

**ALVECHURCH SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB**  
**Radford Road, Alvechurch, B48 7LD**

Planning Statement

March 2023

spring

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant, Westbourne Leisure, in support of a full planning application at Alvechurch Sports and Social Club, Radford Road, Alvechurch, B48 7LD (“the site”).
- 1.2 The application seeks planning permission for;  
“Refurbishment of the existing building and extension to accommodate bed and breakfast accommodation (Use Class Sui Generis).”
- 1.3 The extension to include 20no. bedrooms and internal works on the first floor to accommodate a managers living area, and a further 8no. bedrooms. The proposals include the introduction of windows or changes to openings on all elevations as well as fenestration details in the form of heads and cills, works of hard and soft landscaping and other works incidental to the application proposals (“the Proposed Development”).
- 1.4 The proposals have been designed by Upson and Co.
- 1.5 This report should be read alongside the application drawings and following documents submitted as part of the application:
- Completed and signed application forms;
  - Planning Statement;
  - CIL Additional Information form;
  - Existing and Proposed Drawings –prepared by Upson & Co;
  - Heritage Statement prepared by TJC Heritage Ltd;
  - Arboriculture Report and Tree Survey prepared by Ruskins Tree Consultancy;
  - Drainage Report prepared by RAB Consultants Ltd; and
  - Transport Assessment prepared by TTC.
- 1.6 This Statement sets out the background to the site, outlines the proposals and assesses how these comply with the relevant planning policy and guidance at local and national level.

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION & BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Alvechurch Sports and Social Club (Alvechurch Inn) is located on the eastern side of Alvechurch. The site is bounded by Radford Road and sits to the East of The Square and to the West of the River Arrow. The location of the site can be seen below at Figure 2.1.

