

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE (CENTRAL & EAST DURHAM)

AT A MEETING of the **AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE (CENTRAL & EAST DURHAM)**
held at Council Offices, Seaside Lane, Easington, on **Tuesday 13 April 2010**

PRESENT

COUNCILLOR C WALKER in the Chair

Members

Councillors A Bell, J Blakey, G Bleasdale, J Brown, P Charlton, S Iveson, R Liddle, J Moran and M Plews.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Freeman, K Thompson and B Wilson.

A1 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2010 were confirmed as a correct record by the committee and signed by the Chair.

A2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

A3 Applications to be determined by the Area Planning Committee (Central & East Durham)

The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) gave members a brief presentation on the changes in Planning Regulations for Dwelling Houses and Houses in Multiple Occupation.

(a) PL/5/2010/0043 – British Israel World Federation, Hardwick House, Hardwick Street, Horden Conversion from Single Dwelling to Seven Separate Dwelling Units, with Communal Bathroom

Consideration was given to the report of the Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) which recommended the application for Approval. The Principal Planning Officer explained that Members had visited the site that day, and gave a detailed presentation on the main issues outlined in the report and advised Members that the proposal was considered to be in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 3 as being within the settlement boundary in a sustainable location for residential development.

The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) read out the following letter which had been received from Councillor Stradling.

“I write to express concern in respect of the above application which is in my ward.

The junction at the top of Hardwick with the A1086 has and still is difficult to negotiate from whichever direction you approach it due to traffic flow as directed by the traffic lights at the junction with Yoden Way. Congestion often occurs. Vehicles wishing to access Horden Village are often tempted to use Hardwick Street as an alternative route putting additional pressure on the old colliery housing lanes.

I feel that the one off street car parking space is difficult to access and that the presumption that future tenants, their families, friends and visitors will not have availability of motor vehicles is flimsy in this day and age, hence further congestion will occur.”

Edna Connor speaking on behalf of Horden Parish Council indicated that the property and surrounding properties were built when there was little car ownership and the properties were built back to back with no garages. The applicant had stated that the occupiers of the properties would not be expected to own a vehicle but one off street parking space would be made available. The A1086 was a main road through the village, which became very congested. Parking issues was a concern of residents and there was nothing to stop tenants purchasing a car after they moved into the property. Concerns were also raised with vehicles trying to get out of the allocated parking space, which was on the main road. Streets in the area were currently full of vehicles and the main concern of the Parish was traffic issues and additional vehicles, which the village could not accommodate.

Councillor Bleasdale reiterated what the Parish had said. She asked if 4 tenants had cars then where would they park, she was amazed that Highways had no objections.

Councillor Bell sought clarification on whether the fire authority had been consulted with regard to the property being in multiple occupancy. The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) indicated that this would come under Building Control rather than Planning. Councillor Bell also asked if all tenants had vehicles and this was known to Highways then would they have raised objections. The Highways officer indicated that if this information was given then they would have raised concerns.

The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) indicated that they were small units and it was considered unlikely that tenants would have cars. The property was currently 4 bedrooms which could potentially have 4 or 5 vehicles.

Councillor Charlton was concerned at the size of the living accommodation. The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) indicated that there was no size stipulation but the layout suggested that the space was adequate.

Councillor Bleasdale moved and Councillor Charlton seconded that the application be refused.

Resolved: That the application be **REFUSED** for the following reasons.

The development, by reason of the number of residential units proposed, is likely to lead to an increase in traffic generation and parking demand in the area. Taking into account the inadequate provision of off-street parking and the location of the property adjacent to a busy main road, the A1086, this would increase traffic congestion in the vicinity of the site and result in conditions prejudicial to highway safety, contrary to saved policies 1, 36 and 73 of the District of Easington Local Plan.

**(b) PL/5/2010/0071 – British Israel World Federation, 1st Floor, 5 Bede Street, Easington
Conversion of Single Residential Unit to 3 No. Self-Contained Flats**

Consideration was given to the report of the Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) which recommended the application for Approval. The Principal Planning Officer explained that Members had visited the site that day, and gave a detailed presentation on the main issues outlined in the report and advised Members that the proposal was considered to be in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 3 as being within the settlement boundary in a sustainable location for residential development.

