



Highways Committee

Date Monday 7 October 2013
Time 9.30 am.
Venue Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham

Business

Part A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Substitute Members
3. Minutes of the meetings held on 4, 8 and 27 July 2013 (Pages 1 - 14)
4. Declarations of interest, if any
5. Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders relating to the re-opening of the northern end of Stanley front Street to vehicular traffic - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 15 - 34)
6. Loss of open space objections relating to the sale of land adjacent to The Todner, Front Street, Dipton - Report of Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 35 - 48)
7. Such other business, as in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

Colette Longbottom
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
27 September 2013

To: **The Members of the Highways Committee**

Councillor G Bleasdale (Chairman)
Councillor C Kay (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors J Allen, B Armstrong, D Bell, H Bennett, I Geldard,
O Gunn, D Hall, D Hicks, K Hopper, O Milburn, S Morrison,
R Ormerod, J Robinson, J Rowlandson, P Stradling, R Todd,
J Turnbull, M Wilkes and R Young

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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Highways Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 4 July 2013 at 9.30 a.m.**

Present:

Councillor G Bleasdale in the Chair

Members of the Committee

Councillors J Allen, D Bell, H Bennett, O Gunn, D Hall, D Hicks, K Hopper, C Kay, O Milburn, S Morrison, J Rowlandson, P Stradling, J Turnbull and R Young.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B Armstrong, I Geldard and R Ormerod.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members present.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 11 April and 19 June 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any items of business on the agenda.

5 Proposed Signalisation of Northlands Roundabout, Chester-le-Street, County Durham

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development regarding objections received to a scheme which proposed junction improvements and signalisation at the A693/A167 Northlands Roundabout, Chester-le-Street (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager made a presentation to the Committee which detailed the location of the roundabout and included aerial views, prominent features of the immediate surrounding area, street views of the roundabout exits and traffic flow statistics (for copy of presentation see file of Minutes).

Representations from people residing in the immediate area had been on-going since 2005, all of which sought improvements for pedestrians and other road users. The Council had revisited the site on numerous occasions but had encountered difficulties in the design of a suitable scheme given the five-legged nature of the roundabout.

The Committee were informed that the A693 and A167 were categorised as economic transport corridors where the Council would look to improve junction layouts, enhance capacity, facilitate growth and reduce congestion.

The proposed scheme would consist of traffic signals, with pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities. The Park Road North entrance to the roundabout would be reconfigured and an area of highway land to the south would be utilised to introduce a crossover priority junction. The carriageway on the A693 Blind Lane and A167 North Road would be widened to provide additional lanes to deal with the volume of traffic and the roundabout would be reduced from five legs to four.

It was considered that the scheme would serve to manage traffic flow at the roundabout and had been developed in response to a number of factors, namely:

- requests for formal pedestrian crossing facilities at the junction
- lack of facilities for cyclists
- delays to buses and traffic at peak times

Traffic data was shared with the Committee which showed an average of 15,000 vehicles per day. This had remained relatively constant over the past eight years. There had been 14 accidents in the past five years which had resulted in 16 casualties, two were pedestrians and one was a cyclist.

Extensive consultation had taken place, through informal meetings with the local Parish Council, local councillors, residents associations and the general public. Consultation with residents was undertaken in December 2012 and had been followed up with a series of 'drop-in' sessions. Press releases had been placed in the local media.

The Committee were informed that there had been 59 representations from the occupiers of 33 properties, together with an objection from North Lodge Parish Council and North Lodge Residents Association. In addition to this a 73 name petition had also been submitted which, essentially, maintained an objection to the parts of the scheme which directly affected the residents of Blind Lane who stated that residents in the area were already faced with high volumes of traffic, associated noise and pollution and environmental impact. Representations from the MP for North Durham and North Lodge Residents Association had been circulated to the Committee at the request of both parties.

The Strategic Traffic Manager then summarised the objections to the scheme which included:-

- traffic volumes and speed;
- impact on pedestrian safety as a result of carriageway widening and the impact on accessing properties;
- merging lanes;
- noise and vibration;
- vehicle emissions;
- quality of life and visual amenity;
- consideration of alternative proposals.

Referring to an email submitted by Councillor Wilkes prior to the meeting, the Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that:

- the location of telegraph poles, streetlights and the tree barrier from a nearby playing field had not been considered at the current stage and would be part of the final design phase. This had not yet been undertaken because the Council did not have approval for the scheme;
- traffic signals on the roundabout would be full-time and needed to be operate in this way for any pedestrians who were visually impaired;
- there were no concerns in relation to any possible increase in through-put of traffic which would affect the Vigo Lane/Durham Road mini-roundabout at the boundary with Birtley, because improvements had already been undertaken in that particular area;
- no objections had been received from emergency services and a letter of support had been received from the local bus company;

The Strategic Highways Manager also referred to a representation from a local resident who sought the retention of a stone bus shelter. The Committee were informed that no discussions had yet taken place and the Council would discuss this issue with the Parish Council and others at the relevant time.

The Committee then heard representations from a small group of students from Park View School who were in support of the proposals and explained to the Committee that:-

- the road was extremely difficult to cross given the amount of traffic at peak times;
- many students took unnecessary risks in attempting to cross the road after long periods of time, simply through impatience. Whilst it was accepted that students would still have to wait for any possible traffic signals to change, it would be controlled with a guarantee of being able to cross safely, quicker than what it would be without;
- vehicle speeds entering and exiting the roundabout were fast and dangerous;
- Northlands park was a popular play area in Chester-le-Street which many students used and encountered difficulty in accessing because of difficulties crossing the road;
- many vehicles did not indicate which left students unsure of their intended direction of travel;
- visibility was poor when crossing the road at Blind Lane with many cars travelling at excess speed;

- some road users with good intentions would often stop their vehicle on the inside lane to allow students to cross the road, however, drivers in the outside lane were either unaware or wouldn't stop often - causing students have to retreat back to the footpath.

In summing up their representations, the students from Park View School felt that the introduction of traffic signals and pedestrian crossing facilities would make the road safer for all users.

The Committee then heard representations of objection from a spokesperson of the residents of Blind Lane, summarised as follows:

- residents were not against change, especially changes which would make the area safer and provide better traffic flow;
- proposals at present would mean the removal of grass verges at Blind Lane which offered little or no tangible benefit other than to affect the lives, wellbeing and physical wellbeing of local residents;
- it was considered that the junction was safe. This was supported by the Council's own statistics and the introduction of traffic signals would potentially create more accidents. The spokesperson highlighted a scenario of a heavy goods vehicle travelling at speed over the junction through an amber signal;
- it had been observed very recently by local residents that the majority of responsible road users took care at the roundabout. Traffic at peak times had seen good traffic flow and little congestion. Thirty or more schoolchildren had crossed the road with relative ease using the existing footpathways;
- there was a feeling that more could be done to educate students on how to cross the road properly;
- recent meetings between representatives of the local community, the local Member of Parliament and County Council representatives had resulted in a general view that all reasonable objections had been dismissed and there were doubts about the effectiveness of the consultation which could have been better;
- the Committee were being asked to agree a multi-million pound project without a final design;
- traffic congestion at peak times from junction 63 of the A1(M) came as a result of traffic lights, whereas the Northlands Roundabout appeared to flow quite well;
- Blind Lane was not constructed for the volume or capacity of traffic that travelled through it which would worsen with the expansion of Drum Industrial Estate;
- earlier reports lacked consistency and there were little to no details of any form of compromise or alternative;

- there was a feeling that the Blind Lane area was shouldering the burden for the scheme and did not fit with the council's consultation strategy to 'reduce inequality between residents';
- requested that the Committee leave the grass verges in Blind Lane untouched and look at alternative of staggered traffic.

