

## Agenda item

LA04/2021/1317/F - Demolition of existing dwellings and erection of two new dwellings and associated site works, 450 and 448 Lisburn Road

### Minutes:

The Planning Manager provided the Committee with an overview of the applications and highlighted the following main issues for consideration:

- Principle of development;
- Affordable housing and housing mix;
- Adaptable and accessible housing;
- Climate change including SuDS;
- Demolition;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- Design;
- Impact on Listed Buildings;
- Impact on neighbouring amenity;
- Transport;
- Waste water infrastructure;
- Other environmental considerations; and
- The application site was within the Malone Park Conservation Area.

He explained that officers were recommending that planning permission be refused as the proposal would result in the unacceptable demolition of two semi-detached dwellings that make a material contribution to the character and appearance of the area and the proposed replacement dwellings would have a harmful impact on the Malone Park Conservation Area by reason of their excessive plot coverage, scale, height and alignment. He added that it was considered that the proposed dwellings would harm the setting of the adjacent Listed Building, 1a Malone Park.

He reported that DfC Historic Environment Division, NI Water and the Council's Conservation Officer had objected to the proposal and that the Council had received three letters of objection and 18 letters of support.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. H. McConnell, RPP Architects and Mr. M. Gordon, Turley to the meeting on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. McConnell explained that the current buildings on the site had been vacant for 20 years and were in such a state of dereliction that they were well beyond viable refurbishment, as detailed in the engineer's report which accompanied the application.

He reported that the upper floors of the buildings had collapsed to the ground floor and that the properties were well known to Building Control and that there had been many visits to the site by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to address ongoing issues of antisocial behaviour and risk to life, especially to children.

He stated that, given the degree of dereliction, disrepair and near collapse, the repeated issues of recorded antisocial behaviour and the ongoing danger the properties present to the adjacent residents and to the public, the properties made a negative contribution to the distinctive character of the area. He added that the proposal demonstrated that bringing families back to Malone Park, the high-quality design of the homes and the materials used, would enhance the area and the wider streetscape of the Lisburn Road.

He acknowledged the three letters of objection which had been received, but pointed out that none of them were from properties immediately adjacent to the site and that there had been a significant degree of support for the scheme, including the residents of the listed gate lodge property at 1a Malone Park.

He highlighted the planning policies that the proposal aligned with and that the proposed dwellings were in character with the conservation area and supported the surrounding context and would enhance the character of the conservation area.

Following discussion around the safety of the existing buildings, the Director of Planning and Building Control clarified that the assertions around the dangers

posed were indeed assertions, and that there was currently no evidence to substantiate the claims and no surveys had been undertaken.

## Proposal

Moved by Councillor P. Donnelly,

Seconded by Councillor Carson,

“That the Committee grants planning permission on the basis that:

- The application meets the desirability criteria of section 104 of the planning act 2011 as the replacement buildings will enhance the character and appearance of the area and this is an opportunity to do so;
- Given the condition of the buildings and the likelihood of further deterioration, even dereliction public safety could become an issue at the site, it is my view that the application meets the public interest criterion and the presumption against demolition should be relaxed as laid out in paragraph 6.18 of the SPPS;
- The current buildings make a negative and nonmaterial contribution to the character of the area, and the design quality, form, and use of materials sympathetic to the area in the replacement dwellings will enhance the character of the area and bring vibrancy to what is a key junction in the south of our city thus meeting the criteria in relation to policy BH2;
- The officer discusses the footprint of the replacement dwellings, this is a mathematical equation which doesn't include the rear return of number 448, and that if this was included (as it was originally a part of the initial footprint of the property) the existing plot coverage would increase in turn changing the equation in square meters and in percentage terms and the 1.5 criteria would be met. That said 0.3 is

negligible and in line with other applications where the same issue arose permission was granted, it is not seen as a reasonable reason for refusal in relation to policy BH1 or the Malone Park conservation design guide; and

- Delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise any conditions.”

On a vote, fourteen Members voted for the proposal and four against and it was declared carried.

(Alderman Lawlor left the meeting while the following item was being considered.)