



Area Planning Committee (South and West)

Date Thursday 12 December 2013
Time 2.00 pm
Venue Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Crook

Business

Part A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Substitute Members
3. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 November 2013 (Pages 1 - 4)
4. Declarations of Interest (if any)
5. Applications to be determined
 - a) 3/2013/0372 - Bondisle Playing Field, Bondisle Way, Stanhope
(Pages 5 - 16)
Improvements to field access and 33 days use of the field for parking (part retrospective)
 - b) 6/2013/0165/DM - Land rear of 40 Front Street, Staindrop (Pages 17 - 28)
Erection of detached dwelling
 - c) 7/2013/0409/DM - Thurlow Grange, Thurlow Road, Sedgfield
(Pages 29 - 40)
Demolition of Thurlow Grange and construction of 21 no. dwellings
 - d) 7/2013/0447/DM - Geestamp Plant 1, Groat Road, Aycliffe Business Park, Newton Aycliffe (Pages 41 - 50)
Re-development of existing industrial site to include part demolition and rebuilding of existing buildings, erection of extension to existing office and associated works

6. 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
4 December 2013

To: **The Members of the Area Planning Committee (South and West)**

Councillor M Dixon (Chairman)
Councillor J Buckham (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors D Bell, D Boyes, J Clare, K Davidson, E Huntington,
S Morrison, H Nicholson, G Richardson, L Taylor, R Todd, C Wilson
and S Zair

Contact: Jill Errington

Tel: 03000 269703

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Area Planning Committee (South and West)** held in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Spennymoor on **Thursday 21 November 2013 at 2.00 pm**

Present:

Councillor M Dixon (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors D Bell, H Bennett, D Boyes, J Clare, K Davidson, J Gray, S Morrison, H Nicholson, G Richardson, C Wilson and S Zair

Also Present:

A Caines – Principal Planning Officer
C Baxter – Senior Planning Officer
C Cuskin – Legal Officer
D Stewart – Highways Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Buckham, E Huntington, L Taylor and R Todd.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor J Gray substituting for Councillor J Buckham and Councillor H Bennett substituting for Councillor L Taylor.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2013 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

5 Applications to be determined

5a 3/2013/0232 - Land West of St Pauls Gardens, Witton Park, Bishop Auckland

The Committee considered a report of the Principal Planning Officer regarding an outline application for residential development with access to be considered (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Principal Planning Officer gave a detailed presentation on the application which included photographs of the site. Members had visited the site that day and were familiar with the location and setting.

With the agreement of the Chairman, the Applicant's Agent Mr J Lavender provided a plan showing the location of the proposed development, other development sites in the village, facilities, bus routes and the village green.

In addressing the Committee J Lavender stated that there had been no objections to the proposals from statutory consultees and in his opinion the main barrier to the development was local planning policy. The report made reference to the NPPF, and that the Wear Valley Local Plan was the starting point for consideration, however J Lavender stated that this Plan was now 20 years old. He considered that the emerging County Durham Plan paid little regard to the future of villages. Sustainable communities could only develop from the bottom upwards and if planning applications such as this were refused then the village would continue to be unsustainable.

Witton Park used to be a Category D village and was now classed as a Tier 6 settlement with poor sustainability credentials. As such developments which would bring about the regeneration of Witton Park should be encouraged. He believed that if this application were to go ahead then other developments would follow.

The focal point of the village was the recently registered village green and this development would consolidate the fragmented structure of the settlement around that green. It would also deliver much needed new housing, would adjoin the Park Road site, thereby adding cohesion and connectivity to the structure of Witton Park, and would represent a positive contribution towards building a sustainable community.

Councillor Richardson commented that other areas of land in the village had been granted planning permission but remained undeveloped. However the proposals would help to regenerate the area and whilst residents mainly travelled by car there was a bus service through the village with access to a range of shopping and other facilities.

Councillor Davidson, having listened to the views of the Agent, advised that he was not persuaded that this was a sustainable development. There were no proposals for the provision of further infrastructure in the village and he agreed with the reasons for refusal of the application which were outlined in the report.

In response to a query from Councillor Boyes about a rail halt shown on the plan circulated by the Agent, Members were informed that this had not come forward to date, and was not a material planning consideration to which any weight should be afforded in this instance.

The Chairman considered that a key issue for Members was that planning permission had been granted for other sites in the village, one of which included a retail unit. If these other sites were completed there may be a case for further developments in Witton Park.

In referring to the Agent's presentation Councillor Clare agreed with J Lavender that if a community was not allowed to grow it would not become sustainable. However he concurred with the comments of the Chairman about the undeveloped sites and stated that if the village started to grow there may be an argument that more housing capacity was needed in Witton Park.

Resolved:

That the application be refused for the reasons outlined in the report.

5b 6/2013/0286/DM/TP - Staindrop Hall, Front Street, Staindrop

It was reported that this application had been withdrawn.

The Chairman agreed that to keep Members informed the following items of business could be considered.

6 Protected Species - Badgers

In response to a request for clarification from Members about the impact on the planning process as a result of badger culling which was taking place in other parts of the country, C Cuskin, Legal Officer advised that in the determination of planning applications badgers remained a protected species.

7 County Durham Plan

Members discussed the emerging County Durham Plan and sought clarification with regard to the weight that could be given to it in the determination of planning applications.

The Legal Officer advised that the Council was currently consulting on the pre-submission draft and it may be appropriate to attach some weight to the emerging Plan in certain circumstances. However until fully implemented the starting point for consideration of planning applications should be the relevant policies in Local Plans where they accorded with the aims of the NPPF.

8 Planning Committee Venues

Councillor Richardson referred to the venues for the Area Planning Committee (South and West) and the frequency of meetings held at Spennymoor compared to Crook and Barnard Castle.

The Chairman acknowledged that since the loss of Teesdale House as a venue the Committee had not met at Barnard Castle. In taking on board Councillor Richardson's concerns he explained that venues were determined in advance of each meeting in consultation with Planning Officers and the Committee Services Officer, taking into consideration the location of the planning applications and the number of speakers and members of the public likely to attend from a particular area.

This page is intentionally left blank

Planning Services

COMMITTEE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

APPLICATION NO:	3/2013/0372
FULL APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:	Improvements to field access and 33 days use of the field for parking (part retrospective)
NAME OF APPLICANT:	Mr Mike Fairburn, Weardale Railway
ADDRESS:	Bondisle playing field Bondisle Way, Stanhope, Bishop Auckland, DL13 2YS
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	Weardale
CASE OFFICER:	Adam Williamson Planning Officer 03000 260826 adam.williamson@durham.gov.uk

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSALS

The Site

1. The application site lies to the south and across the railway line from the residential estate of Bondisle Way, Stanhope, and is a grassed area that forms part of the Bondisle playing fields (but not including the football pitch).
2. The site lies outside of the Stanhope conservation area, but it is within the Area of Landscape Value (ALV). There are no public footpaths within or immediately adjacent to the site, but there is a footpath running through the field to the south and another further to the south east, which crosses the railway line over the foot bridge.

The Proposal

3. Part retrospective planning permission is sought for the use of the land as a temporary car park for 33 days in association with the Weardale Railway Polar Express event, and the retention of access improvement works in the form of a kerbed hardcore surface, which has been constructed at the field entrance.
4. The Polar Express event is a themed Christmas event, which takes visitors by train from the railway station at Stanhope to a north pole village set located near the Harperley Prisoner of War Camp. This is the second year the event has been run and this year is taking place on 33 days between 15 November and 29 December. The event proved very popular last year having sold 36,000 tickets, and this year, at this time, has sold over 39,000 of the 40,000 tickets expected to be sold.
5. With the large amount of visitors there is a need for a dedicated parking area near the departure station. The application site was used last year for this purpose on a lesser number of days using permitted development rights, however the number of event days (33) now exceeds the 28 days permitted development allowance, hence

the need to make an application this year. The parking area has capacity for approximately 180-200 cars and the grass has been protected with a temporary Grassprotecta matting, with an additional DuraDeck matting for the feed in lanes, which will be removed at the end of the event in January. The hardcore surface at the field entrance is intended to remain permanently.

6. The application has been called to Committee by Cllr Shuttleworth because of concerns about the traffic impact on residents of Bondisle Way.

