

Name of Applicant	Proposal	Expiry Date	Plan Ref.
c/o Agent	Refurbishment of the existing building and extension to accommodate new bed and breakfast accommodation (Use Class <i>Sui Generis</i> ).  Alvechurch Sports and Social Club, Radford Road, Alvechurch.	12.07.2024	23/00324/FUL

**Councillor A Bailes has requested that this application be considered by Planning Committee rather than being determined under delegated powers.**

**RECOMMENDATION:** That planning permission be **GRANTED**.

### **Consultations**

#### **Worcestershire Highways - Bromsgrove**

Worcestershire Highways have no objection subject to conditions. Worcestershire Highways have provided comments at each stage of the application and reviewed the drawings/submitted information as well as comments received from stakeholders.

Worcestershire Highways have provided the following in summary comments:

- The site is in a sustainable location.
- The location of the vehicular access is acceptable, being more than 20m from the junction with good visibility. No accidents have been highlighted in the immediate vicinity of the vehicular access.
- Sufficient car parking (2.4m x 4.8m) has been provided (33 spaces). Larger spaces for vans are not required in this instance, swept path diagrams are acceptable for parking and servicing.
- The amount of traffic to be generated by the proposed development would not have a severe impact on the highway network.
- Worcestershire Highways have requested amendments to the car parking layout, ramps, servicing, bins, cycle parking and find the amendments acceptable or subject to a planning condition.
- Worcestershire Highways have requested conditions for: accessible parking and cycle parking, conforming with details prior to occupation, Construction Environmental Management Plan and Employment Travel Plan,
- S106 financial contributions for dropped kerbs at various locations to Alvechurch Train Station have been requested and reviewed by Worcestershire Highways, however have failed to meet the statutory tests.

#### **Conservation Officer**

The Conservation Officer has no objection to the proposals subject to planning conditions. The Conservation Officer has been consulted throughout the determination of the application and has provided a series of comments which are summarised as follows.

Alvechurch Sports and Social Club is located at the eastern end of Alvechurch Conservation Area. The building was erected in the 1960s and is modern in appearance

having been constructed in a brownish brick beneath a mixture of flat and pitched roofs with largely upvc windows. The building sits at the centre of a sloping site surrounded by carparking with access from Radford Road. Although two storeys in height, it does have the appearance of a three-storey building on the north side, enhanced by the site topography.

The significance of the conservation area is derived from its architectural and historic interest. The area contains a high density and variety of historic buildings covering almost all periods from the medieval through to modern 20th century development, including notably 16th and 17th century timber-framed structures and numerous brick-built dwellings from the 18th to the 21st century, as well as shops and civic structures. It is centred around The Square, Bear Hill, and Swan Street. The multi-period buildings in these streets are predominantly terraced or closely spaced, situated at the back of pavement with minimal set-back. This results in a highly linear building line, with the high density forming distinctively enclosed streets towards the village core. Plots are notably long, narrow, and relatively regular in form, with many of the 18th and 19th century properties occupying medieval and postmedieval burgage plots. Structures within and around The Square are more irregularly aligned, with landmark buildings situated within and at the periphery of the former market square. The multi-phased development of the area's built form generates an irregular roof line through subtle variations in structural scale. The Square represents a relatively open space, inherited from the area's medieval market, a strong sense of enclosure is generated by the largely terraced structural form and minimal gap sites.

To the north of the site is the Grade II Listed Crown House, dating originally from the 16th Century. To the south and rear of the site are the Grade II Listed 5 and 7 Swan Street, dating originally from the 18th Century. The Social Club clearly sits within the setting of the former, directly facing the listed building from the opposite side of the street and towering over it due to the topography. It is separated from the later by a garden fence, rear gardens and some intervening trees.

Historically this site does not appear to have been developed until the Social Club was constructed, although the north side of the site, facing Radford Road appears to have had a row of probably small cottages which enclosed the street facing Crown House, with gardens behind. There was a further house, facing Radford Road in the southeast corner of the site, also with a garden to the rear, and the remaining land to the south of the site, appears to have formed gardens to what are 9 and 11 Swan Street.

The existing building is at odds with the historic and architectural character of Alvechurch Conservation Area, being much bigger and bulkier than the buildings in the centre of Alvechurch, it sits within the centre of the plot, rather than being back of pavement, and constructed in an obviously modern design.

The applicant is proposing to construct a two-storey side extension with the first floor being contained in the roof space and the rooms at this level having dormer windows. It is also proposed to change the fenestration on the existing building, removing the extensive fenestration that is currently on the front elevation, and installing sash style windows. Windows will also be installed in the projecting gable which is currently a dominant feature with no fenestration.

The existing building is clearly at odds with the character of the Conservation Area; however, it would appear to be a well-used building and an asset to the community, indicated by its ACV status. The proposals are being put forward to secure its longer-term viability. The proposed extension is much reduced in height compared to an earlier application, and the use of dormer windows in the roof space reflects the vernacular architecture of the village and achieves the aim of reducing the height and dominance of the extension. The proposals to change the existing fenestration of the building and particularly the addition of the sash windows to the projecting gable element, as well as the addition of heads and sills details, will improve the overall appearance of the existing building, particularly at the front where it sits within the setting of Crown House.

