

Item 7

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS - COUNTY MATTERS

1. 7/2007/0441/CM

APPLICATION DATE: 6 July 2007

PROPOSAL: PROPOSED EXCAVATION OF FIRE BREAK ON FORMER RAILWAY EMBANKMENT

LOCATION: CHILTON COLLIERY RECLAMATION SITE CHILTON CO DURHAM

APPLICANT: Durham County Council
Environment, County Hall, Durham

CONSULTATIONS

1. CHILTON P.C.
2. Cllr. C. Potts
3. Cllr. T.F. Forrest
4. Cllr. B.F. Avery
5. ENV. HEALTH
6. LANDSCAPE ARCH

This application (7/2007/0441/CM) is for development by Durham County Council and will therefore be dealt with by the County Council under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.

THE APPLICATION SITE

Chilton Colliery Reclamation Site is located to the north west of the village of Chilton adjoining Chilton Industrial Estate. The application site consists of part of industrial reclamation site forming a railway embankment and woodland and vegetation.

The application has arisen as part of the embankment has ignited and is burning. The vegetation and woodland in this area is dying back due to the high temperatures.

THE PROPOSAL

Permission is sought to excavate a cutting through the embankment to form a fire break and prevent the high temperatures spreading and igniting combustible material on the remainder of the site. The cutting will be excavated on the north western part of the site, measuring approximately 40m in width by a depth of 6.2m. The excavated material will be spread over the southern side of the existing embankment. The remaining hot material will be left to burn itself out.

A large number of trees will have to be felled to enable the earthworks to proceed, however the whole area will be replanted with broadleaved trees once the works are complete.

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CONSULTATION

Environmental Health – No objections

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed works will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area due to the number of trees that will need to be felled and the amount of material excavated from the site. However on balance, it is considered that the impact of the works will be significantly less that if no action is taken and the fire spreads through the embankment, possibly killing off all the vegetation on the site.

Policy E15 of the Sedgefield Local Plan requires that development affecting trees should retain other areas of woodland wherever possible and replace any trees which are lost. In total it is estimated that 1000 trees will be felled in order to complete the works, a large proportion of these trees would have been harvested in 5 years time. It is proposed that in total 2000 mixed broadleaved trees will be replanted once the works have been completed. Furthermore, existing mature broadleaved trees around the boundary of the proposed fill area will be left in place to act as a screen.

It is anticipated that the works will take 5 weeks to complete. Access will be taken from the A167 roundabout through the industrial estate. On average two wagons will enter and exit the site daily. It is considered that this will have a minimal disturbance on neighbouring land users and the overall transport network given the nature of the existing access route.

It is considered that the proposal conforms with the principles set out in Policy E11 (Safeguarding sites of nature conservation interest) and Policy T7 (Traffic Generation) of the Sedgefield Local Plan, for reasons identified above.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that in general terms, the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in dealing with the above application.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council raise no objections to the proposal, providing appropriate conditions are attached to ensure that the replanting works are undertaken to an agreed timeframe and standard.

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2. 7/2007/0463/CM

APPLICATION DATE: 16 July 2007

PROPOSAL: ERECTION OF 3 NO. CYCLE STORAGE SHELTERS AND 1 NO. SCOOTER SHELTER

LOCATION: OX CLOSE PRIMARY SCHOOL OX CLOSE CRESCENT
SPENNYMOOR CO DURHAM

APPLICANT: Mr J Richardson
Director , Environment, Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham,
DH1 5UQ

CONSULTATIONS

1. SPENNYMOOR TC
2. BUILDING CONTROL
3. ENGINEERS
4. ENV. HEALTH
5. Cllr. Andrew Gray
6. Cllr. A. Smith
7. Cllr. J.M. Khan

This application is for development by Durham County Council and will therefore be dealt with by the County Council under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992. The views of the Borough Council have been sought upon the proposal as a consultee.

THE PROPOSAL

This proposal involves the installation of 2no. (10 unit) cycle storage shelters within the grounds of Ox Close Primary School, Spennymoor, and 1no. (10 unit) cycle storage shelter within the grounds of the adjacent Ox Close Nursery School. Works will also see the construction of a new footway and gated access to the Nursery School, linking with the public footpath which runs to the rear of Mayfields to the immediate north-east of the Nursery School site.

Submitted plans show each of the 3no. shelters to be constructed from translucent cladding and a mild steel box section structure, having a dark green polyester powder coated finish. Two of these proposed shelters will be installed onto existing hard surfaces in close proximity to an adjacent shelter unit within the primary school site (recently granted planning approval, planning ref: 7/2007/0220/CM). Meanwhile, the remaining shelter, which is described as a scooter shelter despite being of similar scale and design to the other 2no shelters, will be constructed adjacent to the Nursery School in existing verge space, upon a purpose built foundation raft. Plans show this shelter to be located adjacent to the existing nursery school car park, which will be partially barriered off to prevent vehicular access and ensure highway safety to all potential users of this shelter and the proposed adjacent footpath.

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Each of these units are considered to be of a similar scale and design to that which was recently installed within the grounds of the Primary School, and will aim to increase provision for the number of students cycling to the school/nursery, thereby reduce congestion in the area and ultimately benefiting the local environment.

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

As part of the consultation and publicity exercise for this application, Building Control, Highways Engineers and Environmental Health have all been notified, with no adverse comments or objections having been received in response to the consultation exercise.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Each of the 3no. proposed cycle storage shelters are considered to be relatively small structures which will fully complement the existing storage shelters recently installed upon this site. With each unit being designed in such a way so as to blend in with many of the fenced surroundings and foliage which border the school and nursery site, each unit is considered to be of a scale and design which complements their surroundings so as to not appear incongruous to the surrounding street scene.

Submitted plans show each unit to be located within a highly visible, enclosed area of the school grounds for security purposes, with their largely transparent appearance and segregation from the local road network ensuring highway safety and a deterrent for criminal activity. However, despite their visual prominence within the school grounds, each structure will remain well screened from view when viewed from outside the school grounds due to the surrounding fencing and heavy vegetation. With the nearest residential dwellings sited some distance away to the north and south of the site, and behind substantial screening, it is therefore considered that each shelter will present little detrimental impact upon the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

On this occasion, it may be considered that the chosen sites will result in only a minimal loss of the total recreational space which surrounds these school buildings, with each of the chosen sites considered the most appropriate in terms of safe access, security and practicality.

Finally, in terms of the proposed footpath and gated access to serve this nursery school, no objections have been raised; with it considered that the siting of a secure footpath some distance away from any vehicular highway is both safe and practical. Furthermore, with no objections raised, and only a minimal loss to the existing panelled fence and hedgerow which borders the northern edge of this site, it is considered that this proposal would be acceptable, with no adverse impact upon the residential amenity of the neighbouring occupiers who live approximately 20metres to the north-east of the site.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that in general terms, the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in dealing with the above application.

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SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council raise no objections to this proposal, although Durham County Council should be made aware that the application site does fall within the 500 metre Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone, with it important that Natural England are notified of this proposal.

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