

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**WEDNESDAY 2 APRIL 2025
GIPPING ROOM, GRAFTON HOUSE
9.45 AM**

Present: Councillors Stephen Connelly, Kelvin Cracknell, Nic El-Safty, Peter Gardiner, Carole Jones, Colin Kreidewolf, George Lankester, Lynne Mortimer, Adam Rae, Jenny Smith, Sam Murray, Nathan Wilson and Oliver Holmes

91. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

92. Unconfirmed Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED:

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2025 be signed as a true record.

93. To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business

RESOLVED:

that the Order of Business be confirmed as printed on the Agenda.

94. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jones, being known to people who were speaking on applications, declared an interest in Items 1 & 2 (IP/25/00005/FUL & IP/25/00007/LBC) and Item 4 (IP/25/00054/VC), and left the room during the consideration of these items.

95. PD/24/12 Planning Applications - General Information

In considering the applications, the Committee took into account representations made where indicated by the word 'REPS' after the individual planning reference number.

The applications were considered in the following order:

Items 1 & 2 – IP/25/00005/FUL & IP/25/00007/LBC – Archway and various sites, Lloyds Avenue

Item 4 – IP/25/00054/VC – The Mulberry Tree Public House, 5 Woodbridge Road

Item 3 – IP/25/00097/FPI3 – Car Park, 15-21 Foundation Street

96. PD/24/12 Items 1 & 2 - Applications IP/25/00005/FUL & IP/25/00007/LBC

REPS

Ward: ALEXANDRA

Proposal: IP/25/00005/FUL:

Public realm improvement works to Lloyds Avenue consisting of resurfacing works including increasing the width of public footway and extended shared public space, installation of raised bed planters and landscaping, and existing cycle storage repositioned. Refurbishment of Lloyds Arch undercroft, including insertion of lights and cabling, digital screens/lightboxes, security cameras and radio equipment.

IP/25/00007/LBC:

Refurbishment of Lloyds Arch undercroft, including removal of service box, repositioning of plaques, insertion of lights and cabling, digital screens/lightboxes, security cameras and radio equipment, and general redecoration.

Address: Archway and various sites, Lloyds Avenue

Applicant: Ipswich Borough Council

Agent: KLH Architects Ltd

The Development Management Team Leader reported that a late representation had been received at 8.45am on 2.4.2025 from Mr S Ali in reference to a previous email of 26.3.2025 and whether that was to be considered by the Committee. The late representation raised the following points:

- A petition had been prepared regarding the consultation undertaken in relation to the application; it was not clear whether the petition had gone live or if anyone had signed up to the petition.
- The email of 26.3.2025 referred to the public consultation being unfair; this was in relation to the consultation undertaken prior to the planning application being submitted, not the consultation undertaken as part of the planning application process.

The Planning Officer presented the report illustrated by drawings and photographs.

Mr Stuart Edgar, agent for the application, spoke in support of the proposals:

- Consultation had taken place with disability groups to help inform the development of the design with regards to disability access.
- Over a period of 14 months, there had been information shared and workshops held with representatives from 5 local disability groups: Progression Session Groups, Suffolk Sight, Suffolk Guide Dogs Forum, Ipswich Disabled Advice Bureau and Suffolk Coalition of Disabled People.
- The first consultation on the proposals in May 2024 resulted in crossing points and dropped kerbs being added at the north end of Lloyds Avenue, horizontal to the top of the taxi rank.
- Further discussions in May 2024 resulted in a second crossing with a raised table being added just before Electric House, opposite the Bingo Hall, to help slow traffic coming around the corner and act as a visual discouragement to general traffic; Lloyds Avenue would still to be open for deliveries and taxi use.
- On 13 December 2024, the final designs were presented to the disability groups for sign off ahead of the submission of the planning application.

Ms Nina Cunningham, Head of Economic Development at Ipswich Borough Council, spoke in support of the proposals:

- Proposals for Lloyds Archway aimed to provide illumination and an interactive art piece that residents and visitors could interact with, drive footfall into the town centre and add to the cultural offer to increase dwell time.
- The art installation would involve workshops to gather input from students and families, and the proposed one-off installation would attract visitors from Ipswich and beyond.
- The proposed digital billboards would be Council owned with the content being controlled by the Council; this would typically be used to promote events to visitors.

Mr Luke O'Brien spoke in opposition to the proposals:

- Objected to the extension of the pedestrianised public space and widening of the pavement.
- Currently many disabled people who wanted a taxi would wait at the bottom of Lloyds Avenue to be picked up as they were not able to walk that far uphill.
- Walking uphill presented a greater problem to people with balance issues who might need to walk with a wider gait or extreme walking pattern; extending the public space would require disabled people to walk further.
- The Police had conducted engagement activities on Lloyds Avenue and access would be required for other emergency vehicles; one loading bay would not be sufficient.
- Under Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council had an obligation to make reasonable adjustments for the disabled and it would be reasonable to not widen the pavement and extend the public pedestrianised space.