Overall, it is considered that this is an improved scheme, with the clearly subservient extension, not adding to the dominance of the building, and the proposed changes to the appearance of the existing building are particularly welcomed.

The Conservation Officer has no objection to the proposed window design which has been amended with casement windows and segmental arched window heads at the ground floor within the extension. The main advantage of the scheme is the improvements to the appearance of the existing building, particularly at the front where it sits within the setting of Crown House, and where it is also highly visible within the CA. The inclusion of sash windows for the upgrading of the existing building is considered acceptable.

In conclusion, this is a much-improved scheme, and subject to incorporating the small changes to the front elevation noted above it is considered that the scheme will have a neutral impact on the significance of the CA and will not harm the significance of the nearby listed buildings noted above. It would therefore comply with the requirements of the above legislation and policies.

### **Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service**

The site is within an area of high archaeological potential and interest being within the Medieval and Post Medieval core of the village of Alvechurch and within its Conservation Area. Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service have requested a planning condition for a written scheme of investigation to inform a programme of archaeological works and recording.

### **Arboricultural Officer**

The application is supported by a Ruskin's Tree Consultancy Arboricultural Report and Impact Assessment, all the tree reference details given below are taken from this report.

The site falls within the Alvechurch conservation area and as such all trees with a stem diameter of 75mm or above at 1.3 metres above ground level are subject to protection under conservation area legislation which is recognised within the Arboricultural Report.

It is highlighted that T16 Ash, and two dead trees will need to be removed to facilitate the proposed development as shown on Site Plan drawing number 1132-07D. T16 Ash has no major prominence within the landscaping of the site or area and is unlikely to be able to achieve full maturity as a good quality tree due to the constraints of its position. Therefore, I have no objection to the loss of this tree alongside the two dead trees.

The footprint of the proposed extension creates a slight incursion into the theoretical BS5837:2012 Root Protection Area (RPA) of tree T20 Western Red Cedar. However, this tree is sounded by a Tarmac surface car park which is likely to have restricted the extent of the spread of root growth on this tree. Therefore, in view of the constraints of the growing position of the tree and small percentage incursion I would not envisage that the level of root likely to be affected will adversely influence the health or stability of this tree.

The footprint of the extension also creates an incursion in the theoretical RPA of T21 which is an offsite Ash tree. However, this tree stands on a raised ground level beyond a retaining boundary wall, this along with the existing Tarmac surfacing within the development site would be expected to have restricted root growth of the tree within the site. Therefore, I find the level of incursion acceptable and would not envisage it adversely affecting the health which is already in question or stability of this tree. The canopy of the tree does overhang the proposed footprint of the building and I envisage it may need to be raised / cutback to a degree which if symmetrically done in accordance with BS3998:2010 guidance would not have any detrimental influence on the tree.

I have no objection to any tree related issues subject to the tree protection conditions.

### **North Worcestershire Water Management**

The proposed development site is situated in the catchment of the River Arrow. The site falls within flood zone 1 and it is not considered that there is any significant fluvial flood risk to the site. Risk to the site from surface water flooding is indicated as low, based on the EA's flood mapping risk. There is some surface water flood risk indicated on the road and surrounding area, correctly designed drainage will mitigate any flood risk from surface water on the site and in the surrounding area.

This site was previously commented on under planning application 21/01845/FUL. While at the time we said that in principle development at this location is acceptable, minimal drainage details had been provided with the application. This time around a drainage strategy has been provided but this indicates possibilities rather than final proposals. It is therefore required that the applicant / agent provides the Local Planning Authority with details of the proposed drainage for the site. This information can be provided via a condition and should be in the form of a drainage plan. It should include the means to manage surface water from the site appropriately and an appropriate level of surface water attenuation. We would also require information on any existing drainage if this were still proposed to be used including information on any discharge points. Any third-party permission would also be required, whether a connection is proposed to STW sewer or the highways drainage system.

If this application is approved, we would request a condition for surface water drainage. Given the uncertainty of the proposed drainage and discharge point at this time we request that this is a pre-commencement condition.

### **WRS - Noise**

I have reviewed the proposals with regards to potential nuisance matters and have no comments other than any new external lighting should avoid nuisance to neighbouring properties and it is recommended that a Construction Environmental Management Plan is

submitted to minimise disturbance from noise and dust. Further guidance is available at [wrs-technical-guidance-document-for-planning-v-5-4-final.pdf](https://www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/wrs-technical-guidance-document-for-planning-v-5-4-final.pdf) (worcsregservices.gov.uk)

I have looked at noise from the proposed use against its current use and don't see that there should be a significant impact from noise. There was some history of noise complaints from the club mainly relating to loud music and behaviour up to late last year. In theory it should reduce issues relating to late night functions etc as B&B use has lower flows of traffic etc.

### **Cadent Gas**

No objection subject to an informative being added to any future decision notice.

### **Alvechurch Parish Council**

Alvechurch Parish Council (APC) object to the proposals and have provided three consultation responses (12.06.2023, 31.10.2023 and 11.04.2024). APC acknowledge that the revised proposals are a significant improvement, enhancing the existing building and the Conservation Area.