Councillor T Smith, local County Councillor for the Chester-le-Street North Division referred to letters and correspondence she had received in 2008. The letter alluded to problems that students encountered when trying to cross the road. The school encouraged students to walk to school in an attempt to reduce car journeys to and from school, which many parents were in agreement with. Councillor Smith suggested that after five years of inactivity, no safety improvements had been made, and she considered that the Council must act quickly and approve a scheme for the benefit of all.

Councillor Smith also referred to an email from the Headteacher of the school who had stated that at present, the road proposed a significant danger for students of Park View School with no other reasonable way to approach the school site by foot and expressed the view that traffic signals would make the roundabout safer for all. The Headteacher had also referred to traffic congestion outside the school entrance, essentially caused by indiscriminate parking and did cause major issues for the residents of North Lodge. This issue would potentially be minimised if students had a safe walking route to school.

Councillor P May, local councillor for the North Lodge area informed the Committee that both himself and local residents were not against any scheme which made the area safer and felt that the introduction of any pedestrian crossing would not resolve the traffic issues experienced outside of the school.

Councillor May commented that the Council had proposed a scheme which made the area safer for certain groups of people but was in fact to the detriment of residents and users of a nursery on Blind Lane, which was not intended to cater for heavy traffic. The associated widening of the road would exacerbate problems that residents had already been experiencing, which included noise, vibration and difficulties with access and egress from their properties. Councillor May suggested that Highways officers should have produced an alternative proposal for consideration.

In response to the representations made to the Committee, the Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that:

- despite the concerns that had been raised, there was no evidence to support that the introduction of traffic signals on roundabouts caused more accidents;
- the consultation had been well publicised, open and transparent and provided many opportunities to feed into the process;
- in terms of the final scheme, no detailed design had been made, for example how the utilities would design new telegraph poles etc., and assured the Committee that any changes of significance would be referred to them for consideration;

- in terms of the design for the scheme, the council had tasked a leading traffic design company to come up with a solution to this problematic area which has been fully assessed by professional officers from the Council. If there was an option not to widen Blind Lane the scheme could not go ahead as it could not be achieved without widening the road.

Councillor Stradling commented that the consultation appeared adequate and queried whether any alternatives had been considered at any point.

The Strategic Traffic Manager informed the Committee that no alternative schemes had been considered and referred to the constant requests received over a number of years, hence the renewed push and engagement traffic consultants to come up with a solution.

Councillor Turnbull explained to the Committee that he had travelled the route over the past weekend and felt that the roundabout currently presented a 'who dares wins' type of scenario and needed to be addressed. He also pointed out that a large volume of vehicles had been parked in cycle lanes at certain locations which should be looked at as a separate issue.

Resolved:

That the recommendation contained in the report be agreed.

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Special Meeting of **Highways Committee** held in Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham on **Monday 8 July 2013 at 11.30 a.m.**

Present:

Councillor G Bleasdale in the Chair.

Members of the Committee:

Councillors J Allen, B Armstrong, H Bennett, A Bonner, I Geldard, O Gunn, J Gray, D Hicks, K Hopper, O Milburn, S Morrison, R Ormerod, J Rowlandson, R Todd and M Wilkes.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bell, D Hall, C Kay, J Robinson, P Stradling, J Turnbull and R Young.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor A Bonner was substituting for Councillor D Bell and Councillor J Gray was substituting for Councillor J Turnbull.

3 Declarations of interest

Councillor Wilkes informed the Committee that he had previously commented on the application as one of the local Councillors for Bearpark. This had occurred prior to Electoral Review of the County Council. Councillor Wilkes was no longer the Councillor for the area and indicated that he had not made up his mind on the application and would listen to the evidence presented to the Committee, for and against the application, with an open-mind.

The Planning and Development Solicitor confirmed to the Committee that the circumstances to which Councillor Wilkes referred to would not preclude him from engaging in the decision making process which would allow him to participate in the debate and any vote, if he so wished.

4 Public Footpath No. 20, Bearpark Parish - Highways Act 1980, Public Path Diversion Order

The Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development and Head of Legal and Democratic Services regarding an application to divert part of public footpath (No. 20) at Lodge Farm, Bearpark (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Committee were informed that the application had been made in August 2012 on behalf of the owner of Lodge Farm, Bearpark on the grounds of security and to provide a

more attractive and accessible route for the public. The proposed diversion would be through more 'agricultural' type land. Two new timber link gates would be provided together with a suitable walking surface. A bridge over a small stream would be repaired to meet Durham County Council standards. All of the works would be paid for by the applicant.

The Access and Rights of Way Team Leader provided the Committee with the relevant law on which the application should be considered. In this particular case, the Order would be in the interests of the both the landowner and the public.

The Committee were provided with a summary of the objection received from Bearpark Parish Council which was detailed in Document C of the report. The objection from the Parish Council had been received during the pre-order process. The Access and Rights of Way Team Leader provided Council's view in relation to their objections as follows:

- whilst most paths are historical in their nature, it was not in itself a reason for rejecting proposals to change a path;
- Public Footpath No. 20 formed part of a strategic network of paths for which the diversion would not adversely affect users;
- the initial planning application for a development at Lodge Farm would have required the diversion of Footpath No. 20 under the provisions of the Town and County Planning Act 1990, but a revised application had been approved which accommodated the path on its current line. There was no link between the planning permission and the current diversion proposal;
- Bull Hole Byre was a Grade II listed building, dating from the 17th century. As part of the approved planning permission, Listed Building Consent had been granted for works to consolidate the building. The public would still be able to view the Byre from the new route, albeit at a greater distance. Any decision to allow public access to the building itself, as for Heritage Open Days, was not dependent on the location of the Public Footpath.

The Committee then heard from Joe Ridgeon of George F White LLP who spoke on behalf of the applicant, in support of the application. It was highlighted that the application had been made on the grounds of security of the farm, and those of the new properties under development. The applicant had invested much time and energy into the footpaths and bridleways in the area and referred to the stone stile that users currently had to cross on the route, which did pose difficulties for some users. The new route would alleviate any security and access issues. All in all, the route would present a more attractive proposition for the public to use whilst offering a greater variety of landscape, away from buildings, benefitting residents and would not result in any adverse impact in terms of loss of views of the historical listed building.

The Committee then heard representations from Councillor McKechnie of Bearpark Parish Council who reiterated those objections sent in at the pre-order stage. He explained that the Parish Council wished for the path to remain unchanged in order to preserve the historical and strategic importance of the path, given that it acted as an important link to both Langley Park and Witton Gilbert. The Parish Council also felt that the diversion of the

footpath would lead to a loss of the historical and architectural interest of the surroundings and would have a negative affect on users. Furthermore there was a belief that the diversion application linked to a planning application which they believed to have been amended slightly to ensure that the public right of way could be maintained. The Parish Council highlighted that the application had been made on the grounds of security, however, there was no evidence of any security related issues affecting the farm. The proposed diversion, whilst accessible by the public, would take views away from the main historical building.

The Parish Council also expressed their disappointment that dialogue had not taken place between themselves and the landowner at an earlier stage which may have potentially resolved the issue, given that the Parish Council had an alternative suggestion for a route.

The Access and Rights of Way Team Leader informed the Committee that the possible alternative suggestion referred to by the Parish Council representatives could not be considered by the Committee at the meeting. The Committee had to determine the application before them and could only decide to either agree or refuse the making of the diversion order. Any alternative would be subject to a different process.

Points of clarification were sought from Councillors B Armstrong and O Milburn in relation to the precise location of Bull Hole Byre and the triangular area detailed on the plan which the Access and Rights of Way Team Leader confirmed would be a fenced paddock.

Resolved:

That the Committee agree to the making of a Diversion Order to divert part of Footpath 20, Lodge Farm, Bearpark under the provisions of Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980.

