

SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

29th FEBRUARY 2008

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

PART 1 – APPLICATION FOR DECISION

3/2007/0829- PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT WITH OFFICES AND SMALL INDUSTRIAL UNITS. THE OFFICES ARE A MIXTURE OF TWO AND THREE STOREY, THE BUSINESS PARK DEVELOPMENT ALSO INCLUDES A SINGLE STOREY CAFÉ AT LAND AT HENSON CLOSE, SOUTH CHURCH ENTERPRISE PARK, BISHOP AUCKLAND FOR MR. GLASS – 06.12.2007 – AMENDED 06.02.2008

description of site and proposals

1. The application site comprises of a vacant parcel of open land located south of Dovecot Hill and east of Henson Close within the South Church Enterprise Park at Bishop Auckland. The site is allocated in the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007 as a Prestige Industrial Site under Proposal 14. The adopted highway is located directly north of the application site with commercial buildings located beyond. There are commercial buildings to the east and west of the site.
2. Planning permission is sought for a mixed use development incorporating offices and small industrial units which would comprise of a mix of B1, B2 and small element of B8 use. 9 no. office blocks are proposed, eight of which would be of a two storey design, and one office block would be of a three storey design positioned centrally within the office development. 20 no. small industrial units are proposed which would be split into three individual blocks. The industrial units are a traditional single storey industrial design. An ancillary cafeteria building is proposed within the development.
3. The development is to be accessed from a new road which would be taken from the highway to the north of the site. The office blocks would be positioned to the north of the site with the industrial units grouped together to the south of the site. The cafeteria building would be situated centrally on the east boundary of the site.

planning history

4. There is no recent planning history relevant to this planning application.

planning policies

5. The following policies of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007 are relevant in the consideration of this application:
 - GD1 General Development Criteria
 - I4 Prestige Industrial Sites
 - T1 Highways – General Policy

consultations

6. WVDC (Economic Development): Commented orally stating they are fully supportive of the proposed development.
7. Durham County Council (Highways Authority): Minor amendments recommended with regards to the introduction of footpaths and the slight alteration to the access road. Amended plans have been submitted by the agent for the application. None of the car parking or servicing areas will be eligible for adoption. The main access road at the west of the site could be adopted. Full engineering details must be submitted for the adoptable length of highway.
8. Bishop Auckland Town Council: No comments.
9. Northumbrian Water: No comments.
10. Environment Agency: Objects to the proposal as a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has not been submitted. The agent for the application has indicated that a FRA is to be submitted. The Environment Agency have indicated that if the matter of flood risk can be resolved and the Council is minded to grant planning permission, a condition should be imposed.

officer analysis

11. The key issues for consideration are:
 - Principle of Development
 - Visual Impact on Surroundings
 - Highway Issues

principle of development

12. Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007 states that:

'Proposals for office and business uses (Class B1) and general industry (Class B2) will be permitted.'

13. The proposed development is predominantly for Class B1 and B2 use in the form of office and industrial units. In respect of these elements of the proposal, the development is considered to be in accordance with Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
14. A cafeteria (Class A3) and some general B8 use accommodation are also proposed within the development and these elements need to be considered further.
15. Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007 specifically states that uses which fall under Class Use A3 should not be permitted on this site. In the justification for Proposal I4 it is indicated that because of the relative scarcity of such good quality land, such as the application site, efforts should be made to preserve it for B1 and B2 uses. The site is to be predominantly utilised as B1 and B2 use, and the cafeteria element is described as ancillary to the main development. It is also noted that the proposed cafeteria is of a limited scale and the proposed plans show a meeting room incorporated within the cafeteria which the applicants have indicated could be utilised by the employees of the surrounding offices. Given the scale of the proposed cafeteria, it is considered that the cafeteria would genuinely be ancillary to the proposed development which could also be utilised by employees of other existing businesses within South Church Enterprise Park. The proposed cafeteria would provide an opportunity to create a vibrant, self contained development which would retain employees on the site throughout the working day, which would also promote green travel objectives. Whilst the cafeteria element of the proposed development would not directly accord with the description of Proposal I4, it is not considered to conflict with the aims of Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
16. The applicants have also indicated that of the 20 industrial units proposed to the rear of the site, 25% would be utilised as B8 use. Proposal I4 does not specifically indicate in the description that B8 uses are not permitted however the justification for the Proposal does state that *'Large land users which provide few jobs such as warehousing and storage (B8) will not normally be allowed.'* It is noted that Proposal I4 (Prestige Industrial Sites) intends to provide high quality industrial development which can compete against the very attractive sites now available in many parts of the UK. Whilst B8 uses are not specifically indicated as the preferred use for development on this site, only 25% of the industrial units would be for B8 uses which is considered small in comparison to the large scale of the overall development, and it is not considered that this would compromise the attractiveness of the development or contradict the aims of Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