The Parish Council have raised the following in summary objections:

- Alvechurch Sports and Social Club is a Community Asset; any change of use is therefore a Material Consideration and the removal of the function room affects the use of the building by the community.
- APC considers the proposals an over-development of the site; the number of rooms, lack of variation in rooms and substandard design, the massing and volume of the extension is of concern.
- No provision for larger tradesmen vehicles, e.g. Transit and Sprinter vans
- Concerns that the existing site plan is both incorrect and misleading.
- Concerns of the implementation of the obscure glazing and future enforcement, impacts on privacy to rear gardens on Swan Street, window design generally.
- The current design remains simplistic and a better quality of design is warranted due to the location being in the Conservation Area and central in the village.
- Noise and disturbance from increased patronage and vehicles
- Concerns regarding the use class of Sui-Generis

### **Publicity**

25 letters originally sent 4 May 2023 (expired 28 May 2023)

Site Notice displayed 9 May 2023 (expired 2 June 2023)

Press Notice published 19 May 2023 (expired 5 June 2023)

A series of consultation and re-consultation has taken place during the determination of the application as amended plans and additional information has been received.

In total 134 objections have been received, 16 in support and 1 representation.

In summary the following matters have been raised in objection to the proposals including:

- Lack of information, lack of clarity of proposals, lack of public engagement
- Overdevelopment, change of use
- Poor design, out of character, size, window design, architectural details

- Loss of privacy, inadequate separation, overshadowing, overlooking, overbearing,
- Deliveries and servicing, congestion, increased traffic, loss and lack of parking, size and layout of car parking spaces, lack of public transport, highway safety of access, increased pollution, construction traffic, fire access
- Noise, anti-social behaviour, lighting
- Need for additional hotels
- Economic impacts on the Village
- Impacts to Conservation Area and nearby Listed Buildings
- Asset of Community Value
- No longer a social club
- Lack of disabled rooms, number of single rooms vs family rooms
- Surface water drainage
- Enforcement of any planning conditions
- Impact on trees and wildlife
- Sustainability standards

In summary the following matters have been raised in support to the proposals including:

- Bring trade and visitors to the Village
- Refurbish the existing building
- Creation of jobs
- Retains the existing business and car park

#### **Alvechurch Residents Association**

- Lack of information and incorrect plans and details submitted
- Concerns regarding viability of drainage proposals
- Securing requested S106 obligations and planning conditions
- Lack of dimensions on plans
- Planning Committee procedure including site visits
- Inappropriate in size and scale for the Conservation Area
- Lack of Travel Plan or condition
- Overlooking, noise and light pollution to 1-7 Swan Street
- Fails to meet High-Quality Design SPD standards for separation, disputes distances stated
- Does not consider the proposal a mixed use, the hotel should be C1 use
- No longer a members club
- Beat survey not carried out at peak times
- Lack of parking and car parking layout doesn't allow for manoeuvring space, space for unloading or large vehicles
- Lack of safe evacuation routes and fire access
- Rooms are small
- Lack of refuse storage
- Harms to Conservation Area and Listed Buildings
- No viability information
- Previous planning decisions including a refused extension to the Club in 1978
- Concerns of anti-social behaviour and noise
- Concerns of highway safety and visibility splays

#### **Other Matters**

### **Councillor A Bailes**

Requests that the application to be decided by Bromsgrove District Planning Committee if the Planning Officer is minded to approve the application due to public interest.

### **Councillor Hotham**

A request has been made for £15,000 towards improving access to the station for less able people as the route lacks dropped kerbs and a general sum towards public transport for the area.

### **Relevant Policies**

#### **Bromsgrove District Plan**

BDP1 Sustainable Development Principles

BDP12 – Sustainable Communities

BDP13 – New Employment Development

BDP15 – Rural Renaissance

BDP16 - Sustainable Transport

BDP19 - High Quality Design

BDP20 - Managing the Historic Environment

BDP21 – Natural Environment

BDP23 - Water Management

#### **Others**

Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan

Alvechurch Village Design Statement SPG

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

Bromsgrove High Quality Design SPD

### **Relevant Planning History**

There have been various planning applications pertaining to the application site from the 1960s to the present day.

### **Assessment of Proposal**

#### **Principle of Development**

The site is located within the settlement of Alvechurch where the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. The provision of new services and facilities through conversion or extensions to support economic growth, tourism and communities is supported by Policies BDP12, BDP13 and BDP15 of the Bromsgrove District Plan 2017, BSS2 and BSS4 of the Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan and paragraph 85 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth.

The proposed introduction of bed and breakfast accommodation has been deemed necessary by the Applicant to diversify its business and provide alternative revenue.

Some resident objections maintain that there is an over-supply of hotel accommodation in this area, and that a need for additional accommodation has not been demonstrated. The

proposal would include 28 bedrooms which would not in itself create or exacerbate an over-supply and competition in the market is not a material planning consideration.

The existing function room would be replaced by bedrooms, and functions would be held on the ground floor within the bar area if required. The Agent confirmed an increase in employees from 3no. full time and 7no. part time to 6no. full time and 14no. part time; as well as associated spend within Alvechurch from hotel guests. Taking the above into account, and that national policy gives significant weight to supporting economic growth, the principle of development is acceptable and supported by local and national policy.

