

Item no.

Report to: **Development Control and Regulatory Panel**

Date: **5 February 2008**

Report of: **Head of Planning and Building Control Services**

Subject: **Applications under the Town and Country Planning Acts
Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**

Ward: **All**

A INTRODUCTION

Members are advised that in preparing the attached report full consultation responses are not presented. Care is taken to ensure that principal issues of all relevant responses are incorporated into the report. Notwithstanding this Members are invited to view all submitted plans and consultation responses prior to the Panel meeting by contacting the Head of Planning and Building Control Services.

The District of Easington Local Plan was adopted by the District of Easington on 28th December 2001 and together with the Durham County Structure Plan it has been a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. However the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 determined that all Local Plans would expire three years after the Act came into force. This took effect on the 27th September 2007. In order to maintain continuity in the development plan system, the Council identified policies that should be 'saved' for an extended period until alternative policies are adopted in Local Development Frameworks. Direction from the Secretary of State has been received and all of those policies have been retained. The saved policies and Planning Policy Statements from the Government will be considered in the determination of planning applications. A view as to whether the proposals generally accord with them is identified in the relevant section.

Section 54A of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act (as amended) requires the Local Planning Authority to have regard to the development plan policies when they are relevant to an application and hence are a material consideration. Where such policies are material to a proposal, section 54A requires the application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The recommendations contained in this report have been made taking into account all material planning considerations including any representations received and Government guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Circulars. Consideration has been given to whether proposals cause harm to interests of acknowledged importance.

Members' attention is drawn to information now provided in respect of time taken to determine applications. Following each recommendation a determination time is provided based on a decision at this Panel. Where a decision time exceeds the 8 week target a reason for this is given in brackets.

Item no.

In considering the applications and preparing the report the District of Easington has fully taken into account the duties imposed on Local Planning Authorities by the Human Rights Act 1998. In particular, regard has been given to Articles 6, 7, and 8, the First Protocol and Section 6. Where specific issues of compliance with this legislation have been raised these are dealt with within each report.

B SPEAKING AT THE PANEL

The District Council is one of the few Councils in the country who allows verbal representations when decisions on planning applications are being made. The Panel has to balance listening to views with the efficient conduct of the business of the Panel. The following procedures have therefore been agreed. These procedures will be adhered to in respect of the items within this report. Members of the public will also be expected to follow these both in their own interests and that of other users of the service.

1. The Planning Officer will present his report.
2. Objectors and supporters will be given the opportunity to speak. Five minutes will be given to each speaker. If there is more than one speaker upon an issue, the District Council recommends the appointment of a spokesperson and that speakers register their request prior to the Panel meeting.
3. After registered speakers have had their say the Chair of the Panel will ask if there is any other member of the public who wishes to speak. Those who do may be allowed to speak. The Chair of the Panel will exercise discretion in this regard. Where the number of speakers or the repetitive nature of the points that may be raised may impact on the other business of the Panel then the Chair will restrict the number of speakers and progress the matter.
4. The applicant or representative may then speak for a duration of up to five minutes.
5. At the discretion of the Chair, objectors or supporters or applicants may ask officers questions then may be asked questions by Members and Officers
6. The Members of the Panel will then finally debate and determine the application with the assistance of officers if required.