PLANNING HISTORY

7. There was an application made on the site in 2009 for the creation of a permanent car park for playing field users (3/2009/0555), but that was never progressed and was eventually withdrawn. That application was not related to the current proposal.

PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY

8. On March 27th 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The framework is based on the policy of sustainable development and establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF can be accessed at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicyframework/>

LOCAL PLAN POLICY:

9. The following saved policies of the Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by Saved and Expired Policies September 2007 Local Plan are considered to be consistent with the NPPF and therefore relevant in the determination of this application:

Policy GD1 (General Development Criteria):

All new development and redevelopment within the District should be designed and built to a high standard and should contribute to the quality and built environment of the surrounding area.

Policy ENV3 (Area of landscape Value):

Development will not be allowed which adversely affects the special landscape character of the ALV.

Policy TM1 (Tourist Proposals):

The Council will encourage schemes which provide tourism facilities provided they are of a scale compatible with their surrounds, safeguard the landscape, can be accessed safely, do not lead to unacceptable levels of traffic and do not impact on the amenities of local residents.

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

STATUTORY RESPONSES:

10. *The Highways Authority* is aware that there were some traffic delays at last year's event, but the failings have been acknowledged by Weardale Railway and they have taken advice from the DCC Highway Design team as regards surfacing and improved access (including widening the width of the highway before it crosses the railway to permit two way vehicle passage). While there may still be some delays, the event is temporary and the alternative without dedicated parking provision would be parking in Bondisle Way to a greater inconvenience to residents. The proposed access work improvements, temporary event duration, and train timings would make it difficult to sustain a refusal. The success of these events also relies on adequate marshalling and it is incumbent on the Railway to ensure this occurs in practice.
11. *Stanhope Parish Council* did not submit any comments.

INTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES:

11. *Culture and Sport* are content that the measures will improve access to the playing fields. Further discussions with the Culture and Sport Section have confirmed that there are sufficient provisions in the license agreement for use of the land to protect the playing pitch with Heras fencing; secure reinstatement of the land after the event; remove litter; and to indemnify the Council (landowner) and Football Club against any damages or other liability arising in any way as a result the Football Club's normal use of the adjacent football pitch. It is also understood that any Saturday football games during this period will begin at 1pm and therefore be finished by 3pm before the 3.30pm train to avoid conflicts of use.
12. *Business Durham* support the application noting that the parking is being provided to facilitate the Polar Express event delivered by the Weardale Railway, which has the potential to bring significant economic benefits to local businesses, such as providers of accommodation, in addition to the seasonal jobs that are also created.
13. *Visit County Durham* has confirmed that they help with the promotion of the event, including promotion on their official tourism website, and that it is a large annual event for the County.

PUBLIC RESPONSES:

14. The application has been extensively publicised by site notice, press notice and letters sent to all residents of Bondisle Way. 9 letters of objection and one letter of support have been received as a result of this publicity.
15. In summary, the main reasons of objection are to do with the inconvenience and danger to local residents of Bondisle Way from the amount of traffic entering and leaving the parking area and displacement of on-street parking for residents. Other concerns relate to the temporary loss of use of the playing fields as a leisure facility, pollution and litter, and the state the field was left in after last years event. There have also been concerns expressed over the retrospective nature of the application, that Weardale Railway did not consult with local residents, blocking of a public right of way, access for emergency services and road cleaning.

16. The letter of support states that the field could be used to aid car parking in Stanhope when football matches are played on the field and for increased provision when tourists visit the town.
17. Outside of the application process the Council has also received a separate petition with 39 signatures similarly raising concerns about the management of traffic, access for emergency services, parking restrictions, pedestrian routes from the parking to the station and lack of consultation with residents.

APPLICANTS STATEMENT:

18. The Polar Express is one of six official events held in both the United States and England. Weardale is the second most popular after Texas State Railway in the United States. The event brings economic benefits to the local area by increasing trade for accommodation and food and drink businesses, in addition to creating seasonal jobs.
19. However, it is recognised that the number of visitors to the event can have an impact upon local residents. In recognition of this, the Weardale Railway has invested in infrastructure improvements to parking arrangements and a number of actions are being undertaken to alleviate the problems that were experienced last year.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

20. Having regard to the requirements of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, relevant guidance, development plan policies and all material planning considerations including representations received, it is considered that the main planning issues in this case relate to the principle of development, impact on the appearance of the area, and highways issues.

Principle of Development

21. The NPPF makes it clear that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development, but does not alter the statutory requirement that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material conditions indicate otherwise. Local Plan policies should still be given weight where they accord with the aims of the NPPF.
22. NPPF paragraph 7 explains that sustainable development is not just about the environmental dimension, it also includes an economic role contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, as well as a social role supporting strong, vibrant communities. In paragraph 19 of the NPPF it says the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth and significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system. In addition NPPF paragraph 28 says there should be support for sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors.
23. Wear Valley Local Plan Policy TM1 is similarly worded very positively towards tourism proposals and says the Council will give encouragement to schemes which provide tourism facilities in the District, provided a number of criteria are met in terms of impact on the surrounding area and landscape, as well as ensuring the development would have acceptable highway safety and amenity impacts. The supporting text acknowledges the important role of tourism in the economic regeneration of the NE and that tourism not only provides jobs directly, but also helps to support a much larger number of jobs indirectly.

24. The application is not for the Polar Express event itself, but for practical and safety reasons the event could not operate without suitable parking provision, including access improvements to the parking area. There is therefore a direct relationship between the proposed parking area and the event in considering the principle of development. The event has proved extremely popular with 36,000 tickets sold last year and nearly 40,000 tickets sold for the present attraction. The event is supported by Business Durham and Visit County Durham, and appears on the official Visit County Durham website. While not of the scale of headline events like the Lumiere (170,000 visitors), or Lindisfarne Gospels (100,000 visitors) it is still one of the largest annual events in the County. It clearly attracts a large number of visitors to the Dales, creates around 60 temporary jobs during the event, and is likely to have significant direct and indirect economic spinoff for local businesses.
25. It is noted that the site forms part of the wider Bondisle Way Playing Fields area, but it does not include the playing pitch itself and therefore Wear Valley Local Plan Policy RL2, which protects playing fields, does not apply. However, NPPF paragraph 74 takes a wider view and says that in addition to playing fields, open space and recreational land should not be built on. The application site can be considered open space or recreational land, although not formally designated.
26. In taking into account the impact on the recreational land, there are 2 elements to the proposal to consider: use of the site for parking on 33 days, and the retention of the kerbed hardsurface at the field entrance.
27. The use of the majority of the site does not involve any permanent building work and therefore the temporary car parking use does not conflict with the provision of the NPPF. It is nevertheless acknowledged that there will be a general impact on amenity because while the parking takes place it will result in loss of the site for informal leisure use and this is something raised in a number of objections. This will however, only be for a period of 33 days, and only from the afternoon and evening when in use, although the matting may discourage use generally. It is also a time of year when the use of the site is normally lowest because of ground conditions and dark evenings. This temporary interruption to normal use of the site is considered to be outweighed by the significant economic and tourism benefits brought by the event. The fact that the land could be used in any case for up to 28 days under permitted development rights is also a factor that carries significant weight in coming to this conclusion, as the proposed use is for just 5 additional days. The Culture and Sport Section are also satisfied that the football club's use of the playing pitch will not be compromised by the event parking with suitable protection having been erected around the pitch, consideration given to Saturday kick off times during this period and legal agreement on indemnity.
28. While the hardsurface at the field entrance is intended to remain permanently, it is not on land that is capable of being used as a playing pitch, or with any significant potential for general amenity use, because it lies between 2 field entrances and is a passageway for vehicles, not just entering this field, but the field beyond and the adjacent allotments. For this reason the formation of the hardsurface does not conflict with paragraph 74 of the NPPF. The Culture and Sport Section also note that after the event, the access improvement will be beneficial to users of the playing pitch.
29. Taking all these factors into account, the provision of parking and access improvements associated with a successful tourism event, notwithstanding the temporary interruption to the normal use of the site, is considered to be acceptable in

principle, subject to more detailed consideration of the impact on the surrounding area and highway safety.

Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area

30. The site is a grass field which is part of the Bondisle Playing Fields lying between the railway line and the River Wear. It is enclosed by dry stone walls to the north west and south west. Immediately adjacent to the north west are some allotments. Across the railway line to the north east is the residential estate of Bondisle Way, while the railway station lies slightly further south along Bondisle Way along with the large William Cook industrial premises. Further to the south across the River Wear is a large caravan site. The area can be described as the settlement fringe of Stanhope with a semi rural character. It does however fall within an area designated in the Wear Valley Local Plan as an Area of Landscape Value. The site sits at a lower level from Bondisle Way, and except for at the northern end, the railway platform and a number of trees along the railway line obscure views of the site from Bondisle Way. It is however an area with public access and use, and there are 2 public footpaths nearby.
31. The only permanent development is the hardsurfacing at the field entrance. It is approximately 39m long and 5m wide, extending to approximately 10m width at the 3 turning lanes. The presence of kerbstones gives it a more formal appearance than is perhaps ideal, but the use of a natural greystone surface material has helped assimilate it into the environment. It is viewed as an extension of the road from Bondisle Way across the railway line and given its position up against the northern field boundary and the difference in levels, it does not have a significantly harmful visual impact and is therefore in accordance with Wear Valley Local Plan Policies GD1, ENV3 and TM1.
32. The presence of protective matting and a large number of parked cars does have an effect on the character and appearance of the area, although the matting to a lesser extent because it is at least coloured green. However, it is still unnatural and not what can normally be expected in this area. The parking use does not therefore strictly accord with Wear Valley Local Plan Policies GD1, ENV3 and TM1 in respect of its visual impact. It is however a material factor that the parking and matting will be a temporary feature with the land restored to its natural condition once the event finishes. For the most part the parking will also be at times when it is dark and although there will be temporary floodlighting, the effect will still be less intrusive than during the day.
33. Concerns have been raised in the objections about the condition the land was left in last year along with litter and pollution and the Council, as landowner, was also not happy with this situation. It is a strict requirement of the Council's agreement to the use of the land this year that Weardale Railway removes the matting, all litter and carries out any repair and restoration at their cost.
34. It is therefore considered that the temporary visual impact from the parking, when balanced against the economic benefits of the event can justify permission being granted for the 33 days requested, but only on the basis that the protective surfacing is removed and the land restored.

Highways Issues

34. Wear Valley Local Plan Policies GD1, and TM1 specifically in relation to tourism proposals, require that development does not create unacceptable levels of traffic

and has safe site access. This is largely repeated in the NPPF, but paragraph 32 of the NPPF says development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

35. Weardale Railway have acknowledged that the parking arrangements at last year's event did not proceed as planned. Subsequently, advice has been sought from the Council's Highway Design Section resulting in physical improvements to the parking area access in the form of the hard surfacing at the field entrance, for which permission is now sought, and widening of the highway leading into the site. The size of the parking area has also been increased and the temporary matting has been better secured to the hardsurface at the site entrance to reduce movement. These physical works are a direct response to address problems from last year where the muddy ground conditions at the field entrance and narrowness of the entrance road contributed to the build up of traffic waiting to enter/exit the field and impacted on residents of Bondisle Way. At the time of last year's event the field entrance was nothing more than an agricultural field entrance, and as ultimately shown, was not suitable for handling the large amount of vehicles associated with the event, particularly with the steep and muddy area at the site entrance, which caused vehicles to get stuck. However, the widening of the road leading into the site and formation of the hard surface with clearly defined turning lanes leading into parking rows has improved the situation, and the Highways Authority are now satisfied with the design of the entrance arrangements.
36. In addition to these physical measures there are a number of event management procedures that Weardale Railway have had to have agreed in order to get the event signed off with the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) and prior to the Council issuing a licence for use of the land. These include having marshals on hand to direct the traffic and prevent parking in Bondisle Way; the placement of police no-waiting cones along the entire length of Bondisle Way from the A689 to the car park; agreement for the residents who park on the bend outside the bungalows to be allowed to park at the entrance to the industrial estate; agreement with Weardale Coaches for their forecourt to be used as a pick-up/drop-off point; no delaying of train departures for late customers; providing a marshalled pedestrian route from the car park to the station over the footbridge; and agreeing road cleaning arrangements with the Council. While some residents have objected to the placing of the no-waiting cones as it would also prevent their own parking on the road, the action is necessary to keep the road free of obstruction to enable smooth movement of traffic, particularly on the bend outside the bungalows and no one has a right to be able to park on the highway immediately outside their home. Suitable arrangements have been put in place for those residents to park opposite at the entrance to the industrial estate. The success of all these measures is largely incumbent on Weardale Railway to ensure they occur as promised throughout the period, but the Council and SAG are monitoring the situation during the event.
37. It is nevertheless inevitable that there will still be some inconvenience to residents in Bondisle Way because of the number of vehicles that will be entering/exiting the parking area at train departure and return times. This is more likely on the days closer to Christmas when there are 3 train departures and potentially up to 200 cars a time. However, the physical measures and event management procedures put in place should improve the situation from last year, which is a view supported by the Highways Authority. There is also a fallback position where the parking could take place without the need for permission if reduced to 28 days. The alternative of not having dedicated parking, would likely be visitors parking in Bondisle Way and the surrounding streets of Stanhope where there would be significantly greater inconvenience to residents and disruption to traffic through Stanhope. A number of

representations have suggested the parking or even the train departures could go to other locations. Weardale Railway have explained that they did consider other locations but they had to be discounted because of reasons including licensee requirements (Bishop Auckland), suitability of station facilities (Wolsingham, Frosterley), distance from the north pole set (Bishop Auckland, Eastgate), agreement with land owners (Eastgate cement works), and costs and logistics of providing shuttle bus connection (Stanhope Show Ground).

38. Therefore taking all these factors into account, the residual cumulative impact of the use of the land as parking for a temporary period of 33 days (5 days over the permitted development allowance) is not considered to be severe. Notwithstanding this, there are still issues of some uncertainty and outside of planning control in respect of the event management arrangements. The impact of both the physical and management improvement measures to the parking arrangements will be better judged at the end of the event. It is also noted that the event will be nearly finished by the time the application is considered by the Planning Committee. It is therefore considered reasonable to effectively treat this year as a trial period and accordingly, to limit the permission for the parking to this year's event only in order to allow a proper review of the improvements to be carried out after the event.

Other issues

39. Most of the objections received have commented on the fact that the proposal is retrospective. It is never advisable for development to take place without or prior to planning permission being granted, but it is not an offence and is at the developer's risk. The fact that parts of this application are retrospective is not a material planning consideration and the application must be considered on its planning merits without prejudice to the fact that the development has already taken place.
40. Any matters relating to lack of consultation by Weardale Railway with residents of Bondisle Way is a private matter, although it is agreed that developers should always consult with the affected local community. The Local Planning Authority carried out extensive notification of the planning application, exceeding the statutory requirements, which only required a site notice to be displayed. The representations received have been given consideration during the application process and addressed in this report where relevant.
41. Arrangements have been made between the Council and Weardale Railway for the road to be cleaned periodically, which should address concerns expressed about the condition of the highway.
42. One objection has claimed that a public right of way is being blocked. As has been mentioned, there are no designated public rights of way within or immediately adjacent to the site. Neither of the 2 public footpaths nearby are affected by the parking proposals.
43. Concerns were also expressed about obstruction of access for emergency services. The event has however been signed off by the Durham Safety Advisory Group (SAG) which is made up of core members from Durham County Council, Police, the Fire and Rescue Service, and Ambulance Service.

CONCLUSION

44. The proposed retention of the parking and access improvements are associated with an extremely popular tourism event which brings significant visitors and economic

benefit to the local area. The event is one of the largest of the normal annual events in the County and could not operate without dedicated parking in a location that meets the event licensee's requirements, and is cost efficient and practical. In accordance with the NPPF, the economic and tourism benefits the event brings carry significant weight when balanced against any temporary inconvenience to residents in Bondisle Way, particularly when the parking will take place for just 5 days more than is allowed under permitted development rights.