#### Asset of Community Value (ACV)

Alvechurch Sports and Social Club is listed on the Council's Register of Assets of Community Value. The Alvechurch Sports and Social Club was nominated by Alvechurch Parish Council and accepted onto the register as of 23 September 2022. The nomination form sets out details of the nomination for the 'former social club and car park'. The nomination form confirms existence of a car parking lease between the District Council, Parish Council and Landowner which terminates in November 2024. The Report to Cabinet following the nomination and the List of Assets held by the Council describes the asset as the Alvechurch Sports and Social Club.

Section 88 of the Localism Act provides the definition of the ACV:

A building or other land in a local authority's area is land of community value if in the opinion of the authority —

- (a) an actual current use of the building or other land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and;
- (b) it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.

It is therefore considered that the car park is an ancillary use and therefore does not form part of the listing. Notwithstanding this, the lease agreement for the car park terminates in November 2024.

The Community Right to Bid gives a fair chance to a community to make a bid to buy the ACV on the open market if the owner decides to sell. In this instance, the owner is not selling the asset. The provisions of the Localism Act does not place any restriction on what an owner can do with their property, once listed, so long as it remains in their ownership. This is because it is planning policy that determines permitted uses. Notwithstanding this, the proposal, including any change of use, is a material consideration for the ACV.

There have been comments received setting out that there is no longer a social/members club and concerns raised over the loss of car parking which is a benefit to the community when visiting Alvechurch. The existing function room would be lost to facilitate the change of use, and any future functions would be held on the ground floor within the bar area. It is not uncommon for bars to hold functions and this element of the Club could continue in a similar way if permission were to be granted, although there may be some impact on the frequency and scale of events. The existing function room and/or its internal arrangements could be utilised in a different way, within the same use, without the need for planning permission or the Owner could decide not to hold functions. The car parking



agreement is to come to an end in November 2024 and the Applicant would permit local residents up to 30 minutes free parking via its proposed ANPR camera system. There is no right to park on this private land.

The Alvechurch Sports and Social Club is an example of a community facility and its importance recognised by its ACV listing. Policy BDP12 supports improvements to existing facilities to enable them to adapt to changing needs and supports facilities that meet the needs of the community; which is supported by paragraph 88 of the NPPF.

Therefore, whilst there may be some harm from the loss of the function room, this could be closed without the need for planning permission. The Alvechurch Sports and Social Club would have the ability to hold functions in the bar area and the proposals would offer lettable accommodation in the centre of Alvechurch. There is no right to park on private land and the car park lease is coming to an end, however, car parking for the community, albeit time limited, has been offered by the Applicant. On balance and taking the above into account, the proposals are considered acceptable and continues to offer a community facility which is supported by local and national policy.

### Uses

The existing use of the site as a social club/public house is *Sui Generis*. The proposals would be ancillary to the main use. There is no proposed reception area shown on the proposed floor plans, the accommodation is only accessible through the members bar area, there are no other facilities used exclusively by paying guests of the accommodation and the general activity associated with the coming and going of customers staying at the premises would not be markedly different from the existing use. The inclusion of accommodation is a traditional function and accepted as an ancillary use.

### Heritage

Alvechurch Sports and Social Club is located at the eastern end of Alvechurch Conservation Area; the significance of the Conservation Area is derived from its architectural and historic interest. The Conservation Area contains many listed buildings, and the site falls within their setting. Crown House, a Grade II Listed Building is located to the north of Radford Road and 5&7 Swan Street, Grade II Listed, is located to the south on Swan Street. The Conservation Officer has confirmed that the existing building is at odds with the historic and architectural character of Alvechurch Conservation Area, being much bigger and bulkier than the buildings in the centre of Alvechurch, it sits within the centre of the plot, rather than being back of pavement, and constructed in an obviously modern design.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that LPAs when considering planning applications, should have regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest they might have. While Section 72 requires special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

This is supported by Policy BDP20 of the Bromsgrove District Plan, which amongst other things, state that development affecting heritage assets, including alterations or additions as well as development within the setting of heritage assets, should not have a

detrimental impact on the character, appearance or significance of the heritage asset or heritage assets.

In addition, policies in the NPPF must also be considered. Paragraph 200 which requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. Paragraph 201 requires LPAs to take account of the significance of affected heritage assets when considering the impact of a proposal, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Paragraph 205 requires great weight to be attached to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of the level of potential harm and paragraph 206 states that any harm to or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, including its setting, requires clear and convincing justification.

Policies in the Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan must also be considered, including policy HDNE1: Built Heritage and Local Character and the Alvechurch Village Design Statement SPG.

The Conservation Officer confirms that the proposed extension is much reduced in height compared to an earlier application, and the use of dormer windows in the roof space reflects the vernacular architecture of the Village and achieves the aim of reducing the height and dominance of the extension. The proposals to change the existing fenestration of the building and particularly the addition of the sash windows to the projecting gable element, as well as the addition of head and sill details, would improve the overall appearance of the existing building, particularly at the front where it sits within the setting of Crown House (Grade II Listed). Overall, the Conservation Officer concludes that it is considered that this is an improved scheme, with a clearly subservient extension, not adding to the dominance of the building, and the proposed changes to the appearance of the existing building are particularly welcomed. The amendments to the proposal include alterations to window number and location within the existing building, casement windows in the dormers, casement windows to ground floor windows with segmental arched window heads within the extension.