C RISK ASSESSMENT

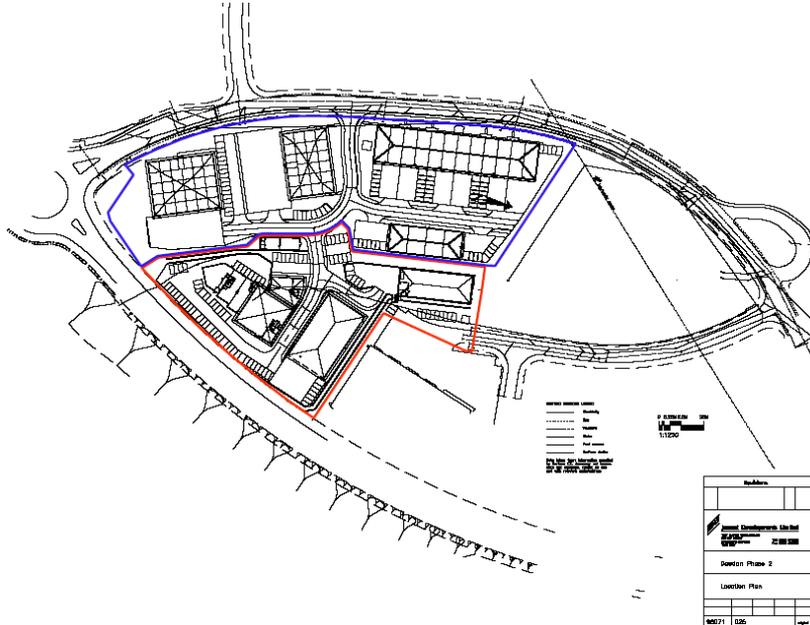
A risk assessment has been carried out in respect of individual cases. Overall, it is concluded that any risks to the Council, for example relating to an appeal being lost and costs awarded against the Council, are low, provided that decisions are made in accordance with recommendations. Risks will increase when decisions are made contrary to recommendations, and the degree will vary depending on the particular case.

D GENERAL APPLICATIONS

PLAN/2007/0767

Seaham (Dawdon) - INDUSTRIAL UNITS at 8 SPECTRUM BUSINESS PARK, SEAHAM for MR S MONK, S J & J MONK

Location Plan



The Application Site

The application relates to an area of land within the former Dawdon Colliery site, in an area which until recently benefited from Enterprise Zone status (see relevant planning history). The application relates to an area of land situated on the western side of the A182 to the south of the roundabout providing main access to the business park. The site is currently unused and is grassed.

The Proposed Development

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a variety of different buildings to be used for a range of uses. The proposal includes the erection of B1, B2 and B8 units and A1 and A2 properties. The proposed buildings are to be in keeping in terms of design and scale with those found within Spectrum Business Park. Due to the fall in land across the site various retaining structures are also proposed to increase the developable area of the site. The site is to be landscaped to enhance its prominent setting.

Site History

Spectrum Business Park was part of an Enterprise Zone. The Enterprise Zone ended in November 2005. Adjacent buildings were allowed under the provisions of the Enterprise Zone.

Item no.

Planning Policy

District of Easington Local Plan

GEN01 - General Principles of Development
ENV35 - Environmental Design: Impact of Development
ENV36 - Design for Access and the Means of Travel
ENV37 - Design for Parking

Consultations and Publicity

The application has been advertised by site notices and in the local press. No letters of representation have been received in relation to this application.

Durham County Council, Highways Authority, comments:

- The overall design of the scheme from a vehicular and pedestrian access point of view is generally acceptable. However minor amendments are required to the access arrangements. The proposed site plan makes reference to 83 car parking spaces which is considered acceptable, the proposed works are deemed acceptable from a highways point of view.

East Durham Business Service, comments:

- No objections to the proposed scheme.

Planning Considerations and Assessment

The proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant development plan policies, it is in keeping with existing developments situated within Spectrum Business Park in terms of scale and design. It is suggested that a condition be attached to the grant of planning permission to ensure that the proposed materials to be used match those used within the Business Park.

It is considered that the variety of uses proposed will add to the viability and vitality of Spectrum Business Park as a centre for employment uses. The proposed industrial (B1, B2 and B8) and commercial uses (A1 and A2) are in keeping with those already found on the industrial estate and as such are considered acceptable. The proposed retail element will provide for the users of the business park, and is also considered to be acceptable in keeping with the relevant development plan policies. It is proposed that a condition be attached to any grant of planning permission to limit the use of the retail unit to the sale of convenience foods to serve the needs of occupiers of surrounding business premises.

The proposal relates to a prominent site adjacent to the A182 that leads to Seaham town centre. It is proposed that a condition be attached to any grant of planning permission to ensure that a high quality landscaping scheme is agreed with the Local Planning Authority to ensure that the development makes best use of this important location.

Durham County Council, Highways Authority has no objections in principle to the proposed scheme, however it is proposed that a condition be attached to any grant of planning permission to ensure that a revised site layout is agreed with regard to Highways Authority comments relating to pedestrian access.

Item no.

Conclusion

In principle the proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant development plan policies, and planning permission should be granted, subject to the suggested conditions.

