

Minutes of Planning Committee

4 June 2025 at 5.04pm at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present:

Councillors: Millar (Chair) Kaur (Deputy Chair)	Councillors: Chidley Loan Piper Tromans Webb
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Apologies:

Councillors Cotterill, Horton and Younis

Also present:

Alison Bishop (Development Planning Manager), Simon Smith (Planning Solicitor), Barry Ridgway (Highway Asset and Statutory Functions Manager), (Andy Thorpe (Healthy Urban Development Officer), William Stevens (Principal Planner), and Anthony Lloyd (Democratic Services Officer).

Meeting ended at 6.35pm.

43/25

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

44/25

Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2025 are approved as a correct record.

45/25

Extension to duration of the meeting

Resolved that, in accordance with paragraph 8.3.2 of Part 2.7 of the Council's Constitution, the duration of the meeting is extended to allow sufficient time for matters that are required by law to be determined at the meeting to be considered in full.

Planning Application DC/24/70128 – Proposed change of use from residential dwelling to children's home for up to 3 No. young people aged between 11 and 17 years old - 1 Constable Drive, Smethwick B66 3AY

The applicant's agent was present and addressed the Committee with the following points:-

- Highways officers had concluded that the amount of visitors would be no more than that of a residential property;
- new frontage for a dropped kerb had been added into the recommended conditions of planning permission;
- there was no evidence that the application would give rise to criminal activity or anti-social behaviour;
- the site would be well-staffed with two on-site care providers at any one time as well as a manager who would be on site Monday-Friday, 9am – 5pm;
- the shift patterns that were proposed were carefully curated as such that the change-over of staff would not occur at times of high traffic congestion to avoid unnecessary obstructions;
- the applicant would ensure that a fourth car parking space would be provided;
- the residential home would be for three children only and no more.

An objector was present who addressed the Committee with the following concerns:-

- the introduction of the home would exacerbate traffic issues in the area;
- parked cars could increase the chance of emergency vehicles being obstructed;
- the private shared road serving the estate would deteriorate as a result of increased traffic, which would disproportionately impact other residents in the area.

Officers from Highways confirmed that they would investigate the possibility of introducing a "Keep Clear" sign on the public highway that was just outside of Constable Drive.

Members were satisfied that the conditions recommended were adequate and highlighted that issues around unwanted access to Constable Drive the road could be discussed between the residents which could include the construction of a retractable barrier.

Resolved that Planning Application DC/24/70128 – 1 Constable Drive, Smethwick B66 3AY (Proposed change of use from residential dwelling to children's home for up to 3 No. young people aged between 11 and 17 years old) is approved subject to conditions relating to:-

- i) Management plan;
- ii) The premises shall be used only as a residential home for three children and three staff and for no other purpose (including any other use falling within Class C2 of the Order) but may revert back to C3 (dwellinghouses) on cessation of the C2 use;

- iii) Four parking spaces to be provided;
- iv) New dropped kerb to be provided;
- v) Revised front boundary wall details; and
- vi) Soft landscaping scheme to include a replacement tree.

(In accordance with Part 4.5 of the constitution, Councillor Loan did not participate in the determination of this application as he had not attended the arranged site visit.)

47/25 **Planning Application DC/25/70439 – Retention of single storey rear extension for storage and proposed single storey extension for storage - 71-73 Bromford Lane, West Bromwich**

The applicant was not in attendance at the meeting.

An objector was present and addressed the Committee. Concerns were raised in relation to the rear access to the site. It was stated by the objector that the rear access was not suitable for non-residential use and as such would cause distress for local residents. Additionally, it was alleged that the site was currently operating outside of its designated usage class.

Members were reminded that although the points made by the objector were valid, the application was for a proposed single storey extension for storage which, if approved, could only be used for that purpose. Furthermore, it was stated that land registry issues were not a matter for the Committee to consider.

It was confirmed by the Development and Planning Manager that the application sites operated as a convenience store and Asian sweet shop respectively. As such, no permission would be required by the applicant if they wished to change the convenience store into a restaurant. However, hot food takeaways would require further permission.

The Committee was minded to defer consideration of the application pending additional information in relation to the current use of the site.

Resolved that consideration of Planning Application DC/25/70439 – 71-73 Bromford Lane, West Bromwich (Retention of single storey rear extension for storage and proposed single storey extension for storage) is deferred in order to obtain further information.