The Conservation Officer concludes that there would be a neutral impact on the significance of the Conservation Area, and the proposals would not harm the significance of the nearby listed buildings. The proposals would therefore comply with the requirements of the above legislation and policies. Planning conditions in respect of materials, joinery, and timings for the improvements to the existing building have been requested. The suggested landscaping condition is not considered reasonable given the constrained nature of the site and available space for landscaping.

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service have acknowledged the site's location within the Medieval and Post Medieval core of the village of Alvechurch and within its Conservation Area. Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service have requested a planning condition for a written scheme of investigation to inform a programme of archaeological works and recording in accordance with paragraph 211 of the NPPF. The Applicant/Agent has agreed to this pre-commencement planning condition.

#### Design, Character and Appearance

The proposal includes alterations to the existing building as well as a proposed two storey extension. The proposed extension is located towards the rear of the site, which is set

back from the highway, and it is the alterations to the existing building that would be most visible.

The proposed extension would measure approximately 6.4m high, 12m deep and 15.4m long. The extension would include 20 bedrooms with a connecting corridor into the main building. The proposed extension is to include bedrooms at ground and first floor level. The internal arrangements including head height and bedroom sizes are considered acceptable and appropriate for their intended use. The Council does not have prescriptive size requirements for hotel bedrooms. The overall bulk of the proposal is considered proportionate to its location and is subservient to the existing building. The extension includes a pitched roof with pitched roof dormers. An external escape stair has been provided to the car park from the extension.

The introduction of additional fenestration on the existing building alongside the alteration of existing openings is welcomed and an improvement to the overall design and appearance of the building. The proposed windows and frames to the existing building are painted timber sash, with or without a restrictor. The proposed windows and frames of the proposed extension are painted timber casement windows, with or without a restrictor. The proposed design of the extension, specifically the window details, is proposed differently to the existing building and is considered acceptable and in keeping with the character of the area.

The proposed main facing brick, including painted finish, of the extension is to match the existing and can be controlled by condition. A further condition for the proposed roof tiles, lintel heads, sills, rainwater goods and the colour of the paint finish of the brickwork can also be secured by condition.

Overall, the proposal's design is considered to accord with policies BDP1, BDP19 of the Bromsgrove District Plan and the Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan and Village Design Statement SPG.

#### Residential Amenity

The application has been supported by a site plan with annotated separation distances, site section and window details. The Council's High Quality Design SPD includes guidance for separation distances and is in this instance a starting point, as not all sites will fit neatly within the parameters of the SPD. Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan Policy BSS2 supports a variety of uses outside the shopping area provided that there is no significant adverse impacts on residential amenity in terms of traffic disturbance, noise, odours, litter or hours of operation as a result of the proposal.

The existing building is located approximately 2m from the boundary and approximately 18m from the rear of 1 Swan Street. The existing building is built at an angle to the gardens on Swan Street and therefore the distance between the boundary increases in a south-easterly direction to approximately 4m. The existing elevation at ground floor contains windows serving the lounge/bar and toilets, which due to the land levels are set down and would not cause adverse overlooking or loss of privacy. The existing building at first floor is devoid of windows. Six sash windows are proposed to be inserted into the existing rear elevation to serve bedrooms. The sash windows are to be installed on a restrictor with the maximum top opening of 300mm to allow for ventilation and are

proposed as obscure glazed on the first floor and western elevation ground and first floor where they serve bedrooms and bathrooms.

A site visit has been undertaken to 1 Swan Street. At the time of the visit there was existing mature vegetation with the garden of 1 Swan Street and a timber boundary fence. Due to the site levels, the existing ground floor and openings are not visible from the garden of 1 Swan Street. The proposal includes for obscured glazing and restricted openings to first floor windows on the rear elevation and it is considered that this would reduce overlooking and loss of privacy. The inclusion of windows on this elevation would likely cause perceived overlooking and loss of privacy; however, via mitigation, the actual overlooking and loss of privacy would be limited to 1 Swan Street.

The proposed extension is approximately 19m at its closest point to 3 Swan Street; however, the two elevations are not directly opposite and the separation distance increases as the extension is set away from the boundary at an angle with the residential gardens of Swan Street. The extension comprises casement windows at ground floor and within the first-floor dormer windows. The front elevation windows would have clear glazing whereas all windows on the rear elevation within the extension would have obscure glazing and be installed on a restrictor to 60 degrees. The boundary with Swan Street is vegetated and includes boundary treatments of brick or timber fencing. The site levels are set below the properties of Swan Street, as shown on the submitted sections. Owing to the proposed design and mitigation, site levels and vegetation, the proposed extension is not considered to cause adverse impacts to the residential amenities of the properties to the rear of the site, namely 3-11 Swan Street.

The submitted details now clearly indicate the design of the window and glazing proposed which would be secured by planning condition.

Therefore, taking into account the proposed use i.e. the proposal is for bed and breakfast and not permanent residential accommodation, the topography of the site and surrounding residential property, the separation distances, existing vegetation which is protected from removal by reason of its location within the Conservation Area and the proposed window details it is considered that there would be some perceived overlooking and loss of privacy to 1 Swan Street; however, the actual overlooking and loss of privacy would be limited. The proposal is considered to be compatible with the adjoining uses and would not have a significant impact on residential amenity.