45. It is acknowledged that the parking arrangements at last year's event and site restoration did not proceed as planned, but physical improvements have been put in place at the entrance to the parking area in agreement with the Highways Authority, and in addition, event management arrangements have been agreed with the Council's Assets Section as part of the licence to use the land, and signed off by the Durham Safety Advisory Group. These measures are an improvement of the situation from last year, but nevertheless, the true effectiveness will be better judged at the end of the event. It is therefore considered reasonable to limit the permission for the parking to this year's event only in order to allow a proper review of the improvements to be carried out after the event.
46. The physical improvements to create the hardcore surface at the site entrance does not have a significantly harmful visual impact and is therefore in accordance with Wear Valley Local Plan Policies GD1, ENV3 and TM1. The presence of a large number of parked cars and protective matting does have a negative visual impact in the Area of Landscape Value, but the fact the impact is temporary, limited to just 33 days, is considered acceptable when balanced against other factors including the significant weight that must be afforded to supporting economic growth proposals, as set out in the NPPF. There are sufficient licensing arrangements in place to deal with litter removal and restoration of the land after the event. The proposal also does not conflict with the use of the playing pitch, or long term recreational use of the land.
47. The issues raised in the objections have been taken into account, but are not considered to be sufficient reasons to refuse the application, particularly when many of the issues have been dealt with under the licensing arrangements.
48. It is therefore considered that the granting of a temporary permission for the parking and permanent permission for the hardcore surfacing would be in accordance with Wear Valley Local Plan Policies GD1, ENV3 and TM1, as well as the aims of the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions

1. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the following approved plans:-

Plan	Reference Number	Date received
Red line plan	MHD618_01WR1	16.10.2013
Engineering layout	MHD618_04	16.10.2013

Reason: To define the permission and ensure that a satisfactory form of development is obtained in accordance with Policies GD1 and ENV3 of the Wear

Valley District Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

2. The parking area hereby approved shall be for 33 days use only and cease on the 31st December 2013. The Grassprotecta matting and all temporary structures and fencing associated with the use hereby approved shall be completely removed from the site by 31st January 2014.

The use of the land for parking and associated protective matting are not considered suitable for permanent retention all year in this countryside location in accordance with policies GD1, ENV3 and TM1 of the Wear Valley Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007.

STATEMENT OF PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

In arriving at the decision the Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against the NPPF and the Development Plan in the most efficient way to ensure a positive outcome through appropriate and proportionate applicant engagement. Advice and assistance has been provided by the Council on highways matters prior to the application being submitted to limit the impact on the local area.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Submitted application forms, plans and supporting documents

National Planning Policy Framework

Wear Valley District Local Plan as amended by the Saved and Expired Policies September 2007

Representations and consultation responses



Planning Services

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceeding. Durham County Council Licence No. 100022202 2005

Improvements to field access and 33 days use of the field for parking (Retrospective)

Comments

Bondisle Playing Field,
Bondisle Way, Stanhope,
County Durham, DL13 2YS

Date 29.11.2013

This page is intentionally left blank



Planning Services

COMMITTEE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

APPLICATION NO:	6/2013/0165/DM
FULL APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:	Erection of detached dwelling
NAME OF APPLICANT:	Mr Graham Hall
ADDRESS:	Land rear of 40 Front Street, Staindrop, Darlington, County Durham, DL2 3NH
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	Barnard Castle East
CASE OFFICER:	Adam Williamson Planning Officer 03000 260826 adam.williamson@durham.gov.uk

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSALS

The Site

1. The application site lies towards the eastern end of the Staindrop conservation area, at the south end of Swan Wynd. The plot comprises one half of the car park of the former Black Swan public house, which lies adjacent to the north, with a stone wall forming the boundary. To the east lies the remainder of the car park. To the west lies a pair of modern semi detached dwellings, fronting on to the rear access lane. To the south east of the site is The Church of England Primary School. The buildings surrounding the site are a mix of historic, late 20th Century and modern buildings of various characters and sizes.

The Proposal

2. Planning permission is sought for the construction of a 3 bedroom, two storey, detached dwelling, with an open parking area to the front elevation and a small amenity area to the rear. The proposed dwelling would measure 8.3 metres by 9 metres in footprint, 5.4 metres to the eaves, and 8 metres to the ridge.
3. The dwelling would be constructed from coursed rubble sandstone with dressed quoins, head and sills, and a red clay pantile roof.
4. The application has been called to Committee by Staindrop Parish Council, who have raised concerns over increases in traffic and the use of upvc windows and doors within the conservation area.

PLANNING HISTORY

5. An application for the change of use of the Black Swan public house to form 5 residential units (ref: 6/2013/0008/DM) was approved on the 26.03.2013.

PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY:

6. On March 27th 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The framework is based on the policy of sustainable development and establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF can be accessed at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicyframework/>.

LOCAL PLAN POLICY:

7. The following saved policies of the Teesdale District Local Plan are considered to be consistent with the NPPF and therefore relevant in the determination of this application:

Policy GD1 (General Development Criteria):

All new development and redevelopment within the District should be designed and built to a high standard and should contribute to the quality and built environment of the surrounding area.

Policy BENV4 (Development Within or Adjacent to Conservation Areas):

Requires new development to respect the quality and character of conservation areas. Proposals which would adversely affect the setting of a conservation area or the views into or out of the area will not be permitted.

Policy BENV11 (Archaeological Interest Sites):

Before the determination of an application for development that may affect a known or potential site of archaeological interest, prospective developers will be required to undertake a field evaluation and provide the results to the planning Authority. Development which would unacceptably harm the setting or physical remains of archaeological sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not, will not be approved.

Policy H4 (Infill Development on sites of less than 0.4 Hectare) presumes in favour of redevelopment of small previously developed sites within the development limits of Teesdale's settlements.

Policy H12 (Design) requires high standards of design in new housing.

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

STATUTORY RESPONSES:

8. *Staindrop Parish Council* has objected to the proposal. Concerns have been raised about cumulative increases in traffic levels as a result of developments at the Black Swan and Broumley Court. It is felt that the cumulative effect of vehicles under the new arrangements cannot be compared to the traffic associated with the former pub because the public house traffic occurred during licensing hours and not school hours. Reservations have also been expressed on the use of upvc doors and windows where timber would be more appropriate in the conservation area.
9. *The Highways Authority* is satisfied that 6 dwellings (i.e. the dwelling currently proposed and the 5 no. flats approved at the Black Swan) would not lead to a greater amount of vehicular traffic than that potentially possible from use as a public house/restaurant or the other alternative planning uses this building and land could be put to without the need for planning consent. The proposed parking provision at the property is not likely to lead to highway problems, being commensurate with the level of accommodation within the property. No highway objection is made.

INTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES:

10. *Public Rights of Way* raises no objection to the proposal.
11. *Design and Conservation* has commented that following receipt of the revised heritage statement it is considered that the proposed loss of the open space in relation to the character and appearance of the area has been justified. The general design principles of the proposed dwelling are also considered to have been justified; however, some of the more detailed elements have not and require further careful control by way of conditions.
12. *Archaeology* has commented that the potential for buried archaeological remains is high on the basis of the site's location. A watching brief/monitoring should be conditioned.

PUBLIC RESPONSES:

13. A site notice was posted at the site, letters were sent to neighbours and the application was advertised in the local press. 3 letters of objection have been received.
14. The main points of objection relate to overlooking of adjacent gardens, obstruction of access, increased traffic, breaking the building line of 1&2 Swan Wynd, loss of light to neighbouring properties, and the potential for noise disturbance during construction. Issues relating to drainage and property values have also been raised.

APPLICANTS STATEMENT:

15. The proposal seeks to use part of the car park as a site for a single detached dwelling matching in style the adjoining and recently constructed houses on the back lane. The style is modern however the stonework is proposed for the elevations to assimilate the building into the conservation area setting. The site surroundings do not have a strong heritage character and relate to the rest of the conservation area in a limited manner.
16. It is considered that the proposal will have no negative impact on the important character of the conservation area and none on any listed buildings or other heritage assets.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

17. Having regard to the requirements of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the relevant Development Plan policies, relevant guidance and all other material planning considerations, including representations received, it is considered that the main planning issues in this instance relate to the principle of the development, impact on the conservation area, impact on residential amenity, highway safety, archaeology and other issues.