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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Highways Committee** held in Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham on **Monday 29 July 2013 at 10.30 a.m.**

Present:

Councillor G Bleasdale in the Chair

Members of the Committee:

Councillors D Bell, H Bennett, O Gunn, D Hicks, K Hopper, O Milburn, S Morrison, N Martin, R Ormerod, J Robinson, P Stradling, J Turnbull and R Young.

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Kay, J Allen, B Armstrong, I Geldard, D Hall and R Todd.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor N Martin was substituting for Councillor M Wilkes.

3 Declarations of Interest

4 Appropriation of Belle Vue site, Consett to facilitate redevelopment as an education Academy and leisure centre

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Spatial Policy, Planning, Assets and Environment to consider the appropriation of an area of land at Belle Vue, Consett, to facilitate the redevelopment of the site as an education academy and leisure centre (for copy see file of Minutes).

The BSF Project Director provided the Committee with a brief presentation showing the location and boundary of the site, the existing open space area to be redeveloped, the public office area to be redeveloped and the open space which was to remain.

On 19 March 2013 outline planning consent was granted for the proposed demolition of the leisure centre, Council offices, football and rugby club facilities and for the construction of new leisure facilities and a new education academy. On 13 March 2013 reserved matters were approved including details as to the layout, external appearance and landscaping of the site.

The redevelopment would result in some reconfiguration and loss of available open space, however that in so far as practicable had been minimised, retaining much of the existing open character of the site.

The Planning and Development Solicitor confirmed that the majority of the site was acquired by Consett Urban District Council in 1936 and three smaller parcels were acquired at a later date. The Council was the owner of the Site as the statutory successor.

The land included in the statutory conveyance in 1936 was acquired and held for the purposes of public walks or pleasure grounds under section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875. In 1949 part of that land was appropriated for public offices.

The Council had sought to integrate open space as part of the redevelopment and the benefits of the replacement multi-functional leisure facility and the provision of a new academy, would contribute to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area and outweigh the loss of part of the open space.

Appropriation was an executive function under the Local Government Act 2000. However, the Highways Committee is to make a recommendation in respect of the proposed appropriation to officers who would then make the final decision.

The objections received during the statutory notice period were detailed in the report and addendum and summarised by the Planning and Development Solicitor.

Councillor Temple addressed the Committee as a local member and spoke for both himself and Councillor Watson who was unable to attend the meeting. Both Councillors were opposed to the appropriation of the land for any other purpose. Councillor Temple commented that everyone in Consett wanted an Academy and the benefits associated with the development, but not at the chosen site. The legal issue the Committee were dealing with was whether or not the area of land in question was surplus to requirements or whether the area of land described as Consett's Town Moor, should cease to exist, be fenced in, and result in the existing greenery, being inaccessible. They felt that no case had been made as to why the land was no longer required by the public for its use as public walks and pleasure grounds, or alternatives provided to the users whose existence had been proven and accepted at both a public inquiry and in the Courts. In summary, it was the view of both local Councillors that the land was not surplus to requirements and urged the Committee not to appropriate the land.

The Planning and Development Solicitor responded that the current facilities were not fit for purpose. A refurbishment would be insufficient – the playing fields were at the end of their life span and the facilities needed the benefit of vast improvement which could only be facilitated by redevelopment.

Councillor Stradling commented that there had been much debate and discussion about the Academy and the chosen site. The development would see the replacement of existing facilities to a high standard and the land would be accessible by the public would be much more satisfactory.

Councillor Martin sought reassurance that the land was not held in trust for enjoyment by the public with a formal agreement, of which the Planning and Development Solicitor confirmed that she was not aware that any such agreement was in place.

Councillor Robinson was of the opinion that the gains for Consett would far outweigh any negative aspects of the development and he felt there was a vast amount of space retained for the public to access at all times.

Councillor Bennett explained his surprise about the objections of the proposed facilities given that the existing area had deteriorated over time, leaving it in a state of disrepair and the scheme offered was superior in comparison.

Resolved

That the Committee recommend the appropriation of land proceed as outlined in the report and appendices.

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Highways Committee

7 October 2013



STANLEY Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting and Prohibition of Loading / Unloading Amendment Order 2013

STANLEY One way Streets / No Entry Order 2013

Report of Ian Thompson Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic development

Councillor Neil Foster, Portfolio Holder Regeneration and Economic Development

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To advise Members of the objections received to the formal consultation on the proposed traffic regulation orders relating to the re-opening of the northern end of Stanley front Street to vehicular traffic.
- 1.2 To request members consider the objections made during the consultation exercise.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In February 2012 the Stanley Masterplan was published. Outlined within this document were a number of challenges that the County Council had identified for the Town.

The focus of the Masterplan is primarily to address a range of issues which fall within the following themes:

- Revitalising the town centre
- Improving the attractiveness of the town centre
- Increasing accessibility to and within the town centre

One of the key locations identified for improvement within the plan was the northern end of Front Street and Beamish Street. Vehicular entry, parking access and pedestrian movements were all identified as areas that could be improved in this area.

- 2.2 With the above in mind, it is proposed that the northern end of Front Street be re-opened to vehicles to encourage increased economic activity within this section of the Town Centre. Amendments to the road alignment in the High Street / Front Street junction area are also proposed so as to better utilise the available highway and to improve the entrance to the town centre and increase parking opportunities for potential visitors. It is anticipated that pedestrian flow to and from the High Street will be aided by the amendments to this junction.
- 2.3 As a consequence of the above actions, increased parking provision within easy reach of the town centre will be created. This parking will be a mixture of disabled and short stay to improve custom to the local businesses and facilities.

In providing this new layout some areas of the existing surrounding highway will need to be amended to suit. It is proposed that traffic will flow in a southerly direction on Front Street, exiting via Anthony Street or Thorneyholme Terrace. It is proposed that Thorneyholme Terrace also be made one way with access only available from its western end.

- 2.4 An initial consultation letter was delivered to all residential properties and businesses on Front St, Beamish St, Anthony St and Thorneyholme Terrace immediately affected by the proposal. This letter was delivered on the 16th May 2013 with comments to be received by the 7th June 2013. Questionnaires inviting comments were also placed in the Town Council offices and Louisa Centre within the town during this period. These forms were to be completed and submitted by the 14th June 2013.

The formal consultation exercise for this scheme commenced on the 25th July 2013 and closed on the 15th August 2013.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed that a new slip road be constructed to the front of Benton Terrace / Elite Buildings for traffic entering Front Street from the A6076 High Street. Vehicles will then be permitted to travel in a southerly direction on Front Street before exiting via either Anthony Street or Thorneyholme Terrace. It is anticipated that the provision of two possible exit routes for vehicles using the Front Street will reduce the impact on the surrounding residential streets.
- 3.2 Limited waiting bays (Mon – Sat, 1 hour no return 2 hours) and disabled parking (Mon – Sat, 3 hours no return before 6pm) will be provided on the Elite Buildings slip road and Front Street. It is also proposed that length of limited waiting (Mon – Sat, 1 hour no return 2 hours) be provided on the northern side of Thorneyholme Terrace at its westernmost end. All restrictions will be operational, Monday to Saturday, 8am – 6pm.

- 3.3 No waiting at any time (NWAAT) restrictions will be provided on the western side of Front Street.
 - 3.4 Wide footways (2 metres minimum width) will be provided on Front Street. These footways will be widened further in areas where pedestrian volumes are expected to be higher. Pedestrian barriers will also be provided to enhance road safety in this area.
 - 3.5 Traffic Calming in the form of speed tables and speed cushions will be provided on the Elite Buildings slip road and Front Street to manage vehicular speeds.
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- 3.6 Following the extensive consultation process, we received 22 objections. Twelve of these objectors live in the area immediately affected by the scheme, 5 lived in the wider Stanley area and the remaining 5 were anonymous.