The inclusion of obscure windows to some of the proposed bedrooms is considered acceptable for the guests due to the temporary nature of their stay.

The orientation and layout of the site would not result in adverse overshadowing or overbearance to the residential properties and gardens of Swan Street.

### Noise

Residents have raised noise concerns for the existing operations at the Alvechurch Sports and Social Club and the proposed disturbance from the new accommodation. The car parking area now includes outdoor picnic benches and reports have been made of patron disturbance, particularly during busy periods late at night. Any incidents of anti-social behaviour should be reported to the Police. Residents have also complained regarding light pollution existing and that proposed.

The noise typically associated with a social club, including loud conversation, background music, television, and people arriving and leaving would be taking place in close proximity to the proposed accommodation and existing residential properties on land adjacent and is a consideration.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Noise have confirmed within their consultation response that there have been complaints of noise in the past, but it is their view that the proposals would not have a significant impact and that noise may be reduced following the proposals. The proposed use would be a small-scale operation and the nature of the combined bedroom accommodation and the social club would reflect the long established tradition of let rooms. The proposed uses are not inherently incompatible. The proposal would remove the outdoor picnic benches, which may be a contributing factor to additional existing noise, and WRS Noise accept that the proposals may contribute towards a reduction in noise at the site.

WRS have requested a Construction Environmental Management Plan is submitted as a pre-commencement planning condition which has been approved by the Agent.

There would be additional internal lighting to serve the accommodation and the planning system could not control these hours of operation. The site is located within the centre of Alvechurch and the existing and proposed uses would be operational in hours of darkness, therefore lighting is to be expected for the routine running of the site and currently exists on site. The proposal may create a change to the lighting environment, particularly along the residential gardens of Swan Street, however, it is considered that the proposal would not cause such harm to residential amenities as to warrant refusal of the planning application. The internal lighting of the proposal cannot be controlled, and it is considered reasonable for some external lighting as an operational need. It is not considered reasonable to request a planning condition to prohibit external lighting and WRS have requested any new external lighting should avoid nuisance to neighbouring properties which would be achieved by appropriate design.

### Highways

The site is in a sustainable location within the Village, off Radford Road, an unclassified road. The site benefits from an existing vehicular access with good visibility in both directions. The applicant has provided 2.4m x 25m visibility splays on a plan which are the existing splays and are deemed to be acceptable by Worcestershire Highways.

There is a lit footpath in front of the site on Radford Road which leads into the centre of Alvechurch and "No Parking" restrictions are in force. The site is located within walking distance of amenities and bus stops for trips to/from Bromsgrove and Redditch Monday-Friday although this is an infrequent service. Alvechurch Railway Station is located approx. 850m from the proposed development providing connections to the local area, including Birmingham.

At present the site has 48 car parking spaces which are to be reduced to 33 spaces (a reduction of 15 parking spaces) which is deemed to be acceptable to Worcestershire Highways as the development meets the Streetscape Design Guide parking standards and is in a sustainable location. The car park is to be controlled and enforced by ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition). The site is to be serviced using a 7.5t rigid

vehicle and the tracking has been found acceptable by Worcestershire Highways. Refuse bins are identified on the proposed site plan and the occupier would need to ensure that any waste is disposed of appropriately, it is an operational decision as to the contractor that is used to dispose of waste.

The Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges the car parking available at the Alvechurch Sports and Social Club and the shared-use agreement, and Policy GAT2 protects and requires the retention of the parking at the Alvechurch Sports and Social Club unless there is no longer a need for the parking facility, or equivalent public parking space is provided elsewhere within comfortable walking distance of the Alvechurch Village essential services and in easy access for people with disabilities.

Worcestershire Highways have reviewed the Applicant's evidence of alternative car parks/areas (Tanyard Lane, The Square, Bear Hill and the site) including a survey in April 2022 (carried out, weekday 10.00 -12.00 and 19.00-21.00 and weekend 10.00-12.00 and 19.00-21.00) and consider the local availability of parking acceptable should it be necessary; however, the parking study concludes there will be sufficient parking available on site.

Worcestershire Highways consider the existing use to produce no trips in the AM and 8 two-way trips in the PM. The traffic forecast for the proposed development is agreed as 6 AM and 4 PM peak hour new two-way vehicle movements. Therefore, a combined trip generation of 6 additional trips during the AM peak and a total of 12 trips (8 + 4) during the PM peak. The increase in trips would not have a severe impact on the highway network or safety. It should be noted Worcestershire Highways assess the peak periods and not the whole day, the peak periods are when there are the greatest number of vehicles on the road. The proposal will not result in a detrimental severe impact on the operation or safety of the local highway network. NPPF paragraph 115 sets out that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The County Council have requested planning conditions for cycle parking spaces (7), motorcycle parking (2), accessible parking (2), Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), and Employment Travel Plan. The CEMP is a pre-commencement condition and has been approved by the Agent.