17. On balance, the majority of the site is to be developed for B1 and B2 use which is in direct accordance with Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007. The cafeteria and B8 use elements of the proposed scheme are to be ancillary to the main development and are considered acceptable as they would not compromise the aims of Proposal I4.
18. There are specific uses which are indicated in Proposal I4 which should not be allowed on Prestige Industrial Sites. These specific activities and uses are recommended to be prohibited on the site through the means of planning conditions. Conditions are recommended accordingly.

visual impact on surroundings

19. Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007 offers justification that:

'Prestige sites are high quality, strategically located major industrial sites capable of competing against the very attractive sites now available in many parts of the UK. Sites should be designed to a high standard with good landscape and building quality.'

20. The proposed development site is allocated as a Prestige Site therefore the scheme has to be of a high quality which reflects the appearance of the existing South Church Enterprise Park.
21. The proposed development comprises of two main elements. These are the office units to the north and the industrial blocks to the south. The industrial units would be sited away from the main highway which runs through South Church Enterprise Park. The industrial units are all single storey and are a typical industrial design combining block work and corrugated metal cladding. Although the design and materials of the industrial units may not be normally acceptable on a prestige site, it is noted that these industrial units would not be highly visible from the main transport links through South Church Enterprise Park. The industrial units would be set away from the main highway and would be heavily screened by the office units which would be located between the main highway and the industrial units. In this case the style, design and materials of the industrial units are considered acceptable.
22. The office units would be located to the north of the site which fronts onto the main highway which is the main transport link through South Church Enterprise Park. The office units are all of a two storey design with the exception of one three storey office block which would be located centrally on the north boundary. This three storey office block would provide an interesting focal point to the development which offers an attractive feature to the site and the surrounding area. The layout of the office units show two parallel rows, with the parking facilities for the offices being set in between. A row of the office blocks would be set along the main highway and would provide a strong frontage. The Design and Access Statement submitted by the applicants indicated that the office units are derived from a contemporary design specification. The statement further indicates that the units would be finished in brickwork to provide a high quality finish. The proposed elevation drawings

for the office units also show an element of glazing. It is considered that the mix of brickwork and glazing for the office blocks would provide a high quality image which would reflect the high standard of the South Church Enterprise Park. A small amount of landscaping has been indicated on the proposed plans, and it is essential that landscaping is incorporated within the scheme to ensure the development is visually attractive. A condition is recommended accordingly.

23. The cafeteria building would be of a single storey design and would be constructed of a mix of brickwork, glazing and timber cladding. The design and use of different materials for this building is considered to be of a high quality and would not compromise the attractiveness of the overall development.
24. Given the sensitive layout of the scheme, by situating the office units to the front of the development where they would be highly visible from a public view point, and screening the industrial units to the rear of the site, it is considered that the proposed development would contribute positively to the high quality standard of the South Church Enterprise Park. The proposal is in accordance with Policy GD1 and Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