4 Objection 1 – Front Street should not be opened up.

- 4.1 A number of objectors do not want to see the northern end of Front Street opened up to vehicles. The objectors state that this will have an adverse effect on road safety, particularly in light of the nearby primary school and church.

5.0 Response

- 5.1 The Stanley Masterplan identified the northern end of Front Street as one of its key locations for improvement. In opening up this section to vehicular traffic it is hoped that economic activity will be increased in this section of the Town Centre.
- 5.2 Wide footways will be constructed on either side of the Front Street, particularly at the northern end in the vicinity of the school. Guardrail will also be introduced in areas where increased pedestrian movements are considered likely.
- 5.3 Traffic Calming in the form of Speed Tables (Front Street) and Speed Cushions (outside of Elite Buildings) is to be installed to keep vehicular speeds low.

6.0 Objection 2 – Thorneyholme Terrace should not be opened up.

- 6.1 A number of objectors do not want to see Thorneyholme Terrace opened up to vehicles. Again, the objectors state that this will have an adverse effect on road safety, particularly in light of the nearby nursery school, primary school and church. A number of those objecting to opening up Thorneyholme Terrace live in the street and also raise concerns that the proposal may increase parking problems for residents.

- 6.2 A comment was also received stating that the splitting of Front Street could result in parts of the street not being used.
- 6.3 A comment was also received stating that the restrictions should only be in place during school hours with the restriction not being in force on a weekend thus avoiding problems for church goers.
- 6.4 A further objection stated that there was no need to open up Thorneyholme Terrace as part of the scheme. It was suggested that Thorneyholme Terrace remain closed and traffic be directed along Front Street / Anthony Street and Beamish Street instead.

7.0 **Response**

- 7.1 Wide footways will be constructed on either side of the Front Street, particularly at the northern end in the vicinity of the school. Guardrail will also be introduced in areas where increased pedestrian movements are considered likely.
- 7.2 Numerous vehicles currently park in Thorneyholme Terrace on a daily basis. Vehicles enter from Thorneyholme Terrace North and because of the single entry / exit point to the street are required to turn in the area at its north western end. The proposal will regulate traffic flow into a one way system and as such will remove the majority of the reversing and turning manoeuvres which are currently undertaken on this street. It is envisaged that the additional parking facilities provided outside of the Elite Buildings and Front Street will relieve some of the existing parking problems in this area.
- 7.3 At present the business owners at the northern end of Front Street are expressing concern because of the lack of trade at this location. Some of the more established businesses are located at the other end of Front Street where pedestrian through flow is more prevalent. It is anticipated that the opening up of this section of Front Street will assist the businesses in this part of the town.
- 7.4 It is proposed that there be a short section of limited waiting bays on the northern side of the western end of Thorneyholme Terrace. These bays will be in operation Monday – Saturday, 8am – 6pm. These days / times are considered the most appropriate to control long stay parking by commuters and should therefore enable the spaces to be used by potential customers to the town centre.
- 7.5 The option of only directing the traffic flow along Anthony Street / Beamish Street was considered. However it was concluded that this could potentially have a detrimental effect on traffic flow. The aim of the scheme is to encourage passing trade into the street and it is considered that two potential exits should make this a more convenient option for people. It is envisaged

that those heading back towards Stanley will exit via Thorneyholme Terrace whereas those heading north will use Beamish Street.

8.0 Objection 3 – One Way System is Wrong Direction.

8.1 Comments were received stating that the one way flow on Front Street and Beamish Street is pointless and potentially dangerous to both pedestrians and motorists.

8.2 A further objection to the direction of the traffic flow stated they thought a safer route of travel would be to direct traffic from the A6076 roundabout, south on Thorneyholme Terrace north, round the southern side of the Health Centre before returning north and entering the western end of Thorneyholme Terrace to the rear of the Job Centre. From this point vehicles could then enter Anthony Street or travel north up Front Street.

9.0 Response

9.1 As previously mentioned in this report, the aim of the proposal is to generate passing trade to the northern end of Front Street to encourage economic activity. Traffic Calming, Signage and appropriate lining will be provided to ensure that both motorists and pedestrians are made aware of the various new restrictions and traffic flows that will be put in place.

9.2 The route suggested by the objector is not considered to be a viable option. The majority of motorists would prefer to take advantage of a convenient route to the local amenities and facilities and it is considered that by providing access from Royal road that this is the case. The alternative route suggested is approximately 3 times longer than the proposal and would also require some land acquisition to enable larger vehicles to turn onto Thorneyholme Terrace adjacent to the Job Centre.

10.0 Objection 4 – Thorneyholme Terrace / Thorneyholme Terrace North Junction

10.1 Concern has been raised with regards the potential for traffic congestion at the junction of Thorneyholme Terrace / Thorneyholme Terrace North Junction

11.0 Response

11.1 As it stands we do not consider this to be a likely issue. That said, if congestion problems did become apparent at this location then consideration could be given to implementing measures to rectify the situation

12.0 Objection 5 – Parking Problems for Residents

12.1 Comments raising concerns for residents parking in Thorneyholme Terrace were received. It was stated that the road gets extremely busy at present with vehicles accessing the school, nursery and church as well as using the area to park when using Front Street.

- 12.2 A request was also made for residents parking permits as it was stated that the effect of the scheme was likely to be too great for the residents of Thorneyholme Terrace.
- 12.3 Comments were also received indicating that residents of Benton Terrace should receive permits so that they could park to the front of their properties at all times.

13.0 Response

- 13.1 There are currently high numbers of vehicles parking within the Thorneyholme Terrace area. It is not anticipated that the proposals will increase these levels. The introduction of the short stay parking bays on Front Street and outside of the Elite buildings could potentially reduce vehicle numbers of non-residents parking in this area.
- 13.2 At present there are a number of vehicles that enter Thorneyholme Terrace from the eastern end, who park, and then turn at the western end of the street before exiting from the same point at which they entered. The introduction of the one way system in this street will eliminate the need to reverse / turn which in turn should have a beneficial effect on road safety and congestion.
- 13.3 Residents permits are only introduced when the current parking conditions meet the criteria as detailed in Durham County Councils Parking Strategy. The criteria states that for permits to be applicable that more than 40% of kerbside space must be occupied by non-residents for over six hours in the survey period and more than 85% of kerbside space must be occupied by any vehicle(s) during the same six hours.
- 13.4 At present there are 'no waiting at any time' restrictions to the front of Benton Terrace. We would not look to introduce permit parking into any of the parking bays created in this area. These bays are being provided to generate a turnover of vehicles for the economic benefit of the Front Street.

14.0 Objection 6 – Noise Pollution

- 14.1 Representation was made that opening up the Front Street to vehicles would increase noise levels and thus lead to disturbance for residents of Front Street.

15.0 Response

- 15.1 The noise levels associated with the re-introduction of vehicles into Front Street are not expected to cause unreasonable disturbance to residents.

16.0 Objection 7 – Money would be better spent elsewhere

- 16.1 Suggestions were put forward that the money available for this scheme could be better spent elsewhere in the town.

17.0 Response

17.1 This scheme has been proposed following its identification and subsequent inclusion in the Stanley Masterplan. A comprehensive consultation exercise was undertaken prior to the publication of the Masterplan for the town.

18.0 Objection 8 – Would prefer alternative limited waiting times

18.1 During the initial consultation period, the consultees were asked whether the new parking provision in this area should be restricted to a 1 hour limit. A number of the responses suggested that 2 or 3 hour parking bays would be preferable.

18.2 In addition to the above, it was also suggested that we should give consideration to making the limited waiting restrictions Monday – Friday, 9am - 4pm only.

