constitution.

It was noted that there was no Committee Update for this item.

Officers presented the report and in doing so highlighted that the application was for a first- floor extension to an existing dwelling to create an additional storey.

Officers presented the presentation slides, as detailed on pages 59 to 66 of the main agenda pack and outlined that the property was a detached bungalow within a residential area.

Officers highlighted that the planning application before the Committee was an amended version of the original application for planning permission.

5 objections had been received, all from residents from within the locality.

Planning officers were satisfied that the planning application was compliant with the Bromsgrove District Plan, the High Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

Further information, including relevant planning history was relayed to the Committee.

It was noted that the planning application was recommended to be granted.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Murkesh Mistry, the applicant's Planning Agent, addressed the Committee in support of the application. Councillor R. J. Hunter also addressed the Committee in his capacity as Ward Councillor, in opposition to the application. Having addressed the Committee, Councillor R. J. Hunter then left the room.

Members then debated the application. From the comments and questions by members of the Committee, the following responses were made, and issues highlighted:

- It noted that it was proposed that the first- floor windows to the front elevation would be non-opening and obscure glazed.
- Officers considered that the proposal as amended did not require a minimum separation distance due to the lack of first-floor, facing habitable room windows.

On being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that having had regard to all the information before them and all other material considerations that planning permission be granted, subject to Conditions as detailed on page 58 of the main agenda pack.

Following consideration of the above matter referred to at Minute No. 82/26, Councillor J. Robinson returned to the room.

83/26 **PLANNING PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 4.**

The Development Management Manager presented the Planning Performance Report - Quarter Four (1st January 2026- 31st March 2026) for Members' consideration.

In doing so it was highlighted that planning performance was based on a one-year rolling assessment period and measured the speed of decision making. The speed of decision making was highlighted on page 67 of the main agenda pack.

Officers explained that the speed of decision-making for major applications over the rolling one-year period was 92.9% and 88.6% for non-major applications over the rolling one-year period. The Government required a minimum of 60% of major applications and 70% of non-major applications to be determined in time, or within an agreed extension of time.

In terms of the quality of the decision making, no Local Planning Authority should exceed 10% of decisions being overturned at appeal. Members were asked to note that the data detailed within the report was intentionally nine months behind the date of publication to allow a time lag for appeals in the pipeline to be determined.

Details of appeal decisions received in Quarter Four and cost award outcomes relating to recent planning appeals were provided to Members for information.

RESOLVED that the Planning Performance Report - Quarter Four be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.37 p.m.

Chairman