Mr Shofik Ali, taxi driver, spoke in opposition to the proposals:

- The outline of the consultation arrangements given today was speculative and feedback had been given by the paid managers of local groups, whereas the

response received from asking users and businesses on Lloyds Avenue was different, with some people outraged and wanting Lloyds Avenue to be left unchanged.

- There had been instances where some people struggled to make it up to the taxi rank at the top of Lloyds Avenue and were relieved to be able to flag a taxi to collect them from the bottom of Lloyds Avenue; the proposals discriminated against the taxi clientele.
- A petition had been set up to get the public's reactions to the proposals and it was requested that more time be given before taking the decision to be able to take the outcome of the petition into account.
- Football fans were also upset by the proposals and would be adding the petition to their webpages.
- The proposed changes would affect everyone, not just the taxi drivers, but the shops as well, and businesses did not want the reduction in space.
- The proposals also went against the green aspirations of Councillor Kelly from West Suffolk Council as there would not be room for electric charging points on Lloyds Avenue.

Councillor Murray welcomed the consultation with disability groups and their feedback but still had concern about disability access, in particular the type of flooring proposed as this had previously caused an issue on the Cornhill development. Councillor Murray asked about the number of disabled taxis in use and the assessment undertaken in relation to the amount of space available for taxis to manoeuvre.

The Planning Officer reported that the materials for the active space and main footway would be flat profile materials to reduce trip hazards; granite setts were proposed for the landscaped area and were to be installed with minimal gaps between them to avoid trip hazards.

The Development Management Team Leader commented that he did not have information to hand on the number of disabled taxis within the Council's licensed fleet. Disabled groups had been consulted prior to the submission of the application and the flatter area at the bottom of Lloyds Avenue had not been designed as a designated pick up/drop off point for taxis; an equivalent space had been included in the scheme but further up the hill.

Councillor Murray commented that the appearance of the granite setts was irrelevant to wheelchair users, it was a matter of whether a wheelchair could be ridden comfortably over the surface, especially as people would need to further to reach the taxi rank.

Councillor Gardiner highlighted that the granite setts were only proposed within the central area and the adjacent footpaths would have flat surfaces.

Councillor Cracknell, as a wheelchair user, welcomed the revised layout especially at the top of Lloyds Avenue where vehicles entered the road as it was currently difficult to cross the road to get to the front of the taxi rank. Councillor Cracknell highlighted the importance of maintaining the proposed paving and requested that any replacement paving slabs be installed flat to prevent trip hazards.

Councillor Kreidewolf welcomed the digital art installation and improvements to public realm that would make a positive contribution to the town centre street scene. Following issues with the Cornhill development, disabled groups had been consulted during the design process and the Ipswich Disabled Advice Bureau had highlighted the competing interests of the visually impaired and wheelchair users with regards to types of paving surface. Councillor Kreidewolf highlighted that there was a natural incline across the town centre from the river up towards Tower Ramparts, not just on Lloyds Avenue, and added that there were a number of blue badge places allocated in the town centre, for example on Lion Street and Museum Street, where taxis could be ordered from. With regards to the number of taxi rank spaces, CCTV footage had been used to identify usage, and it was rare for all 21 spaces to be in use, with the average usage being 11-12 spaces. Councillor Kreidewolf commented that it was also possible to book taxis offering disabled access through operators such as Uber that could collect the passenger from any location.

Councillor Wilson raised concern about access for emergency vehicles, whether a smooth surface could be used in the public space area to make it more comfortable for wheelchair users and if a more traditional style of seating could be provided.

The Planning Officer reported that there would be the same access for emergency vehicles but with the demountable bollards being located further up Lloyds Avenue. The seating was contemporary, with curved seating and planting behind, and would encourage movement through the area.

The Development Management Team Leader highlighted that conditions 3 and 6 would cover details of the materials to be used and the seating/planters, and the points raised would be taken into consideration when these conditions were discharged.

RESOLVED:

Application IP/25/00005/FUL:

Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions (briefly):

- 1. Development to be in accordance with the approved drawings and the requirements of any succeeding conditions.**
- 2. Submission of a Construction Management Plan (pre-commencement condition).**
- 3. Before the development hereby approved is commenced, evidence shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority of the requisite Section 278 highway agreement, including the plans and final details of the proposal (and including details of materials).**
- 4. Before the development hereby approved is commenced, planting management details are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority.**
- 5. Before the development hereby approved is commenced, details of the bollards to be installed are to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.**

6. Prior to their installation, details of the planters and their seating shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
7. Prior to their installation, details of the cycle parking provision shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Prior to their installation, details of the final lighting scheme and control details are to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Application IP/25/00007/LBC:

Grant listed building consent subject to the following conditions (briefly):

1. The works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings, documents, and correspondence, and the requirements of any succeeding conditions.
2. Methodologies and sample panels for the proposed redecoration of the columns, walls and ceiling of the archway shall be submitted to, inspected, and approved by the LPA prior to works commencing on the ceilings.
3. Full details, including manufacturer specification, and methodology for installation on site, for the proposed digital screens and light boxes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation on site.
4. Full details of all new fixtures and fittings (including lighting, CCTV and radio equipment) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation on site.
5. Full details of all permanent signage shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation on site.