Recommendation

Approval subject to the following conditions:

Materials; Means of Enclosure; Landscaping Scheme; Timing of Landscaping Works; Works in accordance with revised layout details; Limit on Retail Goods; Parking Provision.

Reason for Approval

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with policies 1, 35, 36 and 37 of the District of Easington Local Plan.

Decision time Within 13 weeks. Target achieved.

PLAN/2007/0801

Seaham (Seaham Harbour) - RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT at THE BUNGALOW, MILLBANK, STOCKTON ROAD, SEAHAM for MR R JOBES

Location Plan



Item no.

The Application Site

The site comprises an extensive garden area surrounding two dwellings in the built up part of Seaham. It measures 0.5 hectares in area. The existing dwellings may be demolished to make way for the new housing development. The site has residential properties to the south, Stockton Road to the west, recreational space to the north and the former Seaham Colliery site to the east.

The Proposed Development

Outline planning permission is sought for residential development of the whole site, which will be likely to include the demolition of the existing houses. All matters are reserved for a future detailed planning application should permission be granted.

Site History

15/05/2003 – Conservatory (approved)

Planning Policy

District of Easington Local Plan

GEN01 - General Principles of Development

HOU67 - Windfall housing sites

ENV35 - Amenity

PPS3 - Housing

Consultations and Publicity

Residents – no responses

Parish Council – no response

DCC Highways – technical issues raised (passed to applicant as informal advice)

Northumbrian Water – issues relating to water mains on site (passed to applicant as informal advice)

Environmental Health – Requests contaminated land survey and hours of building operation conditions (construction hours condition not needed until reserved matters stage)

Planning Considerations and Assessment

As this is an outline planning application with all matters reserved for further consideration the main planning issue to be considered is the principle of the development of this site.

The land is currently occupied by two dwellings and associated garden areas and is therefore brownfield land, it is situated within the boundary of Seaham and is acceptable in planning policy terms for residential development under policy 67 of the Local Plan.

The site is surrounded on the south and west sides by existing dwellings and gardens and as such any new development will have to respect the privacy, outlook and natural light expectations of existing residents. In addition, any

Item no.

siting of future dwellings would have to be assessed taking into account the Seaham Colliery site which is due to be developed for housing.

Access would be gained via Stockton Road – there may be issues raised at the detailed stage which require further consideration but they are not part of the current application. Highways comments that have been received at this stage will be passed on to the applicant for information/action, but there are no objections in principle.

Conclusion

It is considered that the residential development of this land is acceptable in policy terms and that the impact of any development on local residents and the local road network can be controlled at the detailed planning stage.

Recommendation

Outline approval subject to the following conditions: Full details to be submitted relating to design, materials, density, access and landscaping; Contaminated Land Survey

Reason for Approval

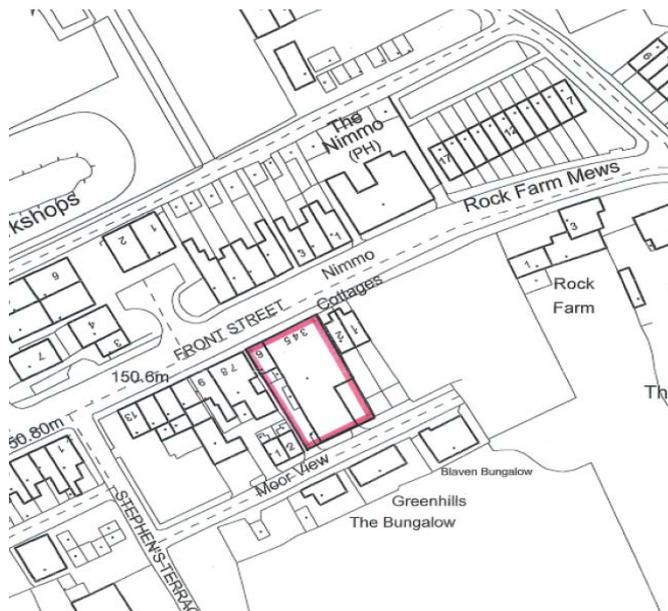
The proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies 1, 35 and 67 of the District of Easington Local Plan.