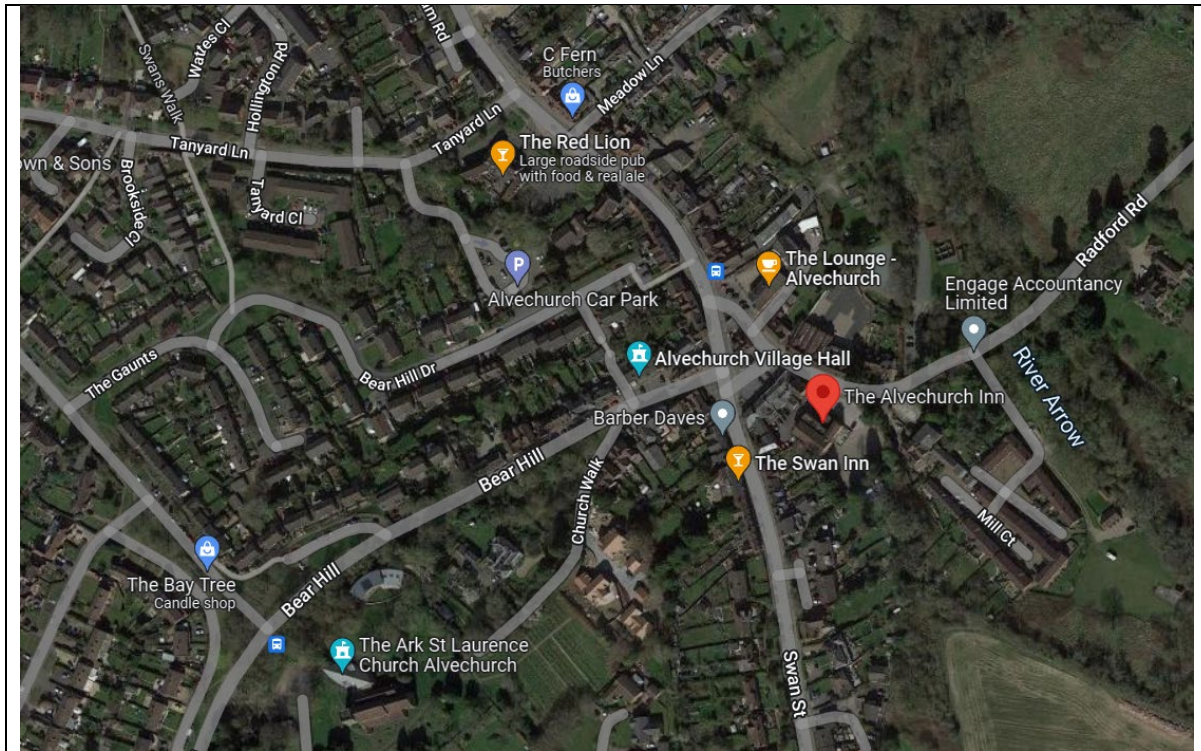
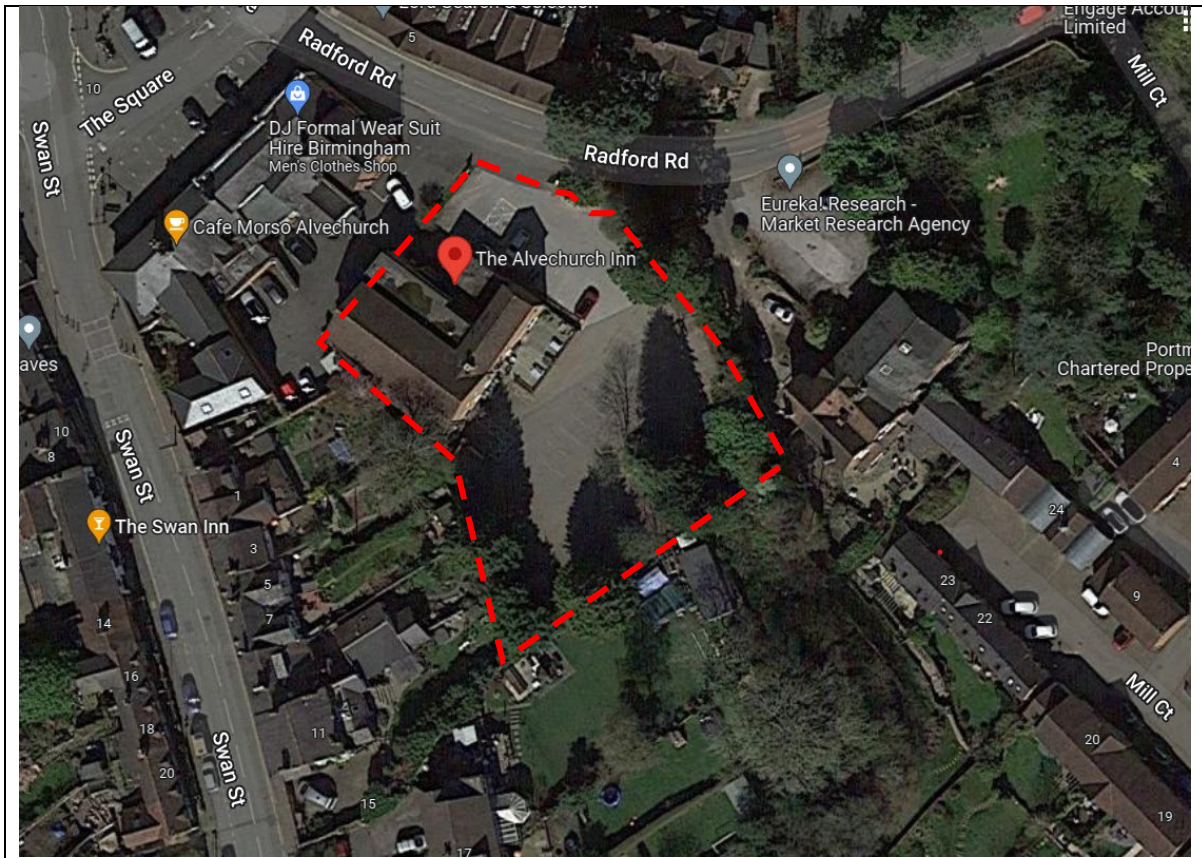


Figure 2.1 Google Map Aerial View (2022)

- 2.2 The Sports and Social Club was constructed in the 1960's. The site itself comprises a part single, part two and part three storey red brick building. The building is of a modern design and comprises flat and pitched roofs.
- 2.3 There is a flat car park with a tarmac finish that sits to the front of the site and is directly accessed from Radford Road. The site location and existing street view can be seen below at Figure 2.2.