18.3 A further suggestion was made that the limited waiting restrictions should be 8am – 8pm.

19.0 Response

19.1 The intention of the scheme is to generate a turnover of vehicles within the newly created spaces. In introducing a 1 hour restriction we anticipate that the new spaces will be utilised to their maximum potential, thus encouraging more potential customers to use the area.

19.2 As noted above, the intention of the scheme is to generate a turnover of vehicles visiting the town centre. We feel that the restrictions should remain as Monday – Saturday, 8am – 6pm to ensure that this is the case.

19.3 The intention of the works is to improve the ease of access to the area during times when the nearby shops and facilities are open and therefore we do not consider 8am – 8pm to be appropriate times in this instance.

20.0 Local member consultation

20.1 The Local members Cllrs Marshall / Dearden / Milburn / Charlton / Nearney / Hodgson / Davinson and Hampson have been consulted and offer no objection to the proposals.

21.0 Recommendation

21.1 It is RECOMMENDED that the Committee endorse the proposal having considered the objections and proceed with the implementation of the Traffic Regulation Orders;

STANLEY Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting and Prohibition of Loading / Unloading Amendment Order 2013

And

STANLEY One way Streets / No Entry Order 2013

Background Papers

Correspondence and documentation on Traffic Office File and in member's library.

Contact: Lee Mowbray Tel: 03000 263 693

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – DCC Capital

Staffing – Carried out by Strategic Traffic

Risk – Not Applicable

Equality and Diversity – It is considered that there are no Equality and Diversity issues to be addressed.

Accommodation - No impact on staffing

Crime and Disorder - This TRO will allow effective management of traffic to improve economic activity, reduce congestion and improve road safety

Human Rights - No impact on human rights

Consultation – Is in accordance with SI:2489

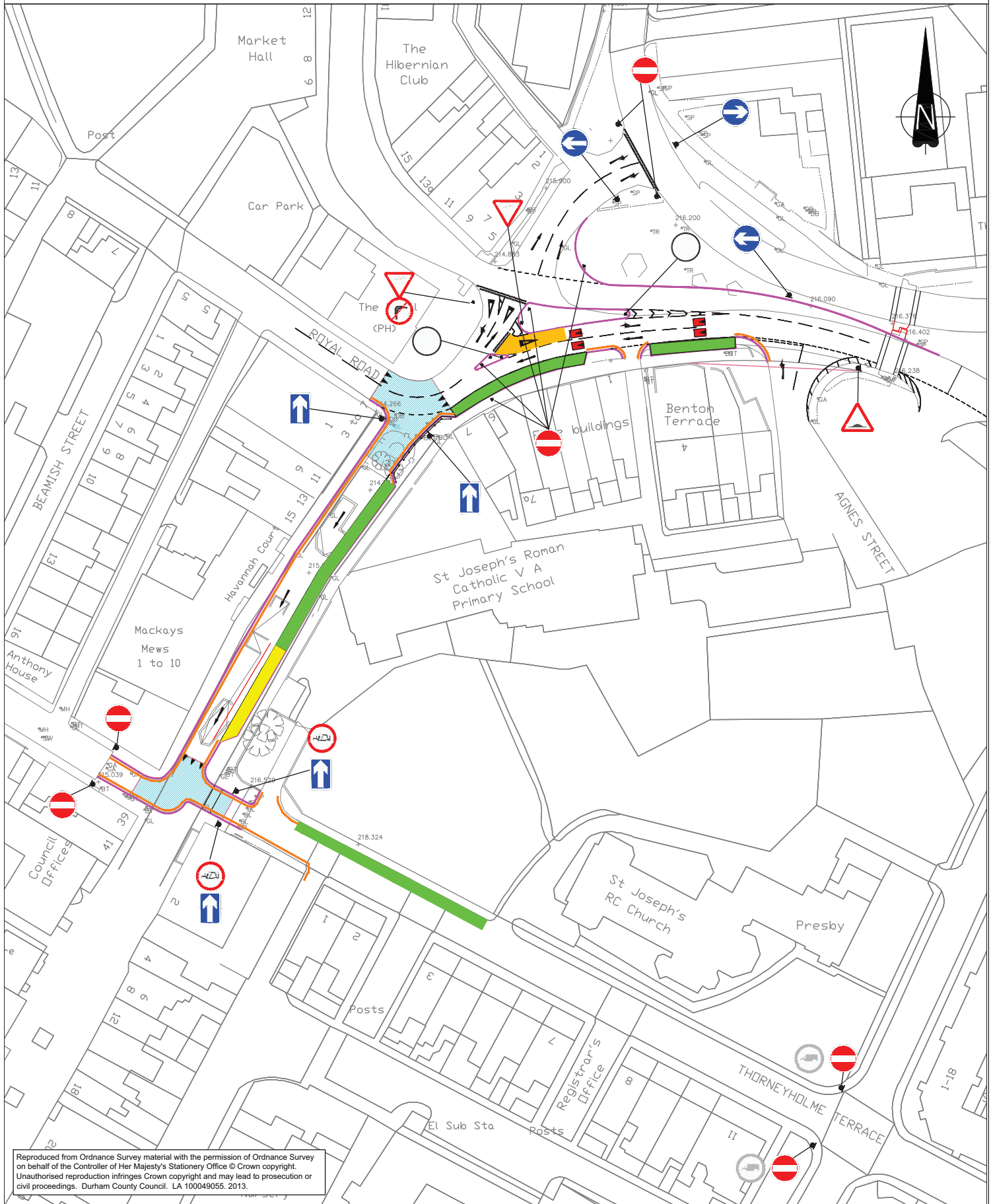
Procurement – Operations, DCC.

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications: All orders have been advertised by the County Council as highway authority and will be made in accordance with legislative requirements.

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Rev/ Andt	Drawn By		Approved By			Description Of Amendments
	Name	Date	Name	Date	Sign	

Key	
	- Speed Tables
	- Parking Restrictions Mon - Sat, 8am-6pm, 1 hour, No Return 2 hours
	- Parking Restrictions Disabled Parking, Mon - Sat, 3 hours, No return
	- Anti-Skid Material
	- No Waiting At Any Time Restrictions

Note
Existing Restrictions Not Shown

Durham
County Council

**STRATEGIC
TRAFFIC
MANAGEMENT**

**CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF
REGENERATION & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