Decision time 10 weeks (target met)

PLAN/2007/0813

Wheatley Hill (Thornley & Wheatley Hill) - 10 NO. APARTMENTS at 3 - 6 FRONT STREET, WHEATLEY HILL for MR P McCOY (McHOME)

Location Plan



Item no.

The Application Site

The site is located within a mixed commercial and residential area of Wheatley Hill and the current redundant building comprises a large scale two and three storey structure fronting the main street and extending right back to Moor View to the rear. Moor View serves a number of residential properties as well as an abattoir business. It is an adopted highway owned by the County Council.

The Proposed Development

It is proposed to demolish the existing building and erect a two and three storey structure to provide 10 apartments and their associated car parking areas. The form and scale of the proposal is similar to the existing building but it does not extend back to Moor View to the rear, this area being given over to parking and storage space.

The external materials are intended to be a mixture of brick, render and concrete slate roof covering. Vehicular access to the site will be via Moor View, an adopted road, with pedestrian access being available from both the front and rear of the properties. A small garden area is provided to the front of the building, behind a low brick wall and railings.

Site History

99/217 – Outline permission for residential development – Approved 17/6/99

05/721 – Outline permission for 8 dwellings approved 4/11/05

Planning Policy

District of Easington Local Plan

GEN01 - General Principles of Development

Policy 35 - Amenity

SHO102 - Local and neighbourhood shopping centres

WH11 - Local shopping centre

WH12 - Improvement scheme at eastern end of Front Street

WH13 - Uses permitted in area covered by Policy Wh12

Consultations and Publicity

A site notice was posted, a press notice issued and local residents consulted. At the time of drafting no comments have been received from local residents.

Regeneration Officer – No objection in principle but aware that a Master Plan is being prepared for the village and that this site lies therein. Consideration should be given to housing needs in Wheatley Hill and the viability of apartments.

Highways – No objections subject to minor car park layout amendments.

Parish Council – Whilst supporting the redevelopment of this site, concerned that apartments will not be appropriate for this site. Another site in the village was approved for similar some time ago but has not been developed. Is of the opinion that the rear access is not an adopted road (*see above*).

Item no.

Concerned that Master Plan may be affected by premature development of this site.

Concerned that nearby Abattoir operations may be compromised by new residential development nearby.

Planning Considerations and Assessment

The main planning issues considered to be relevant to this application are :

- The principle of the development
- The visual impact of the proposal on the locality
- Traffic generation

The site is brownfield and lies in a central location within the village boundary and is therefore appropriate for residential development as proposed. Some concerns have been expressed by consultees regarding the appropriateness of apartment development in this location, however there are no planning policies in place which restrict such development to certain areas of villages. Each application is considered on its merits and in planning terms there are no material reasons why the principle of apartment/flat development should not be acceptable in this Front Street location.

The existing redundant building on this site is large and visually intrusive, dominating the local environment around Front Street and Moor View to the rear. Its demolition and replacement with new development as proposed is considered acceptable, bearing in mind the existing situation and the design of the replacement building. Whilst the central element of the new building is three storey (10 metres high overall), the two storey elements drops to 8 metres, similar to the existing dwellings adjacent. It does not extend back to Moor View thus opening up the environment in this locality.

The number of dwellings proposed is considered acceptable to the Highway Authority in traffic generation terms. Access is gained via Moor View which is an adopted road and adequate space is available to the rear of the site for occupiers and visitor car parking, (16 spaces). The existing building and its past and potential use is capable of generating a considerable amount of traffic in the locality; the proposed use is therefore seen as comparable in traffic impact terms.

Conclusion

In planning terms the development of this site is acceptable for residential development. The proposed Master Plan for the village has yet to be completed but no issues of principle have been raised by regeneration officers to the proposed development. It is considered that the design of the building is compatible with existing buildings nearby and represents an improvement to the environment compared to the existing situation. Traffic generated by the proposal is unlikely to cause problems in the locality and is likely to be less than that generated by potential uses of the existing building if brought back into use.

Recommendation

Approve subject to the following conditions: Materials, landscaping, car parking plans.

Item no.