Site Location – Aerial View Google (Maps 2022)



Street View – Google (Maps 2022)

Figure 2.2

2.4 In terms of designations, the site is not a listed building but is located within the Alvechurch Conservation Area. There are a number of listed buildings nearby, the Grade II listed Surgery and 5/7 Swan Street being the nearest. Listed buildings in the vicinity can be seen below at Figure 2.3.



Figure 2.3 Historic England – Listed Building Map

2.5 The site is within a Flood Zone 1 area so is not considered to be at risk of flooding.

2.6 There are trees bounding the perimeter of the car park. The site is within a Conservation Area and therefore existing trees with a stem diameter above 75mm are protected.

**Planning History**

2.7 There is a relatively limited planning history associated with the site. The most recent and relevant applications are set out below.

Planning Ref No.	Proposals	Decision	Date
22/01101/PREAPP	Pre-Application advice request in regard to proposed extension of the site to provide for hotel accommodation.	<b>Conclusion -</b> Overall, the principle of the development is supported.	12/12/2022

21/01845/FUL	Erection of a three storey extension to provide bed and breakfast accommodation	Application Withdrawn	06/04/2022
B/4739/1978	Extension to Social Club	Refused	16/06/1978
B/4440/1978	Outdoor leisure area, area between new extension, car park and Radford Road	Granted	17/04/1978

2.8 The 2021 application proposals (21/01845/FUL) sought the addition of a 3-storey block to the eastern elevation of the existing building to provide 22 bedrooms in total. The application was withdrawn as the density and massing were not considered fitting with the local area and the design was not reflective of the local architecture.

2.9 Following the feedback received from both the Planning and Conservation Officers a revised scheme was devised and submitted for pre-application advice in August 2022. The pre-application advice concluded that;

*‘Overall, the principle of the development is supported. The improvements to the existing building are welcomed and the proposals would result in a neutral impact on the significance of the Conservation Area. There will be some loss of privacy and overlooking, actual or perceived, as a result of the proposals and there will be conflicts with BDP1, BDP19 and the SPD.*

*Based on the proposals being demonstrated as necessary for the retention and longer term viability of the club, an Asset of Community Value, together with the improvements to the existing building, the proposals can be supported. The recommendations set out by the Conservation Officer and further mitigation to reduce a loss of privacy and overlooking should also be incorporated into a future application.’*

2.10 In response to the pre-application advice the proposed scheme looks to deliver a design that is in keeping with the conservation area whilst enhancing the appearance and character of the existing building.

### 3. APPLICATION PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The drawing pack along with The Design and Access Statement prepared by Upson and Co. submitted with the application provides full details of the proposals.
- 3.2 The proposals seek consent for a two-storey side extension to include 20no. bedrooms and internal works on the first floor to accommodate a managers living area, and a further 8no. bedrooms.
- 3.3 In its appearance, the existing building is considered to have an overall negative impact on the Alvechurch Conservation as well as the setting of the nearby listed buildings. The proposed design has taken the opportunity to improve the appearance of the site and the surrounding Conservation Area.
- 3.4 The extension is a subservient addition and will not add to the dominance of the building. It is also proposed to change the fenestration of the existing building, as well as the addition of headers and sills, which would improve the overall appearance of the existing building.
- 3.5 It is proposed to replace all windows with sash windows, additionally, the proposed materials will match those that are already in use at the site. This will give a cohesive appearance to the site that is greatly improved from what is currently in place. All windows on the rear elevations have been proposed as obscured glazing and with restricted opening. The proposed elevations can be seen below at Figure 3.1



- 3.6 Vehicular and pedestrian access will remain unchanged. The number of car parking spaces are to be reduced from 48 to 34, this remains in excess of minimum requirements for the proposal.
- 3.7 The historic agreement with the Council regarding the use of the car park for local residents or visitors to Alvechurch comes to an end shortly and there are no plans in place



to renew this. At this point the car park will only serve the existing and proposed uses on site.

- 3.8 The Planning Policy Context is outlined within Chapter 4.

## 4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The Courts have held that the Government’s statements of planning policy are such ‘material considerations’ which must be considered, where relevant, in decisions on planning applications.

### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 4.3 The updated National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in February 2021 and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 4.4 The Framework says at paragraphs 7 and 8 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that there are three overarching objectives to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:
- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
  - a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
  - an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.5 Paragraph 10 states that so sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 4.6 Paragraph 84 refers to supporting prosperous local communities and states that;
- ‘Planning policies and decisions should enable:*
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
  - b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*

*d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.'*

4.7 Chapter 8 requires Local Authorities to promote healthy and safe communities. Paragraph 93 refers to the need to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs. Planning policies and decisions should:

*'a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;*

*b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;*

*c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;*

*d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.'*

4.8 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment in the NPPF. Paragraph 126 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

4.9 Paragraph 130 outlines that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit...'*

4.10 Paragraph 194 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting.

4.11 Paragraph 195 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.

- 4.12 Paragraph 199 requires great weight to be attached to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of the level of potential harm. Any harm to or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, including its setting, requires clear and convincing justification.
- 4.13 Paragraph 202 states that ‘*where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*’

#### **National Planning Practice Guidance**

- 4.14 On 6 March 2014 the DCLG published the National Planning Practice Guidance (“NPPG”) web-based guidance. As it takes the form of guidance, rather than a statement of policy, it is assumed that it has less weight than the NPPF.

#### **LOCAL PLANNING POLICY**

- 4.15 The following policies are considered to be particularly relevant:

##### ***Bromsgrove District Plan (BDP)***

- 4.16 The Local Development Plan for the area comprises the Bromsgrove District Plan (2011-30) which was adopted on the 25th January 2017.
- 4.17 **Policy BDP1- Sustainable Development Principles** requires all development to consider matters such as: impacts on the historic and natural environment, visual amenity, economic benefits, compatibility with adjoining uses and impacts of residential amenity.
- 4.18 **Policy BDP12 - Sustainable Communities** seeks to ensure provision is made for services and facilities to meet the needs of the community. This policy states:

*“BDP12.1 The Council will ensure provision is made for services and facilities to meet the needs of the community. It will also seek to retain existing services and facilities that meet a local need or ensure adequate replacement is provided. New developments that individually or cumulatively add to requirements for infrastructure and services will be expected to contribute to the provision of necessary improvements in accordance with BDP6.*

*BDP12.2 To ensure that new development contributes to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities to meet long term needs, the Council will seek to ensure community facilities are provided to meet local needs by:*

*a) Supporting the provision of new facilities for which a need is identified in locations accessible to the community served;*

*b) Supporting improvements to existing facilities to enable them to adapt to changing needs;*

*c) Resisting the loss of existing facilities unless it can be demonstrated that;*

*i) There is no realistic prospect of the use continuing for operational and/or viable purposes;*

*ii) The service or facility can be provided effectively in an alternative manner or on a different site;*

*iii) The site has been actively marketed for a period of not less than 12 months or made available for a similar or alternative type of service or facility that would benefit the local community;*

*iv) There are overriding environmental benefits in ceasing the use of the site.*

*BDP12.3 When applying these tests to specific proposals the Council will have full regard to the specific characteristics, needs, service priorities and objectives of the service and/or organisation concerned”.*

**4.19 Policy BDP15 - Rural Renaissance** supports development that satisfies social and economic needs of rural communities by encouraging:

*“a) Development that contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the District;*

*b) New agricultural dwellings of an appropriate scale for the use of people in agricultural activities where a genuine need exists (occupancy conditions will apply). The District Council will not remove an agricultural occupancy condition unless it is satisfied that the property is no longer required for the holding or the agricultural needs of the area;*

*c) The conversion of suitably located/constructed buildings (For example timber stables and steel portal frame buildings are not suitable for conversion);*

*d) Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with BDP9;*

*e) Appropriate development of infill sites and previously developed land within existing settlements that enhance the vitality of rural communities;*

*f) Limited extension(s), alteration or replacement of existing buildings where the extension(s) or alterations are not disproportionate to the size of the original building, and in the case of a replacement building the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces (in line with BDP4);*

*g) Rural diversification schemes, as well as the provision of live-work units and the principle of home working;*

*h) Re-use of historic farmsteads to promote them as assets in the landscape;*

*i) Sport, recreation and/or tourism related initiatives appropriate to a countryside location. For example in relation to Avoncroft Museum on the Hanbury Road, the Council will support activities and operations where these are clearly relevant to the primary function of the site;...”*

**4.20 Policy BDP19 - High Quality Design** -seeks to deliver high quality people focused space through requiring good design, ensuring development enhances the character and distinctiveness of the local area and ensuring the retention of all appropriate trees and integrating them within new developments.

