

Durham County Council

At a Meeting of the Planning Committee held at the County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 18 June 2008 at 10.00 a.m.**

Present

Councillor R Rodgers* in the Chair

Councillors: Alderson, Armstrong, Bainbridge B, Burnip, Dixon, Farry, Holroyd, Liddle, O'Donnell, Plews, Richardson, Shield, Stoker, Taylor P, Temple, Turner Allen, Williams, Young R, Zair.

Other Members:

Councillors Arthur, Bainbridge A, Bell A, Blakey, Hancock, Hugill, Morgan, Shiell, Stradling, Turner Andy, Young B.

Apologies:

Councillor C Carr, Davidson Fergus, Sloan and Yorke

A1 Code of practice for Members and Officers dealing with Planning Matters

The Committee received a presentation by the Head of Environment and Planning and the Acting Director of Corporate Services on the Code of Practice (for copy see file of Minutes)

A2 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2008 were confirmed by the Committee as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Development by the County Council

a) Wear Valley District: Provision of new tennis courts including 8 no. floodlight columns, fencing and new tarmacadam surface, Bishop Barrington Sports College, Bishop Auckland (Regulation 3)

The Head of Environment and Planning presented a report on the proposed provision of new tennis courts including 8 no. floodlight columns, fencing and

new tarmacadam surface, Bishop Barrington Sports College, Bishop Auckland (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Zair expressed concerns of residents from Arundel Close relating to noise factors caused by the tennis balls hitting the fence and asked if there were any controls in place. The Head of Environment and Planning said it would be difficult to enforce any controls on this problem but that he would raise the issue with the applicant. However, the fencing was coated with a plastic coating and that there was some hedging behind the fence and then the residents own fence and walls which should mitigate the problem.

Councillor Alderson queried if noise measurements had been undertaken and was advised that this had not been done as this was an existing facility and that the school and it's associated activities had been on site since 1960's. The proposal does mean that the courts would be used for their designated purpose rather than as an informal play area and gathering point. However, the Head of Environment and Planning said he would raise this with the applicant and monitoring could be undertaken in the event of any complaints.

Resolved:

that planning permission be granted for the development for the following reason:

The proposal by virtue of the size, location, appearance and nature of the use and intended hours of use and lighting levels would have an acceptable impact on the surrounding area and upon local amenity and would accord with Policies GD1 and RL1 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan.

b) Sedgfield Borough: Retention of two storage containers, Timothy Hackworth Primary School, Byerley Road, Shildon. (Regulation 3)

The Head of Environment and Planning presented a report on the proposed retention of two storage containers at Timothy Hackworth Primary School, Byerley Road, Shildon (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Environment and Planning informed the Committee that this was a retrospective application and in response to a question from Councillor Alderson agreed to discuss the colour of the containers with the school. It was confirmed with Councillor Shield that the temporary consent period would be 5 years

Resolved:

that Planning permission be granted for the following reason, subject to relevant conditions

The containers by reason of their size, purpose and siting do not significantly detract from the appearance of the locality or the amenities of surrounding

residents. The development accords with Policy D1 of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan.

In view of the circumstances that have led to the submission of this planning application it was further resolved that

- The school be advised of the Planning Committee's disappointment and concern that the containers were installed without the benefit of planning permission and reminded of the need to notify the planning authority at the earliest opportunity about intended developments on the site.
- A Planning Information Note be produced covering the use of steel storage containers and related structures and equipment on school sites so that schools are aware of planning requirements when considering their storage options

A4 Applications to be determined by the County Council

a) City of Durham District: Change of use to Recycling Recovery Facility at the former National Coal Board building, Tursdale, for Greencyle Plc, (Retrospective Planning Application).

The Head of Environment and Planning presented a report on the Change of use to Recycling Recovery Facility at the former National Coal Board building, Tursdale, for Greencyle Plc (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Environment and Planning informed the Committee that this was a retrospective application as the Company initially believed that a change of use of the building was not required but had since sought to regularise the planning situation.

The City of Durham District Council's view has now been received and it has raised no objection to the development.

Cassop-cum-Quarrington Parish Council have raised some issues and these have been responded to by letter. There has been no response from Cornforth or Coxhoe Parish Councils.

Councillor Williams expressed his concerns over the amount of traffic on the road often causing delays of 20-30 minutes for local residents. Now they were faced with noise caused by the Company's operations from 5.00 am every morning. The road has already suffered from 30 casualties and 2 fatalities and despite repeated requests for the installation of a mini-roundabout there has been no action taken. Local residents had not been consulted prior to the development and suffer the effects from hoards of seagulls at the site as well as having concerns over the driving methods of some drivers in the local area associated with the site. He added that the City

of Durham Council would not object as they were part of the scheme. He requested that a site visit be undertaken to look at the road and traffic issues in the area as well as the on-site operations.

Councillor Morgan also queried the lack of details relating to an assessment of the fire risk given the materials involved including plastics and asked if any measures were in place. He supported Councillor Williams' request for a site visit.

Councillor Shield suggested that any site visit needs to be at a time when the traffic problems that have been identified can be observed. The Head of Highway Management confirmed that if the site visit was held at the usual time for such visits this would not be at the most congested period however, the Committee would be able to appreciate the nature of the and associated traffic.

Resolved:

That a decision be deferred until a site visit has been arranged. The Chairman reminded Members that they had voted unanimously for a site visit and that he hoped they would be aware of the need for such a meeting to be quorate.

b) Easington District: Provision of a Material Recycling Facility to include the erection of a picking shed, Unit 'U', Thornley Industrial Estate, Shotton Colliery for First Skips Ltd

The Head of Environment and Planning presented a report concerning the Provision of a Material Recycling Facility to include the erection of a picking shed, Unit 'U', Thornley Industrial Estate, Shotton Colliery for First Skips Ltd (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Environment and Planning informed the meeting that no further comments or objections had been received.

Resolved:

that planning permission be granted for the provision of a Material Recycling Facility including the provision of a picking shed at Thornley Industrial Estate, Shotton Colliery for the following reason:

The proposed change of use of the site would not be unduly obtrusive or adversely impact on the local community or environment. The proposal accords with Policies W38, W39 and W33 of the County Durham Waste Local Plan relating to the suitable location of Material Recycling Facilities and appropriate environmental mitigation measures, and Policy 54 of the Easington District Local Plan in relation to small existing industrial estates and bad neighbour uses

A5 Proposed New Validation Procedures for Planning Applications

The Head of Environment and Planning presented a report on the proposed new validation procedures for planning applications (for copy see file of Minutes).

Resolved:

Having notified relevant parties of the intended introduction of the list and considered the issues raised, the 'Draft Validation Checklist' attached to this report was approved.

A6 Easington Local Development Framework: Core Strategy and Development Management Preferred Options

The Head of Environment and Planning presented a report concerning Easington District Council's Local Development Framework (LDF): Core Strategy and Development Management Preferred Options (for copy see file of Minutes)

Councillor Richardson welcomed the report but raised concerns relating to housing proposals in respect of a council having been taken to court by a developer regarding affordable housing and asked if this had any implications for Durham County Council. The Head of Environment and Planning advised that it was required to set an affordable housing ratio but would investigate the legal implications

Resolved:

That the Committee endorses the comments at Appendix 2 as the County Council's formal response to Easington District Council's Preferred Options Core Strategy and Development Management report.