Reason for Approval

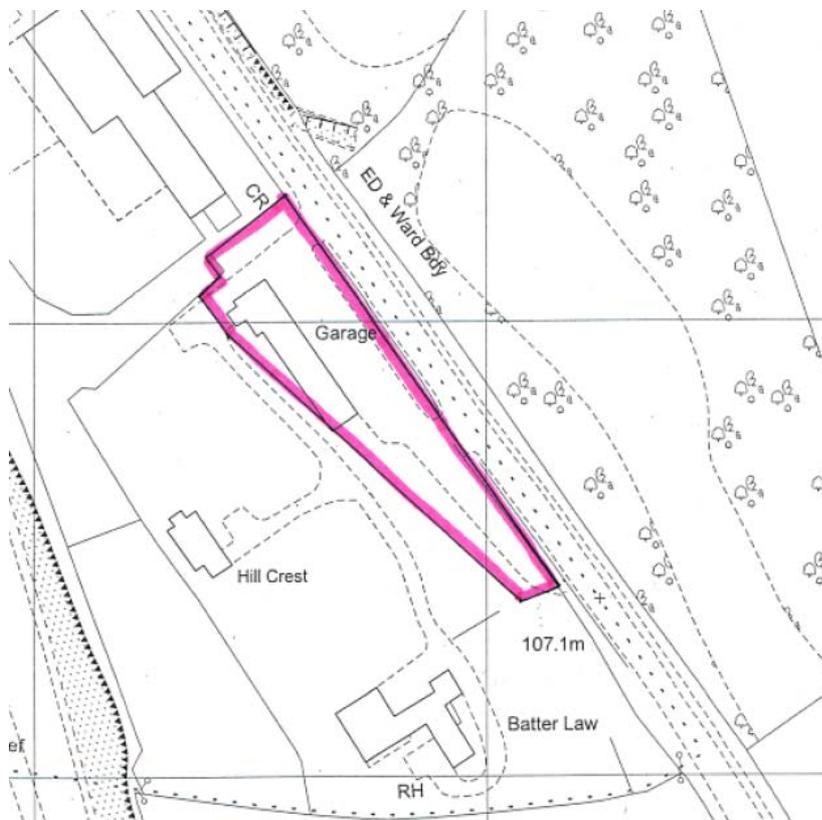
The proposed development is considered to comply with the relevant Development Plan policies referred to above.

Decision time 9 weeks – Target achieved.

PLAN/2007/0825

Murton (Murton East) - 3 No DWELLINGS WITH GARAGES AND 1 No INDOOR SWIMMING POOL at HILLCREST GARAGE, STOCKTON ROAD, COLD HESLEDON for MESSRS. HANSON, TRUEMAN AND COOK

Location Plan



The Application Site

The site is located on the B1432 Stockton Road which runs from Easington to Seaham, at Cold Hesledon, adjacent to the Garden Centre which is located to the north. It forms the site of the former Hillcrest Garage which has now been demolished.

The Proposed Development

It is proposed to erect three detached three storey houses and an indoor swimming pool building on the site of a demolished motor garage. The dwellings will be accessed via the existing shared driveway with parking for plots 1 and 2 being provided off this driveway together with two double garages. The swimming pool building will be located to the rear of plot 3.

Item no.

Site History

00/356 – Alterations to garage – Approved in 2000.
00/579 – Perimeter fencing – Approved in 2000.
05/882 - Four Dwellings – approved January 2006

Planning Policy

District of Easington Local Plan

ENV03 - Protection of the Countryside
GEN01 - General Principles of Development
Policy 35 - Amenity

Consultations and Publicity

The application was advertised in the press and a site notice was displayed and local residents consulted. At the time of drafting, no comments have been received.

Planning Policy Officer's comments are summarised as follows:

- Policy 3 of the Local Plan is relevant to this application as the site lies outside any settlement limit. Development will only be approved in such locations if supported by other policies.
- Policy 67 supports the development of brownfield sites, which the application site is, but only within the boundary of an established town or village. This application site is not so located.
- PPS3 supports new housing in locations which have good access to a range of facilities. It is considered that the application site is in a countryside location with poor access other than by private car to facilities.
- PPS7 supports new development in open countryside if there is Special Justification, such as to house an agricultural worker or the design of the development is exceptional or innovative. This proposal does not fulfil those criteria.

