

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **County Planning Committee** held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham on **Tuesday 4 February 2020 at 1.00 pm**

Present:

Councillor J Robinson (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors J Atkinson, A Bell, J Clare, I Jewell, C Kay, G Richardson, A Shield, J Shuttleworth, A Simpson, F Tinsley (Vice-Chair) and S Wilson

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Corrigan, K Hawley and A Laing.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor L Marshall as substitute Member for Councillor Laing.

3 Declarations of Interest

Councillor A Shield declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Member of the Shotley Bridge Reference Group and informed the Committee that he had been advised to leave the meeting and take no part in the decision on the application for consideration. Councillor Shield expressed his disappointment that he had received this advice at such short notice

Councillor I Jewell also expressed the same interest and Councillor Shield and expressed his disappointment that he had received the advice at such short notice, meaning that he was unable to arrange a substitute Member to attend in his place.

Councillors I Jewell and A Shield left the meeting.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 Applications to be determined

a DM/19/01987/OUT - Land to the south of Puddlers Corner Roundabout, Genesis Way, Consett

The Committee considered a report of the Senior Planning Officer regarding an outline application (with means of access) for a mixed-use scheme comprising a community hospital (C2) and pharmacy (A1), sheltered care unit (C2), residential care unit (C2), gym and wellbeing centre (D2), hotel (C1), public house (C1), micro-brewery (B2/A4) and vets practice (D1) on land to the south of Puddles Corner Roundabout, Genesis Way, Consett (for copy see file of Minutes).

G Blakey, Senior Planning Officer provided a detailed presentation of the application which included a site location plan, aerial photograph, indicative layout plan, proposed site access arrangements, view of the site and the A692, view of the site and nearby C2C and development and view of the site from Terris Novalis. The Senior Planning Officer informed the Committee that an amendment to Condition 6 was proposed to reference the proposed multi-user path to link across the site from the Consett and Sunderland Railway Path to the A692 to the north east close to Puddlers Corner Roundabout.

Councillor M Clarke, Member for the Delves Lane Electoral Division informed the Committee that he supported the application. Although a link had been made about the proposed community hospital being a replacement for Shotley Bridge hospital this application it should be remembered that this was an outline application only. A campaign for a replacement for Shotley Bridge hospital had been ongoing for a number of years but the final decision lay with the CCG who were assessing a number of possible sites. This application proposed a range of related services, was large enough and had good highway links. Councillor Clarke informed the Committee that he supported this application and would support other applications on suitable alternative sites.

Mr M Clarke of Project Genesis thanked Councillor Clarke for his support for the application. In supporting the application Councillor Clarke had outlined the benefits of the site.

Project Genesis had put this site forward at some risk regarding the hospital development, but the site was well located for the proposed purposes and would not conflict with town centre uses. Project Genesis had been heartened by the level of public support for the proposal and Mr Clarke thanked Council officers who had been involved in the application which he asked the Committee to approve.

Councillor Shuttleworth presented to Committee a statement which had been prepared by Councillor Shield. Although in outline only, this was a significant development and the officer report was comprehensive. No statutory or internal consultees had raised objection to it and the proposed development would have little town centre impact. This was not a finely balanced application and would increase job creation and improve social benefits. Councillor Shield asked that the application be approved.

Councillor Shuttleworth **moved** approval of the application, subject to the Conditions contained in the report as amended at Condition 6.

Councillor Tinsley welcomed the application, which presented one site option for improved health facilities in the area. The site had good access, good public transport access and proposed free car parking. Councillor Tinsley **seconded** approval of the application.

Councillor Clare asked about site levels of the development site. The Senior Planning Officer informed the Committee that the field was generally level but appeared elevated from views along the A692 and further north. Councillor Clare asked whether the development might deprive the woodland to the west of the site of water catchment areas. The Senior Planning Officer replied that the use of SUDS would be part of the reserved matters stage.

Councillor Clare commented that he could not see the proposed old people's houses on the indicative plan. The Senior Planning Officer replied that a residential home was being proposed which would be more akin to a care home. In response to a request from Councillor Clare the Senior Planning Officer then indicated the location of the proposed hospital on the indicative plan.

Councillor A Bell informed the Committee that he was fully supportive of the application. He referred to the proposed public house and hospital and asked whether any pedestrian road crossing was proposed. The Senior Planning Officer replied that access only was for agreement in the application and the internal layout of the site was not fixed at this stage.

Upon a vote being taken it was

Resolved:

That the application be approved subject to the Conditions contained in the report with an amended Condition 6 to reference the proposed multi-user path to link across the site from the Consett and Sunderland Railway Path to the A692 to the north east close to Puddlers Corner Roundabout.