COUNTY HALL, DURHAM. DH1 5UQ

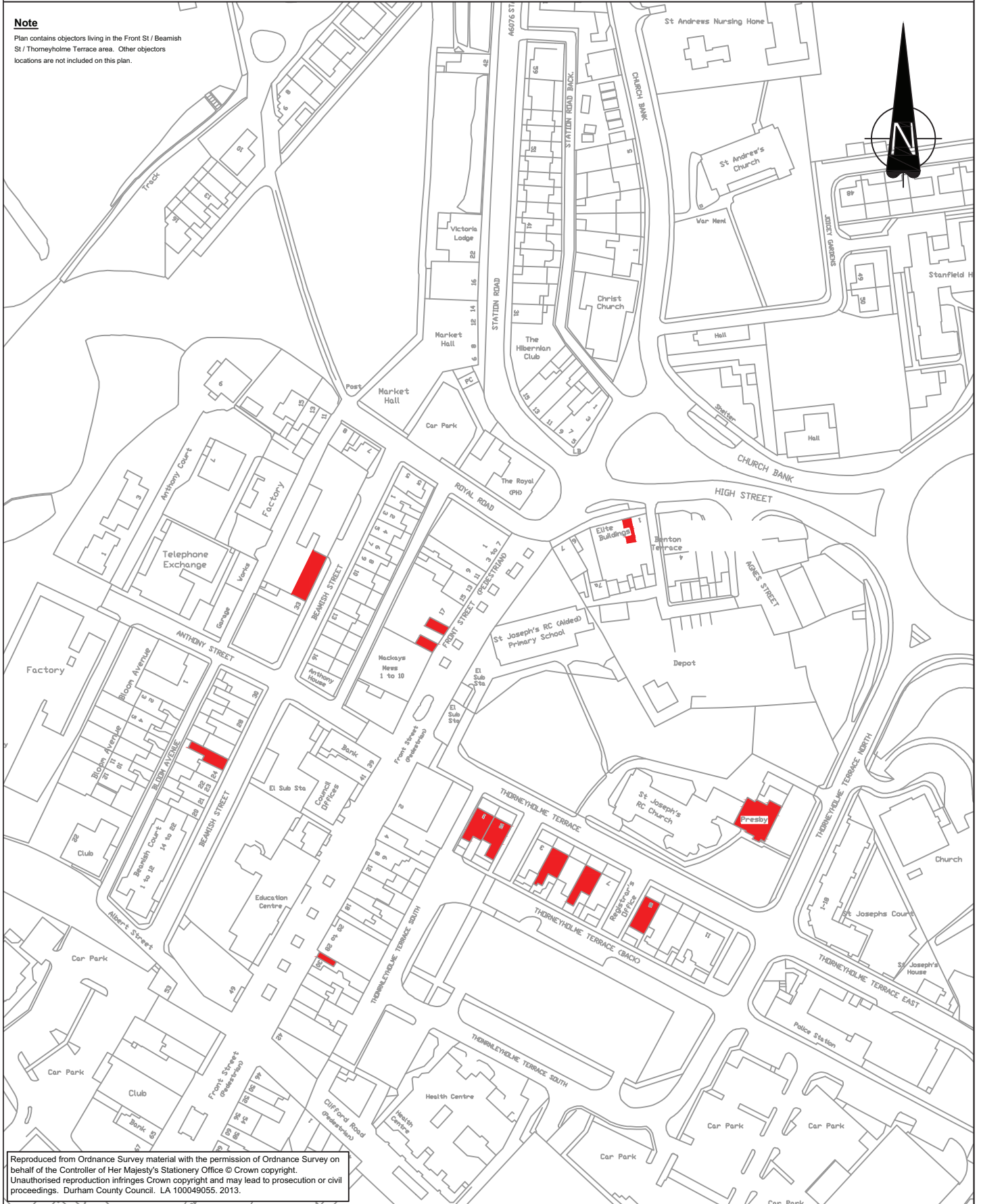
Project Stanley Front Street	Project/Drawing No. Committee Page 25
Drawing Proposed Works	Rev.
Scales 1:750 @ A3	

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PATH:

Note

Plan contains objects living in the Front St / Beamish St / Thorneyholme Terrace area. Other objects locations are not included on this plan.



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Rev/Amdt	Drawn By		Approved By			Description Of Amendments
	Name	Date	Name	Date	Sign	
	LM	09/13				

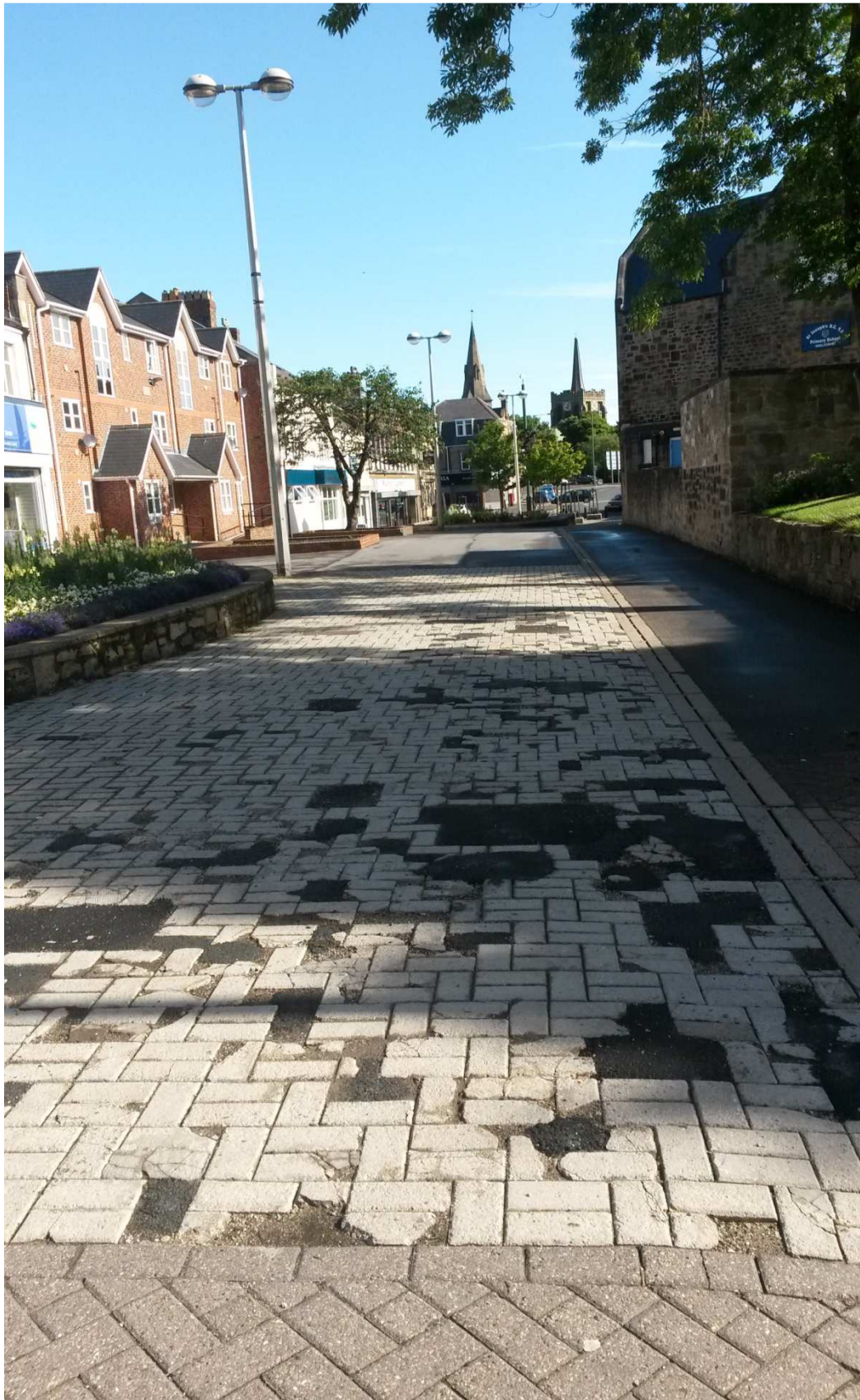


STRATEGIC TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COUNTY HALL, DURHAM. DH1 5UQ

Project Stanley Front Street	
Drawing Objectors	
Scales 1:2000 @ A4	Project/Drawing No. TM/40038/13/0913
Page 27	

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Front Street – Looking north from its junction with Thorneyholme Terrace



Front Street – Looking South from its junction with Royal Road



Thorneyholme Terrace – Looking South East from its junction with Front Street



Thorneyholme Terrace – Looking North West from its junction with Thorneyholme Terrace (North)



Elite Buildings – Looking West towards Front Street / Royal Road



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Highways Committee

7 October 2013



Loss of open space objections relating to the sale of land adjacent The Todner, Front Street, Dipton

Report of Stuart Timmiss, Head of Spatial Policy, Planning, Assets and Environment

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To report objections to the loss of open space notice relating to the potential disposal of land for private garden use verged red on the attached plan adjacent The Todner, Front Street, Dipton.

