

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **Area Planning Committee (South and West)** held in **Council Chamber, Spennymoor - Council Offices, Spennymoor** on **Thursday 20 June 2019** at **2.00 pm**

**Present:**

**Councillor J Clare (Chair)**

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillors J Atkinson (Vice-Chair), D Bell, J Blakey, L Brown, G Huntington, I Jewell, J Maitland, S Quinn, G Richardson, J Shuttleworth and S Zair

**Although Councillors G Huntington and J Blakey were in attendance, they took no part in the decision-making process.**

### **1 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors J Chaplow, E Huntington and F Tinsley.

### **2 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute Members in attendance.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **4 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **5 Applications to be determined**

**a DM/18/00374/FPA - Greyhound Track, Front Street, Merrington Lane, Spennymoor**

The Committee considered a report of the Senior Planning Officer regarding an application for the erection of 84 dwellings with associated access,

parking and landscaping at the Greyhound Track, Front Street, Merrington Lane, Spennymoor (for copy see file of minutes).

The Senior Planning Officer gave a detailed presentation which included a site location plan, aerial photographs and photographs of the site and confirmed that the following updates which had been received following the publication of the report;

- The information which was required to be submitted to verify the drainage scheme had now been received and agreed in conjunction with the Council's Drainage Section. It was proposed to amend the wording of condition 9 to secure its implementation.
- In addition, amended plans, including details of the proposed boundary treatment, had been submitted and the earlier objections raised by the Police Architectural Liaison Officer (PALO) had been withdrawn. Whilst the plans were agreed in principle, a boundary enclosures condition was required to secure the exact details namely of the chicane feature adjacent to the subway entrance. Subject to this condition being imposed no objection was raised by either the PALO or the Public Rights of Way section. A boundary enclosures condition was therefore proposed in addition to the conditions listed within the report. Condition 2 (approved plans) also required updating to reflect the most up to date version of the plans.

The Chair confirmed that there were no registered speakers for the application though Deborah Smith acting as agent was available to answer questions.

Councillor Jewell queried the provision for parking, access and construction of driveways and the Principal DM Engineer confirmed that that Highways had found that since the introduction of a new formula for visitor parking, applications were swamped by laybys which dominated developments, whereas 2013 standards consisted of over-providing in curtilage parking. The Highways Development Manager had researched National formulas and it had been agreed that for a provisional period of time, all developments would be subject to 25% visitor parking provision, which on this development equated to 21 spaces. The Principal DM Engineer confirmed that the initial application had included an alternative access, however the applicant had eventually submitted the application with an identical access route to that approved in 2007, as Highways were keen to maintain it.

Councillor Jewell confirmed that he was satisfied with the response of the Principal DM Engineer and therefore moved approval of the application.

Councillor Brown asked for clarification on the comments received by Public Transport and the Senior Planning Officer confirmed that a contribution of £300k was not being sought as it was not considered necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms given the distances to alternative bus stops and the accessibility of the site.

Councillor Blakey referred to the lack of proposed bungalows and housing for the elderly in the development and asked whether in light of the emerging County Durham Plan, they could be incorporated in the development. The Senior Planning Officer explained that the report acknowledged that the absence of specific provision for the elderly was an adverse impact. Flats were incorporated into an initial version of the layout but they were inappropriate for other planning reasons. The Senior Planning Officer replied that the emerging County Durham Plan was not yet adopted and therefore no weight could be afforded to it when determining applications.

**Resolved:**

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement to secure the following:

- provision of 15% affordable housing units on site equating to 13 units;
- £382,278 towards providing additional primary teaching accommodation in Spennymoor;
- £132,367.50 towards improving offsite open space and recreational provision within Low Spennymoor and Tudhoe Grange Electoral Division;
- £9,328.20 is required to be used by the Council towards biodiversity enhancements in accordance with the framework identified in Durham County Council's Local Biodiversity Compensation Strategy

And subject to the conditions outlined in the report (as amended by the Senior Planning Officer)

Signed.....  
Chair of the meeting held on 18 July 2019