Councillor Boyes speaking on behalf of Easington Colliery Parish Council indicated that the Parish Council would not normally object to housing development under different circumstances. There was a Doctors surgery around the corner from the application site which caused congestion during surgery times as there was insufficient parking in the vicinity. The comment that occupants would be unable to afford cars he disagreed in that everyone could afford a car, which would add to the parking problems.

Councillor Bell asked if a planning condition would be included to advise the applicant that they needed to consult the Fire Authority. The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) indicated that this would normally be done through Building Regulations. Councillor Bell also asked if a needs assessment had been carried out, as a number of properties were up for let in the area. The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) indicated that he was not aware that a needs assessment had been carried out, but the policy team had confirmed that it accorded to policy.

Councillor Blakey commented on the glass located on the back wall which was evident at the site inspection. The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) indicated that the wall was not part of the application site. The Solicitor confirmed that the authority had no control over this but the owner of the property would be liable in the event of an injury.

Resolved: That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions;

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details contained in the application as submitted to the Council on the date specified in Part 1 of this decision notice unless otherwise firstly approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

A4 Appeal Update

Appeal Decisions

The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) gave details in relation to the following appeals, which had been considered by the Planning Inspectorate:

- (i) An appeal was lodged against the council's refusal of outline approval for the erection of a single dwelling at Thornley Moor Farm, Cassop

The Inspectorate found that the new dwelling would unacceptably consolidate the existing group of buildings in this isolated countryside location. The creation of an additional dwelling and domestic curtilage, with inevitable hard standings, parking and garden paraphernalia would lead to the gradual erosion of the countryside character of the surroundings. The development would therefore harm the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.

The proposal would also have been located outside of the settlement of Cassop, and thus not in accordance with sustainability objectives of Local Plan Policy 3 and current government guidance in PPS7.

The appeal was therefore dismissed.

- (ii) An appeal was lodged against the Council's refusal to grant planning permission for the erection of a two storey pitched roof extension to the front of the existing dwelling, and a three storey side and rear extension, with a single storey element to the rear at Fairfields, The Dene, Dalton-le-Dale, SR7 8QW.

The inspector noted that the proposed extension would cause unacceptable harm to living conditions at the adjoining property Bel-air, by reason of overbearing and over dominance and also in that of the garden area of the neighbouring property Wingrove. Furthermore it was not in accordance with Local Plan Policies, which seek to safeguard the residential and general amenity of people living within the vicinity of the site by restricting development which would have a serious adverse effect in terms of residential amenity.

It was acknowledged that whilst there was already a single storey extension to the neighbouring property Bel-air it was considered that the three storey element would be an overbearing and overly dominant feature when viewed from the rear windows and from the rear garden of Bel-air. It was considered that due to existing structures at ground floor level at the neighbouring property Wingrove, the proposal would have had little effect on the occupiers of that property when viewed from their rear windows.

The Inspectorate noted that the two-storey front extension proposed at the site was in accordance with Local Plan Policies.

The appeal was therefore dismissed.

A revised application for works at the above site was approved at the last meeting of the Area Planning Committee, with an overall reduction in the scheme, which was considered acceptable.

- (iii) An appeal was lodged against the council's refusal to grant planning permission for a hot food takeaway at 6 West Grove, West Lea, Seaham.

The inspector noted the proximity of the bungalow adjacent to the appeal site to the west, at No 32 Wells Crescent, and the first floor accommodation above the adjoining unit in the centre at No 7 West Grove. Given their proximity, it was considered that cooking odours emanating from the appeal site would unacceptably affect the living conditions of residents in these properties.

Due to the effect of cooking odours, it was concluded that the proposed development would unacceptably worsen the living conditions of the occupiers of adjacent residents. It would thereby conflict with Policies 1, 35 and 111 of the Local Plan.

The appeal was therefore dismissed.

- (iv) An appeal was lodged against the council's refusal to grant planning permission for the erection of a two storey and single storey extension to Wardens House, Lowhills Road, Peterlee, SR8 2DW.

The Inspectorate found that due to the scale, unrelieved massing and external treatment of the extension, it made no attempts to reflect the character, proportions and detailing of the existing house. In addition concerns were raised that the side gable would be an oppressive feature towering over the community centre. As a result the development would be considered to be visually intrusive to the extent that it would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and street scene contrary to policy 73 of the Local Plan.

Furthermore, it was considered that the design of the extension failed to take proper account of its setting therefore was contrary to advice contained within PPS1.