Background

- 2 Following an encroachment on Council land terms have been agreed with Mr Reg Ord of The Todner, Front Street, Dipton to purchase the land for additional garden land. Attached is a plan showing the subject land verged in red and the immediate surrounding open space verged and hatched blue.
- 3 Planning permission for change of use was approved on 10th October 2012 (planning reference: 1/2012/0471) therefore the loss of the open space was acceptable under planning policy.
- 4 In accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 the loss of open space was advertised in the local press for two consecutive weeks. A number of written objections have been received along with a letter of objection from the local member, Councillor Bob Alderson.
- 5 The objections raised are as follows:
 - Loss of an area for amenity use and outlook for residents nearby will be affected – The subject land is in a fairly isolated location enclosed on two sides with boundary fencing for the adjacent gardens. The land is sloped and aerial photographs taken in 2010 (attached for information) show the area was covered in gorse bushes making it impossible for the public to gain enjoyment from physical use. The Neighbourhoods department have confirmed they have no objections to the loss of the area. The planning application for the change of use has been approved and previous disposals of adjacent land by the former Derwentside District Council were acceptable.

- Land fenced without the Council's permission – This is not relevant consideration in respect of the loss of open space objections.
- 6 When objections are received to the loss of open space the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic Development is required to obtain the views of Highways Committee before deciding whether to proceed with the removal of open space.

Proposal

- 7 The Assets Service has considered the benefits the land in question had to the public as part of the open space in the locality and note that there are more suitable areas of open space nearby for the public to use and enjoy.
- 8 In the officer's opinion, the land was not of great benefit to the residents of Dipton as an area of useable public open space. In considering the above arguments it is the officer's opinion that this loss of open space is acceptable.
- 9 The Committee is therefore required to express its views on whether the land in question should cease to be classed as open space or not.

Recommendation

- 10 It is **RECOMMENDED** that members agree with officer's recommendations that the loss of open space is acceptable and therefore the sale of land for garden use can proceed.

Background papers

Plan DO-12-329
Letters of objection
Aerial Photograph

Contact: Andrew Savage AM/AJS/DEAO154 Tel: 03000 267047

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Disposal of the subject land will result in the Council obtaining a Capital Receipt of £13,500 with associated surveyors fees of £270 and legal fees of £250. There will be a revenue saving in not having to maintain the land.

Staffing – Not applicable

Risk – None Known

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - Not applicable

Accommodation - Not applicable

Crime and Disorder - Not applicable

Human Rights - Not applicable

Consultation – A notice for the loss of public open space was advertised for two consecutive weeks in the local press. The two objection letters received are attached here to.

Councillors Bob Alderson and Ivan Jewell have been consulted and both have objected to the loss of open space. Councillor Neil Foster has no conflicts of interest. He supports the views of the local members and objects to the loss of open space.

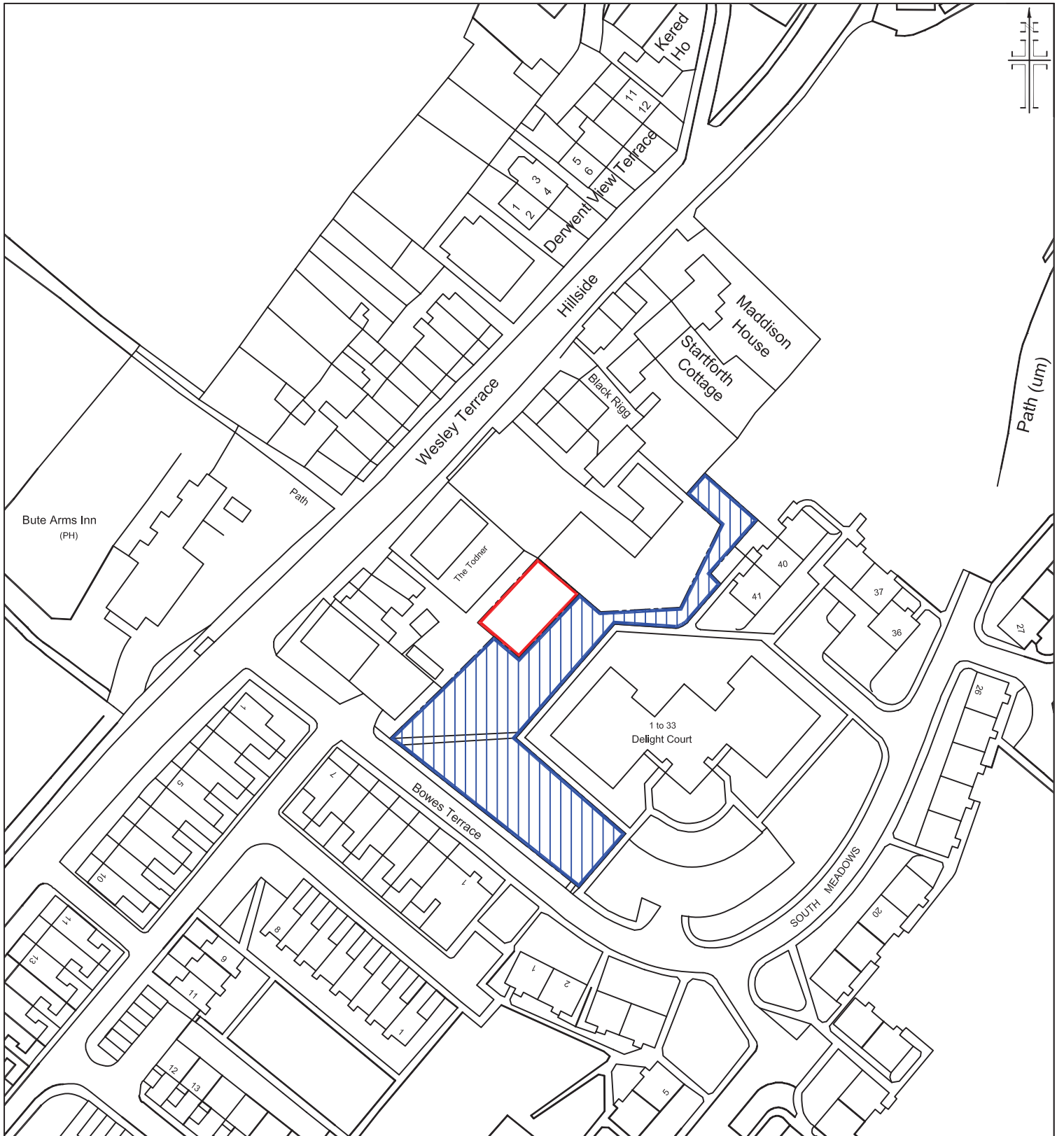
Procurement – Not applicable

Disability Issues - Not applicable

Legal Implications – The council is obliged to advertise an intention to dispose of land held as open space and take account of any objections received before determining whether to dispose of the land or not. The loss of Public Open Space was advertised as stipulated in Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Should the Council decide that the land remain as open space it may be necessary to take legal action to regain possession of the site if Mr Ord does not vacate it voluntarily.

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DIPTON, LAND ADJACENT TO THE TODNER.

Scale : 1/1250

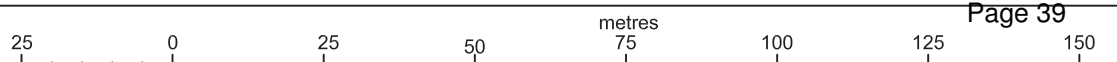
Area Verged Red = 0.07 Acres, 267.03 Sq m. or thereabouts.

Plan Ref. DO-13-329 Date: 08/08/2013

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IAN THOMPSON
 REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC
 DEVELOPMENT
 COUNTY HALL, DURHAM DH1 5UL
 TEL 0191 3833000
 ASSET MANAGEMENT DIVISION



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Title: Aerial Photograph - Land adjacent The Todner, Front Street, Dipton

Scale: 1:1250

Date: 24/9/2013

Plan Reference: None

Comments: None

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Ian Thompson:
Corporate Director:
Regeneration and
Economic
Development:

County Hall,
Durham, DH1 5UL
Asset Management

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14.05.13

Head of Legal Services Department ,

Durham County Council

County Hall

Durham DH1 ???

