

Cerys Jones

From: Philip Forster
Sent: 13 February 2019 13:53
To: planning_admin
Subject: kFW: P/2018/0773 - 33 Park Street, Wrexham

Local member response

From: marc jones [mailto:marcvjones@gmail.com]
Sent: 13 February 2019 10:56
To: Philip Forster
Cc: Sharon Williams
Subject: Re: P/2018/0773 - 33 Park Street, Wrexham

Yes, happy with that. Thanks both.

What's the timescale (in as much as we know)?

Marc

Y Cyngorydd / **Councillor Marc Jones**
Plaid Cymru, Grosvenor
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Wrecsam / **Wrexham County Borough Council**

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On Wed, 13 Feb 2019 at 10:53, Philip Forster <Philip.Forster@wrexham.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi Marc,

What I'll do is pass this on to our Appeals Officer Sharon Williams and ask her to send it onto the Planning Inspectorate as a representation. If you are Ok, I will use this representation as the basis of the Council's Statement of Case?

Phil

Philip Forster

Swyddog Cynllunio/Planning Officer

Rheoli Datblygu /Development Control



01978 298786



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Wrecsam, Neuadd y Dref, Wrecsam LL11 1AY



Wrexham County Borough Council, Guildhall, Wrexham LL11 1AY



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Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ymateb i unrhyw ohebiaeth yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd hyn yn arwain at unrhyw oedi.

Ewch i weld - mi fedrwch chi dalu, rhoi gwybod, gwneud cais, dweud eich dweud, a dod o hyd i wybodaeth ar-lein yn www.wrecsam.gov.uk. Arbedwch bapur - meddyliwch cyn argraffu!

Mae'r neges e-bost hon ac unrhyw atodiadau wedi eu bwriadu ar gyfer yr unigolyn neu'r sefydliad y?i cyfeirir atynt yn unig. Am yr amodau llawn yngl?n ? chynnwys a defnyddio'r neges e-bost hon, ac unrhyw atodiadau, cyfeiriwch at www.wrecsam.gov.uk/top_navigation/disclaimersw.htm

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. We will respond to any correspondence in Welsh and this will not lead to any delay.

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: marc jones <marcvjones@gmail.com>

To: Philip Forster <Philip.Forster@wrexham.gov.uk>

Cc:

Bcc:

Date: Wed, 13 Feb 2019 10:43:19 +0000

Subject: Reasons to reject HMO at 33 Park St P/2019/0773

Dear Phil

Here's my letter of objection. I'm not sure if it's what you wanted so take a look at it in case there are any glaring errors.

Do I need to send on directly or will you?

Marc

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I represent the Grosvenor ward near Wrexham town centre and am vice-chair of the planning committee that made this decision. Like many town-centre wards, Grosvenor has seen an increase in HMOs in recent years. Some are well managed and others are not. In those that are not, a small minority of tenants have disrupted entire streets with anti-social behaviour, prostitution and drug dealing making neighbours' lives hell and leading to regular police visits, raids and arrests. Growing concerns over the over-concentration of HMOs and their effect on community cohesion led to Wrexham Council adopting new LPG5 in 2018 in a bid to address the matter.

HMOs play a role in the mix of tenure our communities have - owner-occupied, private rented, council housing, etc - and it's important that the balance between these is maintained.

The appellant states that the planning committee's decision went contrary to officers' recommendation. While this is unusual, it is clearly the role of the planning committee to make a judgement based on the evidence presented. Otherwise there would be no point in having a democratically accountable planning committee and all decisions could be made by the officers.

1. Amenity space

The application is for an 8-person HMO in five bedrooms. Wrexham's planning guidance states that any HMO with more than 7 inhabitants should have amenity space of 30 sq m with an additional 2 sq m for every extra person.

(https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/planning/lpg/houses_multiple_occupation.pdf)

The amenity space in the back yard of 33 Park St is 24 sq m (measurements taken on 11.2.19) with further limited space in the front garden. However, it is reasonable to say that this is not a suitable space for the 7 bins LPG5 states it must have as a minimum as well as bike parking or for residents to relax. Placing bike racks in this area would be completely out of keeping with the street scene.

The plans do not, as claimed, "clearly demonstrate that there is adequate bin space and cycle parking".

The appellant claims neighbouring houses have equally small areas but those homes do not have eight adult residents. The appeal ignores Wrexham Council's guidance on this matter.

2. Parking

Park Street is the narrowest street in Wrexham. The one-way street is at its narrowest by 33 Park St , where residents' cars are parked on one side of the road. To pass them it is necessary to mount the pavement, causing damage to kerb stones and potentially endangering residents emerging from their homes who have no pavement. Concerns about the safety of children have previously been raised with me by parents along this stretch of road.

The appellant's consultant admits "it is self-evident that the existing houses have inadequate parking". It is also self-evident that, in the interest of safety, the amount of cars in the street should be limited where possible.

Allowing a family home, where one might reasonably expect one or two cars to be in use, to become a home for eight unrelated adults, with the potential for far more vehicle movements, would potentially increase traffic and create further parking difficulties.

In response to the appellant's use of a "council survey" to justify his case: This is, in fact, an unverified snapshot survey by one of Wrexham's largest HMO landlords of his own tenants. It is not scientific and the transient nature of the business means that a HMO with no cars at the time of the survey could have three or four within six months. The converse is also true of course. The point is that this is not an official or impartial survey and cannot be relied upon as evidence.

The convenient location of bus services does not deter people in Grosvenor from owning cars. The truth is that Wrexham's bus services are totally inadequate - only last week, Arriva Buses announced it was reducing or withdrawing services along a number of key routes. In the past three years, a number of bus companies have gone to the wall and services are - at best - patchy. Few people in work can rely on public transport for reliable and convenient services, as evidenced by these news reports:

<https://news.wrexham.gov.uk/changes-to-bus-services-read-more/>

<http://www.wrexham.com/news/easycoach-to-stop-bus-services-in-wrexham-after-just-75-days-of-operation-155013.html>

<https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/16328141.wrexham-wrexham-residents-feeling-isolated-after-cuts-to-bus-services/>

Welsh Government has signally failed to deliver on its desire to reduce reliance on cars by failing to invest in bus services.

In summary, I would add that town-centre councillors have met with the then-planning minister Lesley Griffiths to stress the importance of Welsh Government support for Wrexham's new guidance and to recognise the pressures our communities face.

I hope you will uphold the local democratic decision to refuse planning permission for this HMO.