- 4.21 **Policy BDP20 -Managing the Historic Environment** - states 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. The policy seeks to ensure that any development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area.
- 4.22 **Policy BDP21 - Natural Environment** - sets out policy to manage the natural environment.
- 4.23 **Policy BDP23 - Water Management** - sets out to ensure that developments address flood risk from all sources, follow the flood risk management hierarchy when planning and designing development, and do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

#### ***Alvechurch Conservation Area***

- 4.24 Alvechurch Conservation Area was designated in November 1968. The Council is required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation areas and its setting when determining planning applications.

#### ***Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2011 – 2030) APNP***

- 4.25 Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy was ‘made’ on 27 February 2019. This forms part of the statutory development plan.
- 4.26 Policy HDNE1 of the Plan requires developments to respond to the distinctive local built character and Policy HDNE3 refers Applicants to the Parish Design Statement for design guidance and principles.
- 4.27 The APNP has developed policies to;
- Maintain the openness of the Green Belt from uncontrolled, large scale, or poorly placed development
  - Support Bromsgrove District Council’s development plan by encouraging sustainable development around the edge of Alvechurch Village and not spread out into the countryside.
  - Ensure that development is sympathetic and has regard for; conservation, improvement and maintenance of the look, feel and sense of place of the parish and Alvechurch Village itself through reference to well-thought-out design guidance.
  - Take steps to give the younger and older members of the community preferred access to many of the new local homes.
  - Influence Local Highway Authorities to improve road safety, encourage the use of more integrated and sustainable methods of transport including provision for cycling; and
  - Identify additional actions to improve Alvechurch’s’ facilities, services and local environment.
- 4.28 Policy BSS3 – Safeguarding existing businesses, seeks to ensure that existing businesses in the parish are protected and enhanced. This will be achieved by:

*“a. Safeguarding existing businesses, subject to BDP Policy BDP14 Designated Employment*

*b. Supporting the expansion of existing businesses where additional jobs will be created, subject to the sustainability of the scale and impact of the proposal and its consistency with requirements of BDP Policy 15 ‘Rural Renaissance’.*

*c. Supporting the more effective use of existing business sites, particularly the Bordesley Hall site (see APNP Policy BSS7).*

*The loss of business in the parish will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer viable, the business is relocating to alternative premises within the parish, or there are permitted development rights. Existing business premises should be retained wherever possible when it is in a sustainable location and does not impact negatively on neighbouring properties”*

- 4.29 Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan Policy BSS4 (New Business Development in the Parish) supports new developments that strengthens the local economy and amongst other criteria respects character by way of: building scale, design, impact on landscape, surrounding residential amenity, road safety. The background/justification for this Policy particularly seeks to promote appropriate forms of of leisure and tourism development.
- 4.30 Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan Policy HDNE2 looks to preserve, promote and enhance locally distinctive characteristics and part 3d. requires, wherever possible, that all trees providing visual screening from business establishments should be preserved.

#### ***Design Guidance SPD***

- 4.31 Bromsgrove High Quality Design SPD sets out that proposed development will need to consider its immediate locality. Consideration must be given to the surroundings of the development site.
- 4.32 The SPD will help in the formulation of proposed development to ensure that it is policy compliant by being a reasonable scale, layout, height, material and colour, as well as respecting the surrounding existing built environment and local character.
- 4.33 High quality design is crucial to promoting sustainable development and ensures that the character and appearance of an area, and the street scene in general, is not harmed but also enhanced. A well-designed development will enhance the existing built and natural environment, be appropriate to its intended use, support safer communities and innovative design.