97. PD/24/12 Item 3 - Application IP/25/00097/FPI3

Ward: ALEXANDRA

Proposal: Continued use of land on a temporary basis as short-stay public car park (further to planning permission ref: IP/22/00065/FPI3).

Address: Car Park, 15-21 Foundation Street

Applicant: Ipswich Borough Council

Agent: Mr Michael Newsham

The Planning Officer presented the report illustrated by drawings and photographs.

Councillor Rae asked how realistic the estimate was for a development coming forward in 2028/29.

The Head of Planning & Development commented that the dates in the adopted Local Plan reflected when the landowner estimated that a development would come forward.

Councillor Jones added that this site was one of three sites within a wider site allocation and that not all of these sites were owned by the Council.

RESOLVED:

Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions (briefly):

- 1. Use shall cease on or before 3rd April 2027.**
- 2. Short stay parking only (maximum 5 hours)**
- 3. Disability parking signage to be retained.**
- 4. Parking and manoeuvring areas to be maintained as per submitted plans for the duration of the development.**
- 5. Secure cycle and PTW parking to be retained.**

98. PD/24/12 Item 4 - Application IP/25/00054/VC

Ward: ST MARGARETS

Proposal: Variation of Condition 1 (list of approved plans) of planning permission IP/23/000346/FUL (Extensions to existing facility to provide enlarged prayer hall and classrooms).

Address: The Mulberry Tree Public House, 5 Woodbridge Road

Applicant: Mr Mohamad

Agent: Mr Sherwan Mohammed

The Senior Planning Officer presented the report illustrated by drawings and photographs.

Mr Mojlum Khan, Bangladeshi Support Centre Multicultural Services, spoke in support of the proposals:

- Had been approached by the applicant for support and advice on capacity building to accommodate emerging community groups.
- The Nawracy Culture Centre was very busy, offering social, cultural and spiritual activities to communities, and space was needed to accommodate community groups from different backgrounds in Ipswich.
- The proposed variation from the previous application was a matter of practicality as the original windows would diminish the size of usable space within the upstairs rooms as there were areas where it was not possible to stand upright.
- There was a balance to be met between retaining the heritage character of the building and creating an extension that would be able to meet the growing need for local services; the proposed minimal adjustment would achieve both objectives.

Mr Mohammed Mainul Alam, Bangladeshi Support Centre Multicultural Services, spoke in support of the proposals:

- The Centre supported many organisations and had been especially busy during Ramadan.
- The proposed variation to the extension would make a big difference to the capacity of the building as currently nearly half of the space in the upstairs rooms was unusable because of the slope.
- It was important to retain the heritage of the building, but there was also a need to accommodate all the people who accessed services.

Mr Gaffor Omer, NHS employee, spoke in support of the proposals:

- The Centre had not only been used for vaccination sessions but also had an ongoing use for health assessments, providing public health services alongside the cultural activities.

Councillor Rae commented that he had visited the building, and the original conversion had improved its aspect within the street scene; however, the proposed change was unlikely to release much additional space, and it was necessary to respect this historic building.

Councillor Lankester understood the reason for wanting to replace the pitched roof with a flat roof but could see no reason for the proposed change in materials, especially as UPVC windows and fibreglass roof coverings would not be appropriate in this location.

Councillor Kreidewolf commented that the original change of use application had been successful in bringing a redundant building back into use, which was well used by the community; however, this was a locally listed building with a prominent frontage and due regard should be given to listed building responsibilities.

RESOLVED:

Refuse the variation of planning condition for the following reason (briefly):

The extension would not respect and promote the special character and local distinctiveness of Ipswich by protecting and enhancing significant views nor represent good architectural design. It would represent poor design that would result in harm to the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area and to the significance of the locally listed building of which it would form a prominent part, particularly when viewed from the east looking towards the Central Conservation Area beyond.

The proposed variation represents a material diminution to an approval that would fail to be in accordance with the NPPF. Public benefits have been put forward by the applicant, however these do not justify the less than substantial harm to the setting of the heritage assets and the variation would therefore fail to be in accordance with policies DM12 and DM13, as well as the aims of the NPPF.

99. PD/24/12 Information for Councillors

99.1. Councillor Jones noted that the appeal in relation to 25 Civic Drive had been dismissed by the Planning Inspector as the Council's Local Plan policies had been correctly applied and should not leave occupants in sub-standard accommodation.

RESOLVED:

that the information for Councillors be noted.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am

Chair