A request for financial contributions towards dropped kerbs at various locations to Alvechurch Train Station was requested by Councillor Hotham. Worcestershire Highways have considered the request fails to meet all the tests highlighted within Paragraph 57 of the NPPF. One of the tests being that the proposal is "fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development". Highways do not consider this request to be proportionate to the proposal in this instance.

Paragraph 57 of the NPPF states that planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- b) directly related to the development; and
- c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

The District Council does not consider that the request complies with the above set out as Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 as the crossing points are not necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, is not directly related to the development and is not fairly and reasonable related in scale and kind to the development.

Worcestershire Highways conclude that there would not be a severe impact from the proposals and therefore there are no justifiable grounds on which an objection could be maintained.

The proposals are considered to comply with Policy BDP16, Neighbourhood Plan Policies GAT 1-3 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### Drainage

The information set out within the submitted drainage report states that the proposed drainage strategy incorporates formal attenuation with flow control and small SuDS features proportionate to the scale of the development to provide betterment from the existing. Surface water will be partly attenuated from the proposed extension into geocellular storage tanks beneath a section of car parking with controlled outflow into the existing piped system. There would continue to be some informal surface water site discharge onto Radford Road via a proposed rain garden to provide some retention, detention and water treatment and a proposed channel drain along the entrance to diffuse informal runoff onto Radford Road.

Seven Trent Water are not a statutory consultee and North Worcestershire Water Management have been consulted as the appropriate body.

North Worcestershire Water Management have considered the application and confirm the site is located within Flood Zone 1 and that the risk to the site from surface water is also low. NWWM note some surface water risk within the local area. NWWM have requested a pre-commencement planning condition for surface water drainage should permission be granted which has been approved by the Agent.

#### Arboriculture & Ecology

The application is supported by Ruskin's Tree Consultancy Arboricultural Report and Impact Assessment. The report confirms that there would be the removal of an Ash tree and two dead trees as part of the proposals. The Tree Officer has no objection to their removal. The Tree Officer notes that there would be an incursion into root protection areas of two trees that are within/adjacent to the site boundary and there may need to be some pruning works due to overhang; however, has no overall concerns. The Tree Officer has requested planning conditions for: tree protection, root protection areas, works to be carried out to British Standards and an Arboricultural Method Statement and tree protection plan. The tree protection conditions are pre-commencement which have been approved by the Agent.

Three trees (two dead) would be removed and there is limited scope available on site for tree planting due to the predominantly sealed surface and built form. A landscaping plan or replacement planting is therefore not considered reasonable in this instance.

The application is supported by a Protected Species & Habitat Walkover Survey by Chase Ecological Consultancy and Bat Emergence Surveys by Arc Ecology. The report confirmed on-site value to both nesting birds and bats. Two emergence surveys were carried out and no bats were seen entering or exiting the building during the dusk emergence surveys and no evidence of the presence of bats was found during the initial ecological building inspection. Due to a lack of evidence found, bats are not currently considered to pose a constraint to the proposed development of the building, and no further survey for bats with regard to this building is considered necessary. The Arc Ecology Report makes a recommendation for bat boxes which can be secured by condition.

### Other Matters

Many objections have raised concerns regarding the name and operation of the site and the applicant; however, the planning system is concerned with the use of land and so commercial and personal considerations are not central to the determination of the present case. The Application Form and development are for the Alvechurch Sports and Social Club and the application has been determined on this basis.

The car park has been used for outdoor seating and the siting of charity recycling bins; these are not considered to constitute development for the purposes of planning control.

Planning conditions requested by Alvechurch Residents Association are not considered to meet the tests within paragraph 56 of the NPPF.

Matters raised which are not material planning considerations have not been detailed within this report.

### Conclusions

The principle of the conversion, extension and introduction of accommodation is considered to support economic growth and tourism and is supported by local and national policies.

There would be a loss of the function room and whilst it is proposed to facilitate functions within the bar area; the loss of a dedicated room would cause some harm to the community asset, although the decision to terminate this aspect of the business could be made without planning permission. Similarly, the loss of car parking and introduction of an ANPR system may affect local residents' ability to park on site, however these is no legal right to park on the land.

Notwithstanding that, the introduction of the new use would bring about economic growth during the construction phase and post construction, supporting other facilities within the Village. The proposal would also create additional jobs and support the continued operations of the Alvechurch Sports and Social Club, diversifying its revenue.

There would be some perceived overlooking and loss of privacy to existing residents at 1 Swan Street; however, the actual overlooking and loss of privacy would be limited. The proposed window details can be controlled by planning condition.

The Conservation Officer has concluded that there would be a neutral impact on the significance of the Conservation Area and the proposals would not harm the significance



of the nearby listed buildings. The improvements to the existing building can be secured by planning condition.

Worcestershire Highways have no objection subject to planning conditions. Worcestershire Highways have considered the proposed car parking provision, layout and turning alongside visibility splays at the access to be acceptable. Worcestershire Highways confirm there are no technical reasons to withhold approval and that there would be no severe highway impact resulting from the proposals.

There are no other technical concerns, of themselves or in combination, that cannot be controlled by condition to suggest that the application cannot be supported.

On balance, the proposals are considered to accord with the Development Plan as a whole and the recommendation is that planning permission should be granted subject to conditions and informatives.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That planning permission be **GRANTED**.