48/25 **Planning Application DC/25/70220 – Proposed change of use from banqueting hall to 2 No. warehouse units, first floor extensions to create office space and proposed 4 No. new two storey industrial units to rear and associated works - Victoria Palace, Pope Street, Smethwick B66 2JP**

No objectors were present at the meeting. The Development Planning Manager reported that objections had been received in relation to highway concerns, including the potential for hazards when exiting the site onto Lewisham Road.

The applicant was present and addressed the Committee with the following points:-

- the warehouse would be for business use only;
- there was a significant demand for units in the area;
- the introduction of warehouse units to the area would encourage entrepreneurship;
- the ceasing of use for the banqueting hall would ensure that less disruption was caused to the neighbouring area; and
- the new entry and exit system to the site would be safer than what was already in place.

Members were minded to approve the application, subject to the conditions recommended by the Executive Director-Place.

Resolved that Planning Application DC/25/70220 – Victoria Palace, Pope Street, Smethwick B66 2JP (Proposed change of use from banqueting hall to 2 No. warehouse units, first floor extensions to create office space and proposed 4 No. new two storey industrial units to rear and associated works) is approved, subject to conditions relating to:-

- i) external materials;
- ii) contamination;
- iii) noise Impact Assessment;
- iv) air Quality Assessment;
- v) drainage (foul);
- vi) surface water drainage scheme;
- vii) parking to be implemented and retained;
- viii) hard and soft landscaping;
- ix) renewable energy;
- x) construction method statement;
- xi) jobs method statement;
- xii) finished floor levels;
- xiii) cycle storage details;
- xiv) waste storage details;
- xv) archaeological desktop study;
- xvi) external lighting scheme;
- xvii) boundary treatments; and
- xviii) BNG credits purchase proof.

49/25

Planning Application DC/25/70515 – Retention of rear dormer (amendment to planning permission DC/23/68803 and Lawful Development Certificate DC/23/68615) - 68 Grove Vale Avenue, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 6BZ

Members were advised that this application was before the Committee because the applicant had not used matching materials on the rear dormer which had therefore resulted in the development falling out of that allowed for under Permitted Development rights.

No objectors were present at the meeting. The Development Planning Manager highlighted that objections had been received in relation to loss of light and privacy concerns.

The applicant was present and addressed the Committee with the following points:-

- the dormer sat to the rear of the property away from public view;
- high quality materials were used and were consistent with what had been used on other areas of the property;
- the dormer promoted a high standard of amenity for future use; and
- no overbearing or instructive features were present.

Members were satisfied with application and minded to grant approval, as recommended by the Executive Director-Place.

Resolved that Planning Application DC/25/70515 – 68 Grove Vale Avenue, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 6BZ (Retention of rear dormer ((amendment to planning permission DC/23/68803 and Lawful Development Certificate DC/23/68615) is approved.

50/25

Annual Report of the Planning Committee 2024-2025

The Committee considered its 2024-2025 annual report. In total, 1087 planning applications had been received by Sandwell Council of which 929 were determined. Of the 929 planning applications determined, 895 (96%) were dealt with by officers using delegated powers. 808 planning applications were approved, 120 planning applications were refused permission.

It was reported that of those refused planning applications, 23 (26%) submitted an appeal. 70% of the appeals were dismissed by the planning inspectorate.

It was noted that the local planning authority was closely monitored by the Government in relation to the time taken to determine planning applications. Sandwell Council's planning department had consistently exceeding these performance targets with 100% of major planning applications determined within the 13 week target, 98% of all minor applications being determined within the 8 week target and 95% of other applications determined within the 8 week target.

Resolved that the Annual Report of the Planning Committee 2024-2025 is approved and presented to Full Council.

51/25

Decisions of the Planning Inspectorate

The Committee noted the decisions of the Planning Inspectorate in relation to appeals against refusal of planning permission as follows:-

Application Ref	Site Address	Inspectorate Decision

DC/24/69937	Whitehaven 6 Hill Lane Great Barr Birmingham B43 6NA	Dismissed LPA cost application is refused. Appellant full award of costs is refused.
DC/24/69512	28 Hackett Road Rowley Regis B65 0RP	Dismissed

52/25

Applications Determined Under Delegated Powers

The Committee noted the applications determined under delegated powers by the Executive Director – Place, under powers delegated to them, as set out in the Council's Constitution.