highway issues

25. The proposed development is to be accessed directly off the main highway to the north of the site. The development would incorporate an area for car parking for the office blocks and the industrial units. Durham County Council Highways Authority have been consulted on the application. The Highways Officer has requested several minor amendments to the scheme. Amended plans have been received which show the introduction of several footpath links within the scheme and slight alteration to the access road on the west boundary in order to satisfy the Highway Officer's requirements. The Highways Officer has raised no objections to the main access to the site, the layout of the scheme or the parking provision provided within the development.
26. With the application, a Travel Plan and a Transport Assessment were submitted. These reports have made an assessment of the existing public transport, cycling and walking routes and collected data on current traffic patterns. These reports conclude that the proposed development is accessible to the surrounding area and that the development traffic could be accommodated by the local highway network.
27. It is considered that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the existing road network and would not compromise road safety. The proposal accords with policies GD1 and T1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

objections/observations

28. The occupiers of surrounding properties have been notified individually in writing of the application. A site notice and a press notice were also posted advertising the application.

29. No observations have been received.

conclusion and reasons for approval

1. The majority of the site is to be developed for B1 and B2 use which is in direct accordance with Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007. The cafeteria and B8 use elements of the proposed scheme are considered to be ancillary to the main development. Each application has to be determined on its own merits and the proposed development in this application is considered acceptable as the cafeteria and B8 elements would not compromise the aims of Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
2. The proposed development would provide an interesting and attractive frontage by siting the office units to the north of the site adjacent to the main highway. The design and materials proposed for the office units would provide a high standard finish which would be visually attractive to the surrounding area. The proposed industrial units would not be highly visible from any public viewpoint as they would be located away from the main highway and screened by the office development. The proposed development is considered to be designed to a high standard which would contribute positively to the high quality standard of the South Church Enterprise Park. The proposal accords with the aims of Policy GD1 and Proposal I4 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
3. The proposed development provides adequate parking provision and the layout and access are considered acceptable in highway terms. There are sufficient and acceptable footpath links within the site. The proposed development is accessible to the surrounding area and the development traffic would be accommodated by the local highway network. The proposal accords with policies GD1 and T1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

RECOMMENDED

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions and reasons;

conditions

1. No development shall take place until samples of all materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

2. The development hereby approved shall not begin until details of the surface treatment and construction of all hardsurfaced areas have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the buildings shall not be occupied until that work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.
3. The development hereby approved shall not begin until details of the existing and proposed site levels and the finished floor levels of the proposed buildings and those of existing neighbouring buildings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority; and the works shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.
4. Before the development hereby approved is commenced a scheme of landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development.
5. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed, are severely damaged or become seriously diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.
6. Before the development hereby approved is commenced details of the height, siting, appearance and construction of all means of enclosure to be erected upon the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the works shall be carried out in accordance with such approved details before the buildings hereby approved are commenced.
7. Before the development hereby approved is commenced full engineering details of the proposed new road, including an engineering layout, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, and before the buildings hereby approved are occupied the subsequently approved engineering details shall be implemented to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.
8. Before the development hereby approved is commenced wheel washing equipment shall be provided at all egress points. The equipment installed shall be of the grid type to ensure that once the bottom of the vehicle is cleansed of mud, etc. this mud, etc. is not trailed onto the public carriageway. The wheelwashing equipment shall be used on all vehicles leaving the site during the period of construction works.
9. Prior to being discharged into any watercourse, surface water sewer or soakaway system, all surface water drainage from parking areas and hardstandings shall be passed through an oil interceptor installed in accordance with a scheme previously submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Roof water shall not pass through the interceptor.