For the above reasons the proposed development is contrary to established planning policies and should be refused planning permission.

Environmental Health Officer – Requires contaminated land survey to be submitted.

Environment Agency – Objects due to lack of information on land drainage and land contamination.

County Highways – Requests amended plans..

Planning Considerations and Assessment

It is considered that there are two main planning issues relating to this proposal :

- Planning Policy considerations and site history

Item no.

- Visual impact of the proposed development.

Members may recall granting permission for four dwellings on this site in January 2006. At that time officers recommended refusal of permission in that, whilst the site was brownfield, it lay outside any village boundary and was therefore contrary to policies in the Local Plan, as identified by the Policy Officer and detailed above. Notwithstanding this advice, Members resolved to grant permission, noting that to do so would encourage the demolition of the visually unsightly derelict garage buildings which at that time were on site.

The above decision is a material planning consideration in terms of considering the current proposal, particularly as the decision is still “in time” and valid. In view of the above therefore it is considered that a precedent has been set for the development of this site and that notwithstanding the continued objections raised by planning policy officers, the principle of development is considered acceptable in the context of the recent approval.

The design of the dwellings is larger than those approved before being a three storey type some 9.5 metres to the ridge. The form of the site is such however that the buildings will be set against a backdrop of a large embankment (upon which are located two more dwellings), and the garden centre located immediately to the north, and as such their visual impact should be reduced as a result. The buildings will face along the length of the site rather than directly onto the road.

Overall the proposed development is considered acceptable in this particular setting and will not result in a loss of character to the locality bearing in mind the previous structures that occupied the site and existing buildings on adjacent land.

Conclusion

The principle of development of this site was established via a planning permission granted in 2006. This proposal represents a reduction in numbers of dwellings albeit with an increase in scale compared to the approved scheme. It is considered that in view of the planning history associated with the site and the revised dwelling design in the context of the form of the site and other developments nearby, the proposed development is acceptable in this instance. Approval would represent a minor departure from development plan policy which would not warrant referral to Government Office.

Recommendation

That subject to the receipt of satisfactory details relating to site contamination, land drainage and site access, the Head of Planning and Building Control be delegated to grant permission subject to the following conditions: Materials, landscaping, contaminated land and amended plans.

Reason for Approval

The proposed development is considered to conform with the relevant Development Plan policies referred to above.

Decision time

9 weeks – Target not achieved due to need to be considered by Panel.

Item no.

PLAN/2007/0827

Murton (Murton West) - 83 NO. DWELLINGS at FORMER MURTON PRIMARY SCHOOL, WATT STREET, MURTON, for MR D MURDOCH, YUILL HOMES LTD.

Location Plan



The Application Site

The application site is located on land at the former Murton Primary School, Watts Street, Murton, within the settlement boundary of Murton. The site is bounded by residential properties, a library and school to the north, and residential properties to the east, south and west. It is a brownfield site and has an area of approximately 1.4 hectares.

Item no.

The Proposed Development



This application originally proposed 91 dwellings, however amendments have since been negotiated and the application now proposes 83 dwellings giving a density of 59 per hectare – government guidance requires a minimum density of 30 per hectare. The developer has agreed to provide 16 affordable dwellings on site (20%) and to make a commuted sum payment towards offsite play space/recreational facilities.

Site History

No relevant site history.

Planning Policy

District of Easington Local Plan

- GEN01 - General Principles of Development
- ENV35 - Environmental Design: Impact of Development
- ENV36 - Design for Access and the Means of Travel
- ENV37 - Design for Parking
- HOU66 - Provision of outdoor play space in new housing development
- HOU67 - Windfall housing sites
- PPS3 - Housing

Item no.

Consultations and Publicity

Parish Council – no response

DCC Highways – technical issues raised which are being addressed by applicant, awaiting response at time of report writing

Northumbrian Water – a scheme for the disposal of foul and surface water should be submitted and approved before works commence

Environment Agency – No objections (informal advice passed to applicant)

Environmental Health – Contaminated land assessment should be submitted and approved before works commence

Regeneration – no response

Asset and Property Management – no response

Landscapes – no objections (verbal)

Local Plans – no objections – the scheme goes some way to meeting the requirements of the affordable policy statement, particularly with regard to achieving 20% provision, and with a mix of property size suitable for family housing, with the dwellings appropriately 'pepper-potted' around the development in a manner which makes it indistinguishable from the market housing

Neighbours – one letter of support

Site notices and press notices have also been displayed.