#### ***Alvechurch Village Design Statement SPG 8.***

- 4.34 The Design Guide for Alvechurch Village aims to raise the rural and historic character awareness amongst local residents, businesses, planning applicants, highway designers, local planning committees and planning officers.
- 4.35 Whilst it is noted that much of the housing in the Conservation Area of Alvechurch is small scale character properties, it states that future changes to the village must meet the needs of a changing society.

#### ***Alvechurch Historic Environment Resource Assessment***

- 4.36 The Alvechurch Historic Environment Resource Assessment has been produced as part of a Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service pilot project, funded by English

Heritage. The project aimed to develop a method of 'historic townscape characterisation' for Worcestershire's urban areas, identify means through which to support local communities in the promotion of local distinctiveness and character, and generate evidence bases to inform locally responsive design and planning.

4.37 Within this document, the application site is noted in the following extract:

*“The Alvechurch Sports and Social Club is contemporary to The Precinct of The Square in both its 1960s design and provenance, forming the second component of the mid-20th century civic development within the village core. The three-storey, cross-gabled structure is situated to the rear of the early-19th century retail-terraces to the southeast of The Square (Numbers 7-10). The structure is set-back from the roadside behind a large car park, the construction of which necessitated the demolition of several 18th and 19th century industrial structures and the 'Mill Bank' cottage which historically situated immediately southwest of The Town Mill. The building features mullioned windows set within stretcher-bonded brown brick walls, with pantiled, gabled roofs of varying pitch and a number of flat-roofs to projecting to the east”.*

#### **Other Material Considerations**

##### **Asset of Community Value**

- 4.38 The Alvechurch Inn is registered as an Asset of Community Value. This listing was added to the Bromsgrove District Council register on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022 and the listing ends on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2027.
- 4.39 The Parish Council nominated the site as an ACV as the Inn is of value to the local community. Its retention and longer-term viability is therefore an important material consideration.
- 4.40 Chapter 5 will now consider the key planning considerations associated with the proposals.



## 5. PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

5.1 The material planning issues associated within this application include:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Impact on the Conservation Area
- Highways and Parking
- Flooding and Drainage
- Amenity
- Trees
- Sustainability

5.2 These issues are assessed in turn below.

### ***Principle of Development***

5.3 The site is located within the residential built up area of Alvechurch, just outside the Local Centre.

5.4 Alvechurch is defined as a 'Large settlement' within the Local Plan policies map. When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF, with development directed towards these settlements.

5.5 Policy BDP12 of the District Plan seeks to retain services and facilities that meet a local need and supports new facilities where a need is identified and supports improvements at existing facilities to enable them to adapt to changing needs. Similarly, the Neighbourhood Plan Policy BSS4 supports new developments that strengthens the local economy.

5.6 The Club is an Asset of Community Value and its retention and longer term viability is therefore a key consideration.

5.7 The applicant Westbourne Leisure is a Midlands based company that specialises in managing licenced premises within the leisure industry, including hotels, bars and Members clubs. Social and Members Clubs have changed significantly since their original conception in the 1970's and as such so too have the requirements of the current customer base.

5.8 As existing, the Alvechurch Inn has two bars, a games room and a first floor function room. The bar trade is ultimately the sole source of income for the Inn and the business is at risk of collapse without significant investment to create a new revenue stream. The function room and bars as a whole do not currently generate sufficient income to justify their operation and to maintain the local facility as it stands, therefore the proposal to add B & B accommodation is proposed.

5.9 In order to make the business financially viable there is a need to diversify. The new B&B element will support a new income stream whilst maintaining the facilities on site to host

and support the requirements of the local community. The new B & B accommodation will provide income particularly during the week, when customer numbers are lower. The overnight accommodation is intended to attract both business and tourism customers.

- 5.10 The existing ‘dedicated’ function room will be replaced by a similar space in the existing bar area, allowing the area to be adapted depending on the scale and type of events. As large scale functions are not a key stream it is important to fully utilise available floor space by way of flexible uses. The ground floor area available will still be able to support the scale of functions hosted at present. This would therefore not result in any ‘loss’ of a facility as such.
- 5.11 In addition, the newly created accommodation on site would create new local jobs in the area, supporting the vitality of the community and also supporting the local economy through bringing people to the area.
- 5.12 The Parish Council put the building forward as an ACV, which was approved. Therefore, it is clear that the existing business is important to the village. The proposals support the long term use of the business by providing an additional revenue stream.
- 5.13 It is therefore considered that the application proposals support the long term viability of this important community asset. Furthermore, these revised proposals have sought to address all of the points raised on both the previous application and the pre-application comments.
- 5.14 Overall, it is considered that the proposal would meet the requirements of relevant policy and be acceptable in principle. This accords with the views stated within the Pre-application response, that *“Overall, the principle of development is supported”*.