10. There shall be no storage in the open on the site of goods, materials, equipment, vehicles or waste except in areas which may be first approved in writing by the local planning authority.
11. The business units hereby approved shall not be used for scrapyards, car sales, petrol sales, lorry parks and for the storage and distribution of minerals.

reasons

1. To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
2. To achieve a satisfactory standard of development. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
3. To ensure a satisfactory standard of development and to ensure that the development is not unduly prominent within the surrounding landscape. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
4. To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
5. To ensure the implementation of the approved landscape scheme within a reasonable time. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
6. To achieve a satisfactory form of development. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
7. In the interest of highway safety. In accordance with policies T1 and GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
8. In the interest of traffic safety and to safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
9. To prevent pollution of the water environment. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
10. In the interest of visual amenity. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

11. To avoid the introduction of inappropriate uses on the site and to ensure adjoining or nearby buildings are not adversely affected. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

background information

Application files, WVDLP as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

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number of days to Committee	<input type="text" value="71"/>	target achieved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
explanation			

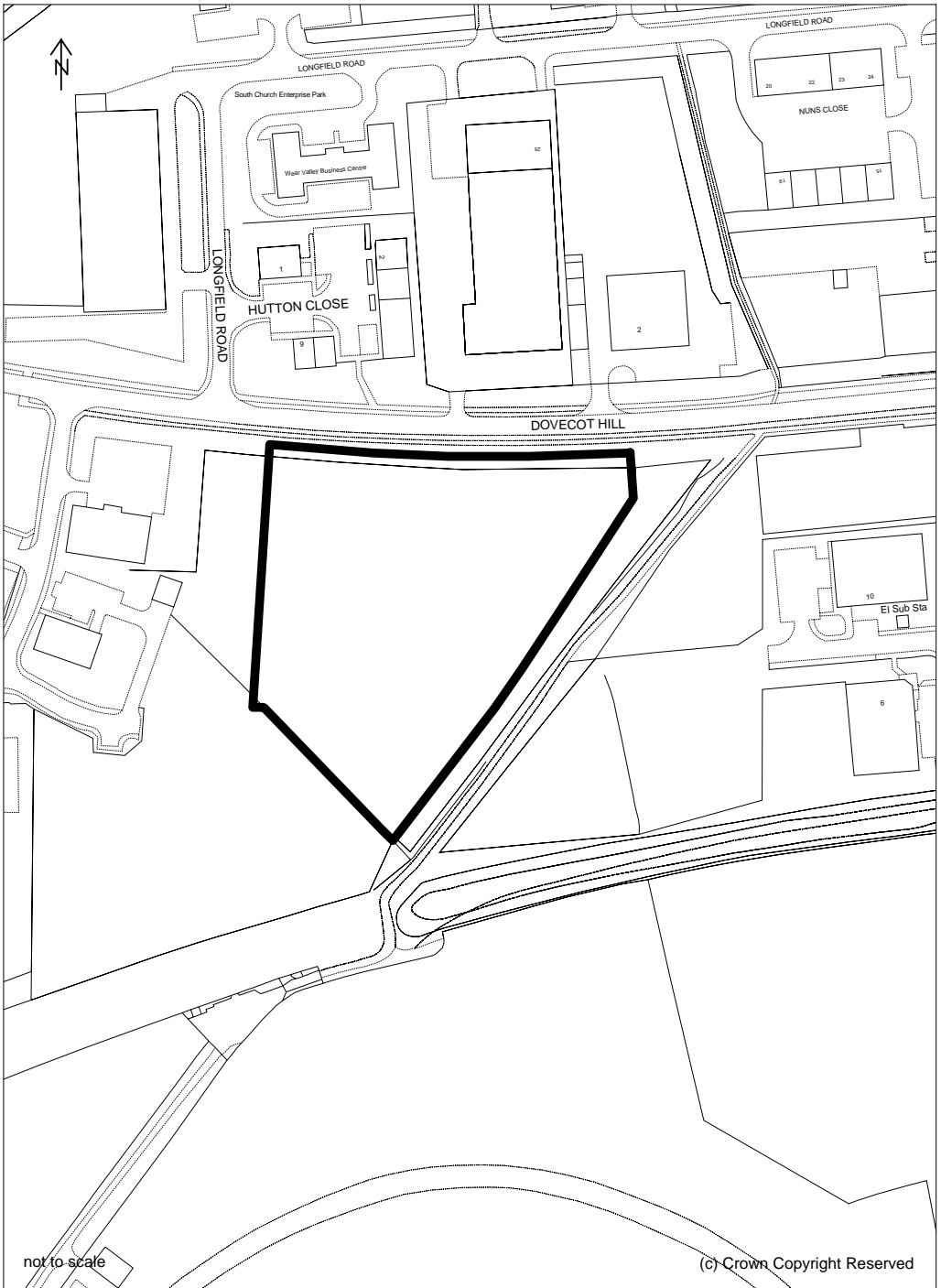
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3/2007/0829 - PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT WITH OFFICES AND SMALL INDUSTRIAL UNITS. THE OFFICES ARE A MIXTURE OF TWO AND THREE STOREY, THE BUSINESS PARK DEVELOPMENT ALSO INCLUDES A SINGLE STOREY CAFÉ AT LAND AT HENSON CLOSE, SOUTH CHURCH ENTERPRISE PARK, BISHOP AUCKLAND FOR MR. GLASS – 06.12.2007 AMENDED 06.02.2008



SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

29TH FEBRUARY 2008

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Regeneration

PART 1 – APPLICATION FOR DECISION

3/2007/0877- PROPOSED LANDSCAPING INCLUDING FOOTPATHS, TREES AND ART FEATURE, REMOVAL OF WALLS AND VEGETATION AT OPEN SPACE IN FRONT OF THE ACLET PUBLIC HOUSE, WATLING ROAD, BISHOP AUCKLAND FOR WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL – 09.01.2008

description of site and proposals

1. Planning permission is sought for landscaping including footpaths, trees and art feature, removal of wall and vegetation at open space in front of The Aclet Public House, Watling Road, Bishop Auckland. The works are to be undertaken by Groundwork West Durham and Darlington.
2. The site constitutes an area of open space to the front of The Aclet Public House, it is an island of open space surrounded by highway.

planning history

3. None relevant .

planning policies

4. The following policies of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007 are relevant in the consideration of this application:
 - GD1 General Development Criteria
 - BE23 Provision of Public Art

consultations

5. DCC Highways: No objections subject to the following requirement:- Please advise the applicant of the need to consult the Area Highways Manager at Etherley Lane before access works commence.

officer analysis

6. The key issue for consideration is:
 - Impact on the Appearance of the Surrounding Area

impact on the appearance of the surrounding area

7. It is considered that the proposed development would be in keeping with the character of the existing area in terms of mass, scale, design and materials and would not have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area. The scheme would improve the appearance of the site and the surrounding area. The proposal conforms to policies GD1 and BE23 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

objections/observations

8. Occupiers of the surrounding properties have been notified in writing and a site notice was also posted. The application was also advertised in the press.
9. No observations have been received.

conclusion and reasons for approval

1. The proposal is acceptable in relation to policies GD1 and BE23 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007 as:
 1. The development would be in keeping with the area in terms of design, scale, mass and materials and would improve the appearance of the area.

RECOMMENDED

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions and reasons;

conditions

1. Notwithstanding the information shown on the submitted application before the development hereby approved is commenced details of the make, colour and texture of all building materials to be used in the construction of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
2. Before the development hereby approved is commenced a scheme of landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

3. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed, are severely damaged or become seriously diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives consent to any variation.
4. Notwithstanding the information shown on the submitted application before the development hereby approved is commenced details of the artwork to the central area shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

reasons

1. To enable the local planning authority to control details of the development in the interests of visual amenity. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
2. To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
3. To ensure the implementation of the approved landscape scheme within a reasonable time. In accordance with policy GD1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.
4. To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the completed development. In accordance with policies GD1 and BE23 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

background information

Application files, WVDLP.

PS code	10				
number of days to Committee	65	target achieved	N		
explanation Workload					

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3/2007/0877- PROPOSED LANDSCAPING INCLUDING FOOTPATHS, TREES AND ART FEATURE, REMOVAL OF WALLS AND VEGETATION AT OPEN SPACE IN FRONT OF THE ACLET PUBLIC HOUSE, WATLING ROAD, BISHOP AUCKLAND FOR WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL – 09.01.2008