Dear Ms Longbottom

LAND AT THE REAR OF THE TODNER, DIPTON DH9

I write _____ to object to the sale of land at the rear of the Todner, Front Street, Dipton, Stanley County Durham. The land, which amounts to 269 square metres has been fenced in by Reg Ord Jnr, son of the previous County Councillor, Reg Ord, I have a copy of a letter sent to the MP relating to planning permission granted for the fence several years ago, to which neither myself, nor Councillor Bob Alderson objected, given that the fence is the same height as that of the neighbouring garden.

At that time there were village complaints about the fence and the impact on resident's homes, many of which are occupied by the elderly and infirm. However, the area of land was not then the subject of purchase, the house was under construction and neither Councillor Alderson, nor myself were aware of the exact size of the area being enclosed nor of its ownership; the height of the fence (two metres) precluded being able to determine this and it was natural to assume that the land belonged to the occupier.

I have been contacted by residents who are very concerned that 1. Councillor Ord gave his son permission to fence the land 2. The land was not in his ownership and 3. The area is amenity land used as a pleasant outlook and barrier between an aged person's court and bungalows and also for dog walking.

Yours Sincerely

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21st May 2013-05-23

C Longbottom
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
County Hall
Durham

Dear Ms Longbottom,

269.90 sq m of land adjacent The Todner, Front Street, Dipton. Which forms part of an open space.

I am writing to object strongly regarding acquisition of this land by Mr R Ord as I believe that this land has already been taken illegally by him and have already objected at the time when he fenced off the land last year.

The way in which he acquired the land should be questioned as I am sure this leads the Council open to more people just going onto open land, fencing it off, then applying for planning permission after the deed is done.

I questioned and reported this to the Council when I saw what was happening. The land next to his property was blocked by a stone wall which had been granted permission for two houses to be built on. On the day a JCB came and knocked down part of the stone wall for the builders to gain access within hours Mr Ord together with two workmen who work for his brother Trevor entered this land with fencing posts and began erecting fence on the open space behind his property. As I knew this land did not belong to him I actually rang the Land Registry Office to query who did own this plot of land and was told it was owned by Durham County Council and was advised to ring immediately to inform them of what was happening.

I did this and spoke to a Mr Andrew Savage in Assessments Management and spoke to him and told him what was happening. He confirmed that the land did belong to the council and that Mr Ord should not be erecting a fence on the land and he would contact him with a visit. By the afternoon of that day the JCB driver had been employed to clear all the land of gorse bushes etc and level the land off. A lorry came to take all the rubbish away. I rang Mr Savage about this.

He did visit the property and I believe he saw Mr R Ord senior (Councillor R Ord) and Mr Trevor Ord and he reported back to me that he had told them they could not continue any more fencing and he said that they were putting in for planning permission for the land, seems strange that you take the land then put in for planning permission, surely you should request to purchase land prior to getting planning permission. Mr Savage agreed that it is true the the council MUST advertise that the land is being disposed of before any action can be taken.

Within a few days of the visit when they were told no more fencing they actually went and erected more fencing to completely cut off the ground altogether.

I don't suppose a lot of people in the village would not be so angry about this if this had been done correctly. Perhaps the owners of Derwent Court might have liked this piece of land to make a garden for their residents, I do know the old people living there are upset that they now have to look out onto a fence rather than a bit of 'green land' I understand though from Mr Savage that no-one else will be given the chance to purchase this land only Mr Ord.

I believe that however many objections you receive to this we are totally wasting our time as this fence has been erected over a year and I notice he now clearing land further down the street too !!

I do find it rather funny though, someone is wanting to build houses beside Ex Cllr Ord's own home and he and his family have large boards up asking people to unite to stop any building on green land in the village but its ok for him to give green land to his son.

Andrew Savage

From: Cllr Ivan Jewell
Sent: 20 August 2013 08:28
To: Andrew Savage
Subject: RE: Sale of land adjacent The Todner, Dipton

Dear Andrew,

Further to our telephone conversation at the latter part of last week and subsequent discussions with residents of the Dipton area, I wish to present my objections to the sale of the above land (The Todner)

My concerns fall into two broad categories. The first being the overall process and the second is the environment and loss/part loss of amenity.

I feel that due to the actions of Mr Ord prior to the opportunity for him to buy this piece of land, it sends out the wrong message to others in similar situations.

The facts as I see them are that Mr Ord 's actions in fencing off the land were illegal, and I don't believe that there was ever an intention to seek to purchase this land from Durham County Council initially.

However, by the action of fencing off the land and clearing it of natural vegetation, this removed any potential objection that may have been made in the future on the grounds of loss of natural habitat and related issues. In addition to this, the fencing off of the plot meant that the land would become of little or no interest to any other potential buyer. If Mr Ord or anyone else decides to encroach further in the future, are Durham County Council suggesting that the process followed in this instance is an acceptable practice? I believe the process sends out the wrong message entirely.

I also believe that the sale of this land would constitute the loss or part loss of a valued open space and rob the community and wild life of an important facility. I also believe that the sale of this plot could lead to the potential of selling off further plots in the adjacent area. This generates an argument that if this plot of land has little to no significant effect, then why would the loss of adjacent land?

Whilst on paper this sale would appear insignificant, the reality is far from this, and I would ask you to reconsider the sale and have the land restored to how it was with the cost of this being met by Mr Ord.

Regards,

Cllr Ivan Jewell

From: Andrew Savage
Sent: 08 August 2013 17:35
To: Cllr Ivan Jewell
Subject: Sale of land adjacent The Todner, Dipton

Dear Cllr Jewell

Following reports of an encroachment on Council land by Mr Ord of The Todner, Front Street, Dipton in early 2012 the Assets Service have progressed an application to purchase the land verged red on the attached plan and have agreed terms with Mr Ord for garden use. The change of use has received planning approval however as part of the statutory process of selling areas of open space we must advertise the sale for two consecutive weeks in the local press. Three objections were received and we are now in the process of producing a report for the Highways Committee to make a decision.

I would be grateful if you could provide comments/objections to the sale of land and loss of open space as soon as possible. If I do not hear from you by 23rd August 2013 I will assume you have no comments to make. I would be happy to discuss this with you if you would like further information.

Kind Regards

Andrew Savage

Assistant Estates Officer

03000 267 047

andrew.savage@durham.gov.uk

Asset Management

Durham County Council

County Hall

Durham

DH1 5UL



www.durham.gov.uk

Colette Longbottom
Head of Legal and
Democratic Services
County Hall
Durham County Council

Cllr Bob Alderson
100 Birch Crescent
Burnopfield
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE16 6JJ

20/5/2013

Dear Collette

Objection to sale of land to the rear of the Todner Front Street Dipton, last year I was approached by residents from Dipton about a fence that appeared at the rear of the Todner on Front Street Dipton, on visiting the site where and looked at the fence which was 6ft high and at regulation height, I phoned the land and property asset management department to see if the land had been sold.

I spoke to the officer Andrew Savage who said the land had been enquired about from Mr Ord the owner of the property and still had to be processed, and I pointed out that a fence had been erected and they had started to work on the land, I as one of the Councillors for the Burnopfield and Dipton Division was not informed of the sale of the land as it was still been processed.

I sent an e-mail to the Officer objecting to the sale of the land on the grounds that it was a loss of open space and the erected fence should not of been put up, I was told my objection was a planning matter, on speaking to the residents of Dipton they told me that the land in question was well used by the public, I am objecting to the sale of the land on the grounds that it is an encroachment on the land, loss of open space and a public amenity which is well used by the public.

Regards

Cllr Bob Alderson.