**Conditions:**

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

Location Plan - received 14.03.2023  
Proposed Block Plan - received 15.04.2023  
Proposed Site Sections 12C  
Proposed Layout 04G  
Proposed Elevations 06G  
Proposed Window Details 15  
Proposed Site Layout 07G  
Proposed Room Section 14  
General Arrangement and Tracking 01b Sheet 1 &2

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

- 3) Prior to their first installation, details of the proposed roof tiles, lintel heads, sills, rainwater goods and the colour of the paint finish of the brickwork shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Prior to their first installation, details of the form, colour and finish of the materials to be used externally on the walls shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance, enhances the Conservation Area and setting of the nearby Listed Buildings is maintained as a result of the works in accordance with policy BDP20 of the Bromsgrove District Plan, the NPPF and section 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 4) Prior to their first installation joinery details at a scale of 1:5 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure that the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building is maintained as a result of the works in accordance with policy BDP20 of the Bromsgrove District Plan, the NPPF and section 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 5) The new accommodation should not be occupied until the alterations to the fenestration of the existing building as shown on Approved Plan 6G, have been installed.

Reason: To ensure that the improvements to the existing building are carried out.

- 6) 1) No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation(s), has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

- a) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording.
- b) The programme for post investigation assessment.
- c) Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording.
- d) Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation.
- e) Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site Investigation.
- f) Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

2) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme(s) of Investigation approved under condition (1) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 211 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 7) No works or development shall take place until a scheme for surface water drainage has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme shall be indicated on a drainage plan. There shall be no increase in runoff from the site compared to the pre-development situation up to the 1 in 100 year event plus an allowance for climate change. If a connection to a sewer system is proposed, then evidence shall be submitted of the in principle approval of Severn Trent water for this connection. The scheme should include runoff treatment proposals for surface water drainage. The drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first use of the development and thereafter maintained.

Reason: In order to ensure satisfactory drainage conditions that will not create or exacerbate flood risk on site or within the surrounding local area.

- 8) Prior to commencement of development, an arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan should be submitted in accordance with the recommendations made within the Ruskins Tree Consultancy Arboricultural Report.

Reason: In order to protect the trees on/near to the site, which form an important part of the amenity of the area.

- 9) Prior to the commencement of any works on site including any site clearance, demolition, excavations or import of machinery or materials, the trees or hedgerows which are shown as retained on the approved plans both on or adjacent to the application site or any within a distance of influence of any ground or development work on any adjoining land shall be protected with fencing around the root protection areas. This fencing shall be constructed in accordance with the guidance in the British Standard BS5837:2012 and shall remain as erected until the development has been completed.

Reason: To ensure that retained trees are protected for the duration of the construction phase.

- 10) All tree management pruning work should be carried out in accordance with recognised good practice by reference to British Standard 3998 (2010) to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to protect the trees on/near to the site, which form an important part of the amenity of the area.

- 11) No works of any kind shall be permitted within or through the Root Protection Areas of trees or hedges on and adjacent to the application site without the prior specific written permission of the Local Planning Authority. This specifically includes any works such as changes in ground levels, installation of equipment or utility services, the passage or use of machinery, the storage, burning or disposal of materials or waste or the washing out of concrete mixing plants or fuel tanks.

Reason: In order to protect the trees on/near to the site, which form an important part of the amenity of the area.

- 12) Prior to first occupation, in order to provide a net gain in biodiversity four schwegler bat and/or bird boxes or equivalent shall be placed on site in suitable locations at least 3 metres above ground level facing to the south or east and kept thereafter in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal results in a net gain of biodiversity having regard to BDP21 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and Paragraph 180 of the NPPF.

- 13) The Development hereby approved shall not commence until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include but not be limited to the following:-

- Details of the proposed measures to monitor and minimise emissions of noise, vibration (piling) and dust during the construction phase.
- Measures to ensure that vehicles leaving the site do not deposit mud or other detritus on the public highway;
- Details of site operative parking areas, material storage areas and the location of site operatives' facilities (offices, toilets etc);
- The hours that delivery vehicles will be permitted to arrive and depart, and arrangements for unloading and manoeuvring.

The measures set out in the approved Plan shall be carried out and complied with in full during the construction of the development hereby approved. Site operatives' parking, material storage and the positioning of operatives' facilities shall only take place on the site in locations approved by in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate on-site facilities and in the interests of highway safety.

- 14) The Development hereby approved shall not be occupied until the parking and turning facilities have been provided as shown on drawing 1132-07G.

Reason: To ensure conformity with submitted details.

- 15) The Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the applicant has submitted a Travel Plan using Modeshift STARS Business. They must meet green level accreditation before occupation and bronze level accreditation within 12 months of occupation.

Reason: To reduce vehicle movements and promote sustainable access

- 65) The Development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until sheltered, safe, secure and accessible cycle parking (7 spaces) to comply with the Council's adopted highway design guide has been provided in accordance with details which shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the approved cycle parking shall be kept available for the parking of bicycles only.

Reason: To comply with the Council's parking standards.

- 17) The Development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until 2 accessible car parking spaces have been provided and thereafter shall be kept available for disabled users as approved.

Reason: To provide safe and suitable access for all.

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