Principle of development.

18. The NPPF makes it clear that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development, but does not alter the statutory requirement that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material conditions indicate otherwise. Local Plan policies should still be given weight where they accord with the aims of the NPPF.
19. The application site lies within the development limits of Staindrop as defined on the Proposals Map of the Teesdale District Local Plan and is previously developed land. The proposal therefore accords with Teesdale Local Plan Policy H4 which presumes in favour of redevelopment of small previously developed sites within the development limits of Teesdale's settlements.
20. Teesdale Local Plan Policy H4 is compliant with the sustainability aims of the NPPF in respect of directing new residential development to sustainable locations and reusing land that has been previously developed. Staindrop is a tier 3 settlement in the Council's Settlement Study, meaning it has a good range of local services and is therefore a suitable location for the scale of development proposed.
21. The principle of development of 1 dwelling on the site is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Design and impact upon the Conservation Area

22. The application site falls within the Staindrop Conservation Area and therefore having regard to Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation

Areas) Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

23. The heritage assessment accompanying the application concludes that the site is of little significance in the wider context of the conservation area and this is not disputed. Although it is visible along a busy route to the school, the site is an open backland plot at odds with the traditional form of the village and its visual amenity is severely compromised by its featureless tarmac surfacing. Although the site offers some sense of openness at the end of Swan Wynd, historic maps show the site was not always open and was in fact nearly completely enclosed by buildings. The proposed development is therefore not at odds with the historic pattern of development, but most of the car park and current openness will still be retained.
24. In terms of the design of the proposed dwelling, the site is seen in the context of surrounding modern buildings at Broumley Court, Hartley Close, the Primary School, 4 Swan Wynd and the adjacent dwellings 1 & 2 Swan Wynd. The design of the proposed dwelling would closely reflect the style and form of the adjacent dwellings 1 & 2 Swan Wynd and the wall and roof materials would respect the traditional building materials found throughout the Staindrop Conservation Area. The drawings do however refer to use of upvc doors and windows, which has been noted in the Parish Council objection and Design comments. The use of timber would be more in keeping with the historic character of the conservation area and even the modern housing adjacent and opposite have used timber. It is therefore suggested the use of timber should be secured by a condition. The use of an up and over garage door design could also be improved and stone boundary walls would be more appropriate to the area than close boarded timber fencing. These details can be agreed by conditions.
25. The proposed dwelling would be built approximately 1.6m forward of the front of 1&2 Swan Wynd and concerns were expressed in the objections that this could appear at odds with the adjacent development. This is however a back lane with no strong character or building line. 1&2 Swan Wynd themselves were not built in line with the adjacent works building to the west. Even the development behind on this section of Front Street has a staggered building line. A staggered building line is considered to be more typical of the informal character of a back lane. Accordingly, there is no need or justification for the proposed dwelling to be built in line with 1&2 Swan Wynd.
26. It is therefore considered that the scale, massing, siting and design of the proposed dwelling would be appropriate and relate well to this part of the conservation area. Having considered the requirements of section 72 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it is considered that subject to conditions to control the materials and design of the windows, doors and enclosures, the character and appearance of the conservation area would be preserved. The proposal accords with policies GD1, BENV4 and H12 of the Teesdale District Local Plan, as well as the requirements of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

27. The neighbouring dwelling, 1 Swan Wynd, lies immediately to the west of the application site, and has a bay window to the front elevation. It is noted that the proposed dwelling would be set approximately 1.6m forward of the existing

building line, however, there would be nearly 2.5m separation between the buildings. The minor projection coupled with the separation between the buildings would limit any overbearing or overshadowing impact on the front of those adjacent dwellings. The rear garden of no.1 lies to the NW of the application site and sunlight will already be restricted by the existing house itself, as well as the 2 storey building belonging to no. 38. By locating the proposed dwelling forward of the building line the gap between the rear of no.1 and the 2 storey outbuilding of no.38 will be retained. Any overshadowing impact from the proposed dwelling through the small gap would be very shortlived on a morning only and therefore not sufficient to justify refusal on that basis.

28. The occupants of no.38, immediately to the rear (north) have raised concerns about loss of privacy, however there is a large obscuring 2 storey outbuilding with a blank facing elevation lying between the rear of the proposed dwelling and rear of no.38, and no.38's habitable windows are east facing. The proposal would not result in any unacceptable loss of privacy to the occupiers of that dwelling. They have also raised concerns about potential obstruction of their access as a result of building up to their right of access over the car park, however, right of access is a private matter and the proposed dwelling would not encroach onto that right of access.
29. It would however be reasonable to control the hours of construction, as requested by neighbours, given the proximity of adjacent dwellings and potential for noise impact at unsociable hours if left uncontrolled. This can be done by a condition.
30. Subject to a restriction on construction times, the proposal accords with policy GD1 of the Teesdale District Local Plan.

Highway Safety

31. Access to the site would be taken off the back lane leading from Swan Wynd and 2no. off street parking spaces would be provided within the site.
32. Concerns have been raised by both Staindrop Parish Council and neighbouring residents in respect of the potential increase in traffic using Swan Wynd, particularly given that the adjacent public house was recently given consent for conversion to 5 no. flats and the recent redevelopment at Broumley Court. This is in addition to the traffic associated with the school.
33. However, the Highways Authority has no objection to the proposal. There is already a large amount of traffic from the school, and the public house or any other similar use it could have changed to without needing permission, could have generated a significant number of vehicle movements day and night. Notwithstanding the consent for 5 dwellings in the public house, the traffic associated with just 1 additional dwelling, given the existing context, would not lead to a severe residual highway impact.
34. The proposal accords with policy GD1 of the Teesdale District Local Plan, as well as the guidance in the NPPF, which suggests proposals should only be refused on highways grounds where the impact would be severe.

Archaeology

35. Staindrop was a busy Medieval village and the Council's Archaeology section considers the potential for buried archaeological remains can be deemed high. However, this is tempered by the development of the plot as an Inn from the 18th century to the modern day use as a parking area. These developments will have lowered the archaeological potential for intact/undisturbed features and deposits potentially dating to the Early Medieval (Saxon) and Medieval use of the site.
36. It would therefore be unreasonable to require the applicant to carry out a predetermination evaluation as could be asked for via para 128 of the NPPF and saved Teesdale Local Plan policy BENV11. However, it would be entirely reasonable to recommend that a watching brief/monitoring of the breaking out the tarmac and the excavation of foundations and services or any other ground reduction associated with the development is put on as a condition. This would satisfy the aims of the NPPF Teesdale Local Plan policy BENV11.

Other Issues

37. Concerns over the loss of value to surrounding dwellings have been raised, but this is not a material planning matter.
38. The suitability of the site drainage methods will be a matter considered under the Building Regulations.

CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

39. The redevelopment of a brownfield site within the development limits of Staindrop accords with the main thrust of the National Planning Policy Framework in terms of securing sustainable patterns of development. The principle of redeveloping the site for residential purposes is therefore acceptable and would be in accordance with policy H4 of the Teesdale District Local Plan.
40. From a more detailed perspective, the layout, scale and design of the development is such that it would preserve the character and appearance of the Staindrop conservation area and would not lead to any unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties. Adequate levels of parking would be provided within the site, and the development would not have a severe adverse impact on highway safety. The development would therefore be in accordance with policies GD1, BENV4, and H12 of the Teesdale District Plan, as well as the guidance within the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions and reasons.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the following approved plans:-

Plan Reference Number	Date received
Site Location Plan	05.06.2013
Proposed elevations 13/27/3	05.06.2013
Proposed site plan 13/27/1	05.06.2013
Proposed floor plans 13/27/2	05.06.2013

To define the permission and ensure that a satisfactory form of development is obtained.

3. Notwithstanding the details of materials submitted with the application the external walls shall be formed using random, coursed natural stone with pointing to match and the roofs of natural red pantile. Prior to the commencement of the building works a sample panel of the proposed stone and pointing to be used in the construction of the main walls of the building shall be erected on site for inspection. The approved sample panel shall be retained for reference on site throughout construction and the development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

In the interests of the appearance of the area and to comply with policies GD1, BENV3 and BENV4 of the Teesdale Local Plan.