Planning Considerations and Assessment

- Design and layout
- Highways issues
- Provision of play space/landscaping
- Affordable housing

Design and Layout

The proposal comprises a mix of two and three bedroomed houses involving the use of three different house types which have an informal, staggered layout as well as slightly varying roof heights, some are terraced and some are semi-detached. It is considered that this is an appropriate mix of house types for this location. The development would involve a combination of fully rendered dwellings and brickwork dwellings, all of which would have either red or grey roof tiles. All of these elements would help to add interest to the street scene. In addition, the dwellings would have panelled windows, feature window cills and heads, doorway canopies and some would have rear Juliet balconies. All dwellings would have access to off street parking in accordance with guidelines set out by Durham County Council.

In addition to this it is considered that a density of 59 dwellings per hectare is appropriate in this location and is in accord with the governments requirement for a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare. The distancing standards as set out in the Local Plan, which aim to protect amenity, have been adhered to in almost all instances. However, in a limited number of instances this has not been met, but due to the small shortfalls involved, it is considered that amenity would not be significantly harmed. Generally it is considered that the design and layout of the proposal is acceptable and is in accordance with local and national planning guidance.

Item no.

Highways issues

Durham County Council highways have raised a number of technical issues relating to visibility splays, footpaths and drive lengths. Plans have been amended to overcome these issues, however at the time of this report being written, confirmation that these amendments are acceptable has not been received. The Panel will be up-dated accordingly.

Provision of play space/landscaping

The proposed development would be open plan with no gates, walls or fencing to the front of properties. In addition there are small pockets of planted landscaping within the development, which improves the overall aesthetics of the site. The developer has also agreed to landscape land along Barnes Road and at the south west corner of the site which is owned by the district council in order to improve the street scene. Policy 66 of the Local Plan requires developers to provide outdoor play space in new housing development. Where this cannot be achieved the developer is required to provide funding towards these facilities offsite. Accordingly, the applicant has agreed to enter into a Section 106 agreement to secure offsite facilities and the development is therefore in accordance with Policy 66 of the Local Plan.

Affordable Housing

The Council commissioned an Affordable Housing Strategy in 2006 which identified a need for affordable housing to help diversify the range of housing available in the district and provide for low income households who cannot access the general open market. The strategy was prepared to provide a local context for affordable housing, required by government in PPS3 (Housing). When considering applications for housing development regard must be given to the need to achieve the appropriate mix of housing in terms of size, tenure and cost and the need to rebalance housing markets. In this instance, the developer has agreed to provide 20% of the dwellings as affordable housing in the form of shared ownership with a registered social landlord. The affordable dwellings would be both two and three bedroomed and would be 'pepper potted' across the site. The provision of affordable housing on this site should be secured through a Section 106 agreement which will need to be finalised before formal approval is issued. The applicant's proposals for affordable housing are being assessed at the time of preparing this report, and the Panel will be up-dated on this matter.

Conclusion

It is considered the principle of residential development on this site is acceptable; it is a brownfield site within the settlement boundary. In addition, it is considered that the design and layout are acceptable and would not have any adverse impacts on surrounding residents or the street scene. The scheme will contribute toward the need for affordable housing and proposes a mix of house types. Overall, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in planning terms and would contribute toward the ongoing regeneration of Murton and the district as a whole.

Recommendation

It is recommended that delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Building Control to either:

Item no.

1. Approve, subject to a suitable section 106 agreement for the provision of affordable housing and offsite play space and subject the following conditions: landscaping; materials; means of enclosure; hours of construction; contaminated land assessment; no forward walls; foul/surface water scheme; amended plans.

Or

2. Refuse, if a section 106 agreement for the provision of affordable housing and/or offsite play space is not finalised before 26th February 2008 then the application would be contrary to policies 66 of the Local Plan and PPS3 – Housing.

Reason for Approval

If appropriate Section 106 agreements are finalised then the proposal would be considered to be in accordance with policies 1, 35, 36, 37, 66 & 67 of the District of Easington Local Plan.