#### ***Design and Impact on the Conservation Area***

- 5.15 Policy BDP19 (High Quality Design) of the Bromsgrove District Plan requires development, amongst other matters, to enhance the character and distinctiveness of the local area. Bromsgrove High Quality Design SPD provides further supplementary detailed guidance on how high standards of design could be achieved in new development. Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan Policy HDNE1 requires developments to respond to the distinctive local built character and HDNE3 refers Applicants to the Parish Design Statement for design guidance and principles.
- 5.16 Policy BDP20 (Managing the Historic Environment) states 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. The policy seeks to ensure that any development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area.
- 5.17 A Heritage Statement has been produced by Upson & Co. in support of the proposal. This Statement sets out the Heritage Significance of the area and assesses the impact of the proposal.
- 5.18 As Officers will be aware, an initial application for a three storey extension to Club to provide hotel bedrooms was submitted in 2021 under App Ref 21/01845/FUL. This was withdrawn earlier this year, and since that time work has been undertaken to address

the issues raised in respect of that scheme and the revised proposals have sought to improve the look of the existing building.

- 5.19 The Conservation Officer comments from the recent Pre- application states: *‘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 existing building has however recently undergone extensive internal refurbishment, and there is no option to replace the existing building on site.
- 5.20 In reviewing the options for the site, specialist input has been gained from TJC Heritage Consultancy and Ruskin’s Tree Consultancy. This input has influenced the position and footprint of the proposed extension, ensuring that this is not sited within the RPA of the important trees on the site. The scheme will require the removal of any trees other than those which have been identified as diseased or dying (T5 and T10).
- 5.21 The heritage advice initially reviewed the context of the site, and these characteristics have been incorporated into the scheme. With more variety of materials proposed, a hierarchy of windows and a subservience to the main building.
- 5.22 In its appearance, the existing building is considered to have an overall negative impact on the Alvechurch Conservation as well as the setting of the nearby listed buildings. The proposed design has taken the opportunity to improve the appearance of the site and the surrounding Conservation Area.
- 5.23 It is proposed to replace all windows at the site with sash windows, additionally, the proposed materials will match those that are already in use at the site. This will give a cohesive appearance to the site that is greatly improved from what is currently in place.
- 5.24 The proposals include a two storey side extension with the first floor being contained in the roof space and the rooms at this level having dormer windows.
- 5.25 The extension is a subservient addition and will not add to the dominance of the building. The proposed changes to the appearance of the existing building will enhance its form and the street scene.
- 5.26 The sympathetic changes to the fenestration on the existing building, as well as the addition of headers and sills will improve the overall appearance of the existing building.
- 5.27 The Conservation Officer concluded in the Pre Application advice that;
- “The proposals are a much improved scheme, and subject to agreeing fenestration and material details, the proposals would hopefully have a neutral impact on the significance of the Conservation Area and would comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation and above policies.”*
- 5.28 Overall, it is considered that the proposal would offer enhancement to the character and appearance of the site and wider Conservation Area.

### **Highways and Parking**

- 5.29 Policy DM33 – Managing Carbon Emissions: Transport and Energy Generation’ states that:

*“Development is required to:*

- a) Be located to provide safe, direct and convenient access to jobs, services and facilities via sustainable transport modes;*
- b) Be provided with safe and convenient access to the local highway network for all modes and appropriate access for servicing;*
- c) Make provision for alternative vehicle types and fuels;*
- d) Include measures to reduce reliance on single occupancy car trips and to increase the use of sustainable transport modes;*
- e) Provide for parking sufficient to meet the needs of future occupants and to ensure there is no significant adverse impact from overspill parking;*
- f) Ensure that any material adverse impacts on existing and forecast traffic conditions are mitigated;”*

- 5.30 The proposal would result in the loss of 14 No. parking spaces. However, it must be noted that the current agreement relating to use of the existing car park by local residents will not be renewed, resulting in an overall net gain in car parking spaces for the Social Club.
- 5.31 It is proposed that an ANPR system is used to control the entry and exit into the car park to avoid the road becoming congested. Further details of this can be found in the accompanying Transport Statement.
- 5.32 The Transport Statement concludes the proposed development and existing site use can be comfortably accommodated within the local area. As such there should be no reason why the application cannot be recommended for approval in terms of highways and transportation.