4. Notwithstanding the information shown on the submitted application, the following design requirements shall be incorporated into the approved scheme and retained thereafter:
 - a) All windows and external doors shall be timber with a painted finish.
 - b) All windows shall be sliding sash and recessed no less than 100mm from the face of the building.
 - c) All rainwater goods shall be black.
 - d) All new heads and cills shall be natural stone.

In the interests of protecting the character and the appearance of the conservation area in accordance with policies, GD1, BENV4 and H12 of the Teesdale Local Plan.

5. Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, prior to the commencement of development full details including plans at a scale of 1:20 and cross sections, of the proposed windows and doors (including the garage door) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The windows and doors shall be installed and retained in accordance with the approved details.

In the interests of protecting the character and the appearance of the conservation area in accordance with policies, GD1, BENV4 and H12 of the Teesdale Local Plan.

6. Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application no development shall commence until details of all means of enclosure have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved means of enclosure shall be erected prior to first occupation of the dwelling and thereafter retained.

In the interests of protecting the character and the appearance of the conservation area in accordance with policies, GD1, BENV4 and H12 of the Teesdale Local Plan.

7. No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a mitigation strategy document that has been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the local planning authority. The strategy shall include details of the following:
 - i., Measures to ensure the preservation in situ, or the preservation by record, of archaeological features of identified importance.
 - ii., Methodologies for the recording and recovery of archaeological remains including artefacts and ecofacts.
 - iii., Postfieldwork methodologies for assessment and analyses.
 - iv., Report content and arrangements for dissemination, and publication proposals.
 - v., Archive preparation and deposition with recognised repositories.
 - vi., A timetable of works in relation to the proposed development, including sufficient notification and allowance of time to ensure that the site work is undertaken and completed in accordance with the strategy.
 - vii., Monitoring arrangements, including the notification in writing to the County Durham Principal Archaeologist of the commencement of archaeological works and the opportunity to monitor such works.
 - viii., A list of all staff involved in the implementation of the strategy, including subcontractors and specialists, their responsibilities and qualifications.

The development shall then be carried out in full accordance with the approved details.

To comply with para. 141 of NPPF to ensure that the developer records and advances understanding of the significance of the heritage asset to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to its importance and the impact.

8. Prior to the development being beneficially occupied, a copy of any analysis, reporting, publication or archiving required as part of the mitigation strategy shall be deposited at the County Durham Historic Environment Record. This may include full analysis and final publication. Reporting and publication must be within one year of the date of completion of the development hereby approved by this permission

To comply with para. 141 of NPPF to ensure that the developer records and advances understanding of the significance of the heritage asset to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to its importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

9. No building works (including demolition, construction, deliveries and temporary site generators) shall be carried out on site outside the hours of 08:00 to 18:00

Monday to Saturdays, and no works shall be carried out on site on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

In the interests of preserving the amenity of residents in accordance with policy GD1 of the Teesdale District Local Plan.

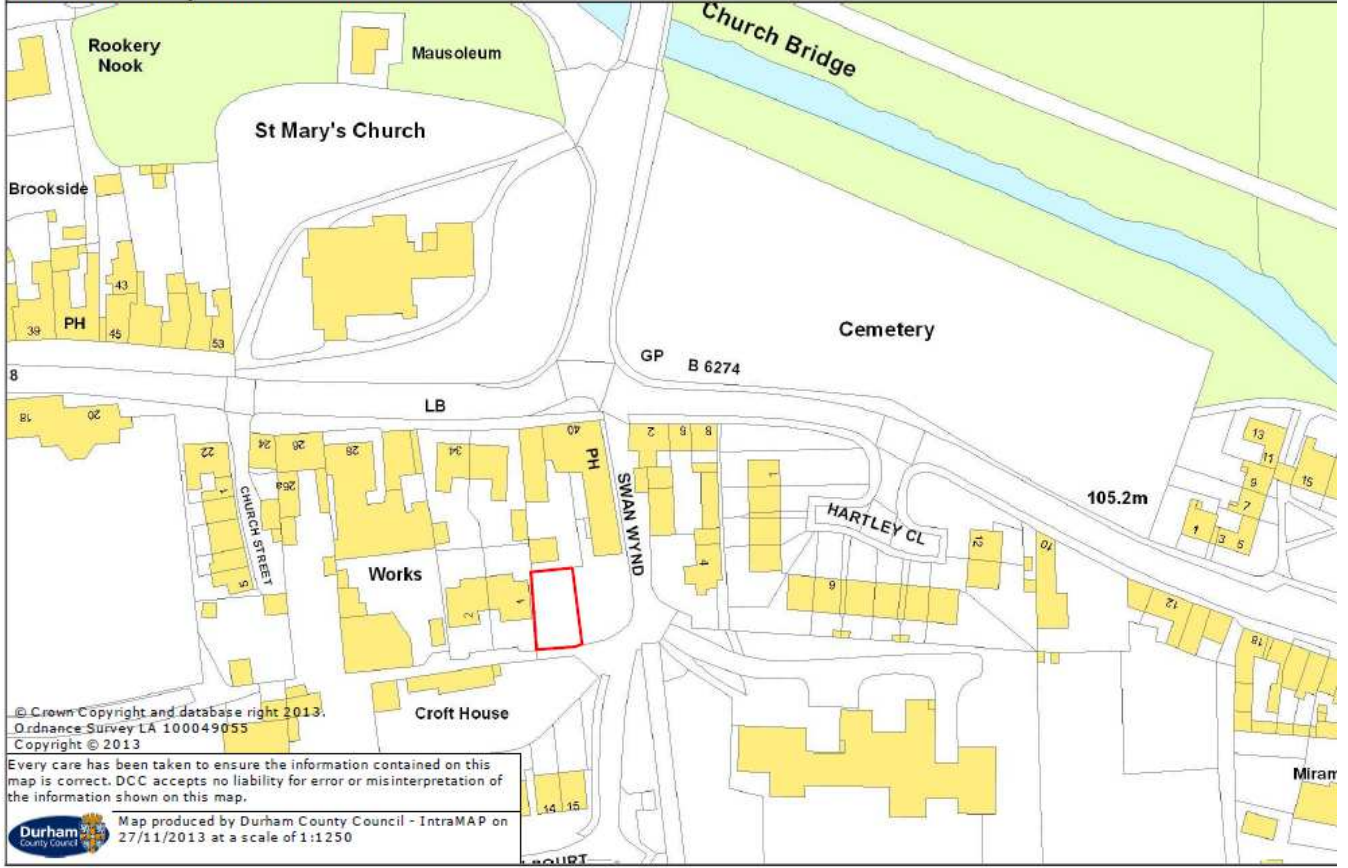
STATEMENT OF PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

In dealing with the application, the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising during the application process. The decision has been made in compliance with the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to promote the delivery of sustainable development.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Submitted Application Forms and Plans.
- Design and Access Statement
- Teesdale District Local Plan 2002
- National Planning Policy Framework.
- Internal and External consultation responses
- Public Consultation Responses

Durham County Council - IntraMAP



Planning Services

Land rear of 40 Front Street, Staindrop,
Darlington, County Durham, DL2 3NH

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright.
Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceeding.
Durham County Council Licence No. 100022202 2005

Comments

Erection of detached dwelling

Date 27.11.2013

Scale 1:1250

This page is intentionally left blank

Planning Services

COMMITTEE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

APPLICATION NO:	7/2013/0409/DM
FULL APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:	Demolition of Thurlow Grange and construction of 21no. dwellings
NAME OF APPLICANT:	Livin
ADDRESS:	Thurlow Grange, Thurlow Road, Sedgefield, Co Durham
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	Sedgefield
CASE OFFICER:	Mark O'Sullivan, Planning Officer, 03000 261056, mark.o'sullivan@durham.gov.uk

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSALS

1. The application relates to the former Thurlow Grange sheltered housing site (area of 0.74Ha) located towards the south eastern fringe of Sedgefield. The site is bordered to the north and east by residential development comprising of short terraced rows of bungalows. To the south beyond the public highway and boundary hedgerow there is open countryside, with landscaped grassland and a duck pond to the west, extending into the historic gardens of the Grade II Listed Ceddesfield Hall and Sedgefield Conservation Area. Limited views are achieved of the Grade I Listed St Edmunds Church to the north west of the site across landscaped parkland.
2. Planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing Thurlow Grange sheltered housing scheme and the development of 21no. dwellings. These would be made up of a mix of 11no. two bed bungalows (terraces and semi-detached pairs), and 10no. two bed apartment blocks built over two storeys and framed around central parking forecourts and landscaped garden areas.
3. Vehicular access to the development would be gained from Thurlow Road to the south of this site via existing and newly created access points.
4. This application is being reported to Planning Committee as it falls within the definition of major development.