Decision time Within 13 weeks subject to Section 106 agreements being finalised. (target met)

PLAN/2007/0863

Easington Village (Easington Village & South Hetton) - 5 NO. DWELLINGS at LAND AT LITTLETHORPE, EASINGTON VILLAGE for G FORBES AND SON

Location of site



Item no.



The Application Site

The application site lies at the south eastern end of the village and is currently occupied by a large storage building some 50 x 18 metres in area. The overall site area is just over 0.1 hectares. There are a small number of trees to the front of the site whilst to the rear there is a heavily wooded area known as Thorpe Gill, most of which lies outside the application site area.

The Proposed Development

It is proposed to demolish the existing redundant building and develop five detached two storey houses and associated double garages along the frontage of the site. It is intended to retain the existing small trees along the roadside within the front gardens. The rear gardens will extend down to the edge of the woodland area adjacent Thorpe Gill.

Red brick and grey rooftiles are proposed for the external materials – steel railings are proposed for the front garden areas to retain an open aspect.

Site History

01/420 – Outline residential development – withdrawn January 2002.

Planning Policy

District of Easington Local Plan

ENV03 - Protection of the Countryside

ENV07 - Protection of Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV)

GEN01 - General Principles of Development

Policy 35 – Amenity.

Consultations and Publicity

The application was advertised in the press, a site notice posted and local residents consulted. One resident has commented raising the following:

- the driveway of one of the houses is opposite an area used for parking a car and may restrict this in the future.

Item no.

Parish Council – No comments received.

County Archaeologist – No objections.

Tree Officer – Requests further information on tree protection.

County Highways – No objections in principle.

Planning Considerations and Assessment

The main planning issues relating to this application are considered to be :

- The visual impact of the development on the character of the village
- Planning policy implications of the development.

In considering the visual impact of the development account should be taken of the existing buildings on site which will be removed as a result of the development. The existing large fibre cement and brick structure is visually dominant in the locality and something of an eyesore when seen in the context of existing dwellings and other buildings in the locality. It is considered that its removal will benefit the character of this part of the village.

The scale and design of the five new dwellings is considered to reflect that of existing dwellings nearby, in particular Ivy House and North View and will positively enhance the appearance of this part of the village, particularly with the retention of semi mature trees on the road frontage.

In terms of planning policy the rear part of the site - some 5 to 12 metres deep across the site – extends beyond the village boundary as shown in the Easington Local Plan. This line follows the rear side of the existing building and not – as might be expected – the hardstanding area to the rear. It is considered that to restrict new development solely to within the village boundary will result in a cramped form of development with little private open space. It would also leave an undeveloped area of hardstanding for which it would be difficult to find an alternative use with residential development adjacent.

On balance therefore it is considered that the limited extension of the gardens of the new dwellings beyond the village boundary will be more than compensated for by the removal of the existing large building and the erection of new dwellings as described above.

Concerns have been raised regarding the possible loss of a parking space opposite one of the proposed access drives. The parking is on the public highway and it is considered that arrangements will be possible between the affected parties that will allow for continued on-street parking and access to the new dwelling. Existing trees on the site restrict the location of the new driveway to where it is currently proposed. This matter is not considered to be sufficiently serious to require an amendment to the plans or refusal of planning permission.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed development will positively enhance this part of Littlethorpe by the removal of a large visually intrusive storage shed and its replacement with five dwellings of a scale and design which will complement the character of the locality. The minor extension of the gardens

Item no.

beyond the village boundary is considered acceptable in this instance in view of the benefits to be derived from the proposed development as described above. The minor departure from policy would not warrant referral to Government Office.

Recommendation

Approve subject to the following conditions: Materials, landscaping, tree protection and highway improvements.

Reason for Approval

The proposed development is considered to conform to the relevant development plan policies referred to above.

Decision time 6 weeks – target achieved.

E Background Papers

The following background papers have been used in the compilation of this report.

Durham County Structure Plan
District of Easington Local Plan
Planning Policy Guidance Notes
Planning Policy Statements
Regional Spatial Strategy
DETR Circulars
Individual application forms, certificates, plans and consultation responses
Previous Appeal Decisions



Graeme Reed
Head of Planning and Building Control