### ***Flooding and Drainage***

- 5.33 The site is located within Flood Zone 1. As requested in the pre-application response a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been prepared by RAB consultants LTD and submitted in support of the application.
- 5.34 A hierarchical assessment has established that the most appropriate method for the disposal of surface water runoff from the development is via infiltration drainage techniques.
- 5.35 A surface water drainage strategy has been developed for the site on this basis, which comprises of a traditional network of below ground pipe work with SUDS in the form of geocellular soakaways, permeable paving and infiltration trenches for the treatment, storage and attenuation of runoff. Each plot provides its own surface water attenuation.
- 5.36 The proposed surface water drainage scheme would ensure that surface water flows are disposed of to ground, whilst providing sufficient capacity for excess runoff to be stored and attenuated on site for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year storm

return period with 40% allowance for increase in peak rainfall intensity over the lifetime of the development.

- 5.37 In terms of flood risk, it is concluded that the development can be occupied and operated safely and that there will be no increase in the level of flood risk to the site or neighbouring sites as a result of the development.
- 5.38 It is therefore considered that the proposals adhere to policy BDP23 requirements and the NPPF.

### ***Amenity***

- 5.39 Policy BDP1 (Sustainable Design Principles) of the Bromsgrove District Plan requires all proposals for development to consider, amongst other matters, compatibility with adjoining uses and the impact on residential amenity, and the impact on visual amenity.
- 5.40 Paragraph 4.2.48 of the SPD sets out that overlooking may be a problem if new development allows views into the private amenity (including outdoor space) or living space of a neighbouring property. Paragraph 4.2.49 recommends a separation distance of 21m between opposing faces to achieve a degree of privacy between habitable rooms of two-storey dwellings.
- 5.41 The residential properties on Swan Street are closest to the new build element of the proposal, with number 2 Swan Street being 20.58 meters away, as shown in Plan 113-07D Revised Site Layout submitted with this application. In order to minimise the impact on the amenity of these properties the windows will be obscured glazing to minimise overlooking and the windows will also be on restrictors. The restrictors will be set at either 50mm or 100mm and they are attached to the bottom of the window opening to restrict the windows opening any more than this distance. By adding these on the people using the rooms will be able to access fresh air and ventilation, however their view onto neighbouring properties will be extremely minimal.
- 5.42 On this basis, it is considered that there would be very minimal loss of privacy to the properties on Swan Street and their gardens.

### ***Trees***

- 5.43 A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment produced by Ruskin's Tree Consultancy is included in support of the application.
- 5.44 This input has influenced the position and footprint of the proposed extension, ensuring that this is not sited within the RPA of the important trees on the site. It is not anticipated that the proposed scheme will require the removal of any trees other than those which have been identified as diseased or dying (T5 and T10).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 In summary, the proposed scheme will ensure the retention of this community facility, which is listed as an Asset of Community Value.
- 6.2 The proposed extension and improvements to the existing building have been thoughtfully designed to preserve and enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.3 The proposed development, to include overnight accommodation will provide additional local jobs in the area and visitors will boost the local economy.
- 6.4 The design of the extension has been carefully assessed with regards to amenity and it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts in this regard.
- 6.5 Overall, the scheme is supported by Officers with the Pre-app response concluding:  
*“Based on the proposals being demonstrated as necessary for the retention and longer term viability of the club, an Asset of Community Value, together with the improvements to the existing building, the proposals can be supported...”*
- 6.6 In summary, it is considered that the proposal would meet the objectives of the NPPF and the three dimensions of sustainable development. As outlined above, there are no adverse impacts associated with the proposals which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme. We therefore urge the Council to approve the current application without delay.