PLANNING HISTORY

5. The applicants carried out pre-application discussion with the Local Planning Authority and submitted an informal scheme for independent review to the North East Design Review and Enabling Service (NE DRES). NE DRES is an organisation set up to achieve high design quality in the built environment and provides advice on the architecture, landscape, urban design and climate change impacts of master plans and development proposals. The submitted scheme reflects the advice offered by this panel.

PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY

6. In March 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The framework is based on the policy of sustainable development and establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Three main dimensions to sustainable development are described; economic, social and environmental factors. The presumption is detailed as being a golden thread running through both the plan-making and decision-taking process.
7. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes are cancelled as a result of the NPPF coming into force.
8. The following elements of the NPPF are considered relevant to this proposal:

Part 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes. To boost significantly the supply of housing, applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Part 7 – Requiring good design. The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, with good design a key aspect of sustainable development, indivisible from good planning.

Part 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity.

Part 12 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The above represents a summary of the NPPF considered most relevant the full text may be accessed at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2116950.pdf>

LOCAL PLAN POLICY:

9. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the weight to be attached to relevant saved local plan policies will depend upon the degree of consistency with the NPPF. The following policies of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan are considered relevant.

Policy D1 (General principles for the layout and design of new developments) requires the layout and design of all new developments to take account of the site’s relationship to the adjacent land uses and activities.

Policy D3 (Design for access) seeks to ensure new development makes satisfactory provision for all road users and pedestrians.

Policy D5 (Layout of new housing development) sets criteria for the layout of new housing developments.

Policy E15 (Safeguarding of Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows) expects development proposals to retain important groups of trees and hedgerows wherever possible and replace any trees which are lost.

Policy E23 (Priorities for environmental improvements) seeks to encourage improvements to the built environment supporting the re-use or demolition of vacant sites.

Policy H8 (Residential frameworks for larger villages) establishes residential development as an acceptable use within the identified residential framework of Sedgefield.

Policy H14 (Maintenance and improvement of housing stock) seeks to support the improvement of housing stock through the redevelopment, conversion or modernisation of buildings.

Policy H17 (Backland and infill housing development) sets criteria for new backland and infill housing development.

Policy L2 (Open Space in New Housing Development) sets out minimum standards for informal play space and amenity space within new housing developments of ten or more dwellings.

SPG Note 3 (The layout of new housing) sets amenity/privacy standards for new residential development.

The above represents a summary of those policies considered most relevant in the Development Plan the full text, criteria, and justifications of each may be accessed at <http://planning.wearvalley.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=69842>

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

STATUTORY RESPONSES:

10. *Sedgefield Town Council* – Has no objections to the proposal.
11. *Highway Authority* – Has no objections, subject to the imposition of conditions relating to highway improvement works.
12. *Northumbrian Water Ltd* – Has no objections.

INTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES:

13. *Design and Historic Environment Section* – No objections.
14. *Spatial Policy Section* – No comments received.
15. *Landscape Section* – No objections, subject to a condition requiring the submission of a detailed landscape scheme and control over means of enclosure.

16. *Ecology Section* – No objections, subject to adherence to the mitigation measures detailed within the submitted ecological report.
17. *Arboriculture Officer* - No objections, subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the prior approval of protective fencing details and plans for trees to be retained.

PUBLIC RESPONSES:

18. The application has been publicised by way of press and site notices, and individual notification letters to neighbouring residents. No representations have been received in response to this consultation and publicity exercise.
19. Prior to the submission of the application, a community consultation event was carried out by Livin at Ceddesfield Hall, Sedgefield on 29 August 2013 which provided an opportunity for local residents to examine and discuss the scheme.

APPLICANTS STATEMENT:

20. The site currently houses the empty Thurlow Grange sheltered housing scheme, comprising previously developed land. The brief was to redevelop the site, taking account of its setting next to high quality open space, with modern older person accommodation, including the introduction of older persons two storey apartments in order to help meet the identified acute shortage of affordable homes in Sedgefield.
21. The proposals offer a mix of bungalows and flats designed to be suitable for older people for social rent and would be HCA grant funded, designed to Lifetime Homes standards and achieve code for sustainable homes level 4.
22. Although initial schemes met the technicalities of the brief, it was felt that they did not respond to the unique setting and nature of the site. As such the emerging scheme was taken to the North East Design Review Panel (NE DRES). The design strategy has evolved through a clear and considered response to the analysis of the site, the NE DRES report and the constraints and opportunities of the site.
23. The site is located in a sustainable location close to Sedgefield High Street and public transport links, and close to amenities which should encourage walking and cycling.
24. The proposals retain the existing grassed area and trees to the west of the site. There is opportunity to create areas of high quality landscaping in the courtyard and to the west of the site, enhancing views of the historic landscape and church.

The above represents a summary of the comments received on this application. The full written text is available for inspection on the application file which can be viewed at:

*<http://planning.wearvalley.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=69842> and
<http://planning.wearvalley.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=72155>*

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

25. Having regard to the requirements of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the relevant Development Plan policies, relevant guidance and all other material planning considerations, including representations received, it is considered that the key issues are the principle of the development, impact on the character of the area, impact on residential amenity, highway safety, open space provision, and ecological and arboricultural implications.

Principle of development:

26. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's overarching objectives for the planning system, promoting sustainable development as a key objective.
27. Paragraph 49 of the NPPF explains how housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Furthermore, Paragraph 111 explains how planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, providing it is not of high environmental value.
28. At a local level, saved policy E23 of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan seeks to encourage improvements to the built environment through the re-use or demolition of derelict buildings, with saved policy H14 supporting the maintenance and improvement of the housing stock through granting permission for schemes which lead to the improvement of housing areas through the redevelopment, conversion or modernisation of buildings.
29. Saved policies H17 and D5 support new residential development on backland and infill locations where they can achieve a satisfactory means of access and parking provision, satisfactory amenity and privacy for both the new dwellings and existing adjacent dwellings, and where development is in keeping with the scale and form of adjacent dwellings and the local setting of the site.
30. The application site comprises previously-developed land located within the Sedgefield residential settlement as defined by Policy H8 of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would be located in a sustainable and accessible location with regard to the NPPF and relevant local plan policies.
31. The redevelopment of this site for continued residential use is considered acceptable in principle. The removal of a former sheltered housing scheme and its replacement with modern housing would provide a range of affordable housing types for the elderly to meet current needs that would be owned and managed by a registered provider (Livin).

Impact on the character of the area:

32. Part 7 of the NPPF and saved Sedgefield Borough Local Plan Policies H17 and D1 seek to promote good design in new developments, ensuring a comprehensive and coordinated approach to new development which takes into account adjacent land uses and activities. The site is currently occupied by an empty sheltered housing scheme which detracts from the character of this area. Its demolition and replacement with a well designed residential development scheme is to be encouraged.
33. The density and scale of the proposed development would generally reflect the predominant character of surrounding residential properties which consist primarily of short terraces of bungalows. The scheme would blend with the surrounding development patterns whilst also providing a more contemporary feel. The provision of a large area of open space to the west of the development is also welcomed.
34. The layout and architectural concept has evolved since initial discussions commenced to more positively enhance the setting of the nearby Sedgefield Conservation Area

whilst preserving views of other designated heritage assets. Although samples of materials are still to be submitted and can be controlled by condition the outline material palette is considered acceptable.

35. Areas of landscaping would also be introduced into the scheme and a detailed landscape master plan has been submitted. Landscape officers raise no objections to the proposal which is considered to provide a well designed landscape approach which respects surrounding registered gardens and the view to the nearby Listed St Edmunds Church to the North West.
36. In view of the forgoing, this application is also considered to satisfy the objectives of Part 12 of the NPPF which seeks to ensure that Local Planning Authorities recognise the importance of heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Impact on residential amenity:

37. Local Plan Policies H17 and D5 and Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 3 (SPG3) seek adequate amenity and privacy standards for existing and proposed dwellings when assessing new residential development.
38. The proposed dwellings would benefit from sufficient levels of private and public amenity space as well as satisfactory separation from existing neighbouring uses. The closest existing properties are to be located some 25m away to the east of the site and 15m to the north, with no directly overlooking windows or principal elevations located within close proximities. Within the site, minimum distances of 13m would be achieved between the rear elevation of the two storey apartments and the side gable elevation of proposed bungalow plot no.11 to the east, with 10m separation to be achieved between the rear elevations of plot no's 3 and 4, and 7 and 8, and the side gable elevations of plots 2 and 10 the west. There would be no side facing windows in these bungalows (plot no's 2, 10 and 11), which would prevent direct overlooking or loss of privacy and justifies the slightly substandard separation distances on this occasion. All other separation distances between opposing plot no's would exceed the minimum standards.
39. Areas of private amenity space would be enclosed by fencing in accordance with details to be agreed by way of condition.
40. This application is considered to be in accordance with saved Local Plan Policies H17 and D5, as well as SPG3 in this respect.

Highway safety:

41. Local Plan Policies H17 and D3 both seek to ensure new development achieves a satisfactory means of access, manoeuvring, turning and parking space for the number and type of vehicles using the development.
42. The Highway Authority notes that the existing Thurlow Grange development contains 31no. dwellings. These would be replaced with 21no. two bed dwellings (comprising apartments and bungalows) and an improved level of on-site car parking provision. Based upon Durham County Council's Residential Car Parking Standards (17 July 2013), this would require a minimum of 28no. car parking spaces across the site. The proposed scheme would provide 30no. car parking spaces and is therefore deemed to be acceptable.

43. The proposed car parking court arrangement between the block of 4no. apartments and Plot 1 to the south of the site would require a new 4.5 metres wide footway type vehicular access crossing to be constructed across the existing public footway. Sections of existing public footpath including lighting would also need to be removed to facilitate the development. As a result the existing public highway would need to be formally Stopped Under Section 247 Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Such details are to be controlled by way of condition.
44. Based on the information submitted, the Highway Authority raise no objections on highway safety grounds subject to the imposition of conditions controlling the above highway improvement works. The proposals are therefore considered to accord with Policies H17 and D3 in this regard.

Open space provision:

45. Saved Local Plan Policy L2 seeks to ensure the provision of open space within or adjacent to housing developments of ten or more dwellings. For every ten dwellings, a minimum of 100m² of informal play space and 500sqm of amenity space is required. In this case this equates to 210m² informal play space and 1050m² amenity space. Where this level cannot be provided, either fully or in part, an in lieu commuted sum equivalent to £1000 per dwelling, would be required.
46. The proposed layout would provide some public amenity space to the west of the site, providing an attractive buffer between the adjoining Ceddesfield gardens and duck pond. However such provision would not fully meet the aforementioned policy objectives, and following negotiations with the applicants, a commuted sum of £10,500 would be provided towards the improvement or provision of open space elsewhere. This would be secured by way of a S106 Legal Agreement in the form of a unilateral undertaking. A draft agreement confirming this figure has been submitted in support of the application.
47. A reduced fee has been agreed given the high quality of the open space to be provided and the nature of future occupants of this site who would all be elderly. Accordingly, the scheme is considered to comply with the provisions of saved Local Plan Policy L2.

Ecology:

48. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to take into account, protect and mitigate the effects of development on Biodiversity Interests. In this instance the applicant has submitted a bat risk assessment. The Ecology Section has raised no objections to the proposal based on the findings of this survey, subject to adherence to the mitigation and recommendations detailed within the survey report. The proposals are considered to satisfy the provisions of section 11 of the NPPF in this regard.

Arboricultural implications:

49. The Arboriculture Section raises no objections to this proposal subject to a condition requiring the prior inspection and approval of tree protection measures around this site. Subject to adherence to this condition, the proposals would accord with Policy E15 which seeks to ensure the retention and protection of important trees and hedgerows.

CONCLUSION

50. The principle of redeveloping this site for future residential use is considered acceptable given its sustainable location and previously developed nature. The proposal would provide an appropriate mix of housing in an accessible location which would enhance the character of the area.
51. Careful consideration has been given to the scale and design of the proposed development, its relationship to surrounding development including the impact on amenity/privacy standards. The proposed development is considered to satisfy highway safety requirements whilst taking account of ecological and arboricultural restraints.
52. Although the provision of public open space falls below the minimum requirements, the applicant has agreed a commuted sum with the Local Planning Authority agreed through a s106 legal undertaking.
53. No public objections are raised over this proposed development which is considered to accord with relevant national and local plan policies. Subject therefore to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions and completion of the legal agreement it is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the completion of a Section 106 Obligation to secure the payment of a commuted sum in lieu of adequate on site open space provision and the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. Development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the following approved plans:
2310-D-00-103-Rev B (Proposed site plan), received 08 November 2013
2310-D-00-104-Rev A (Proposed site sections), received 08 November 2013
2310-D-00-110-Rev A (Ams House Bungalows, Elevations), received 08 November 2013
2310-D-00-111 (Ams House Bungalows, Floor Plans), received 27 September 2013
2310-D-00-120-Rev A (Semi-detached bungalows), received 08 November 2013
2310-D-00-130 (Apartment 1, south plans), received 27 September 2013
2310-D-00-131-Rev A (Apartment 1, south elevations), received 08 November 2013
2310-D-00-140 (Apartment 2, north plans), received 27 September 2013
2310-D-00-141-Rev A (Apartment 2, north elevations), received 08 November 2013
R/1502/1c (Landscape Masterplan), received 21 November 2013
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
3. Notwithstanding any details of materials submitted with the application no development shall commence until samples of the external walling and roofing materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local planning authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the area and to comply with Policy D1 (General principles for the layout and design of new developments) of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan.

4. No construction or demolition work shall take place, nor any site cabins, materials or machinery be brought on site until all trees and hedges, indicated on the approved scaled tree protection plan as to be retained, are protected by the erection of fencing, placed as indicated on the plan, inspected by the local authority and agreed in writing as satisfactory. Fencing should comprise of a vertical and horizontal framework of scaffolding, well braced to resist impacts, and supporting temporary welded mesh fencing panels or similar approved in accordance with BS.5837:2012 unless otherwise agreed by written consent of the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to comply with policy E15 (Safeguarding of woodland, trees and hedgerows) of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan.

5. Prior to the commencement of the development details of means of enclosure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local planning authority. The enclosures shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the dwelling to which they relate.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to comply with policy H17 (Backland and infill housing development) of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan.

6. No development shall commence until a detailed landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No tree shall be felled or hedge removed until the landscape scheme, including any replacement tree and hedge planting, is approved as above. Any submitted scheme must be shown to comply with legislation protecting nesting birds and roosting bats.

The landscape scheme shall include accurate plan based details of the following: Trees, hedges and shrubs scheduled for retention; details of hard and soft landscaping including planting species, sizes, layout, densities, numbers; details of planting procedures or specification; finished topsoil levels and depths; details of temporary topsoil and subsoil storage provision; seeded or turf areas, habitat creation areas and details etc; details of land and surface drainage; and, the establishment maintenance regime, including watering, rabbit protection, tree stakes, guards etc.

The local planning authority shall be notified in advance of the start on site date and the completion date of all external works.

Trees, hedges and shrubs shall not be removed without agreement within five years.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to comply with policy H17 (Backland and infill housing development) of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan.

7. All planting, seeding or turfing and habitat creation in the approved details of the landscaping scheme shall be carried out in the first available planting season following the practical completion of the development.

No tree shall be felled or hedge removed until the removal/felling is shown to comply with legislation protecting nesting birds and roosting bats.

Any approved replacement tree or hedge planting shall be carried out within 12 months of felling and removals of existing trees and hedges.

Any trees or plants which die, fail to flourish or are removed within a period of 5 years from the substantial completion of the development shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Replacements will be subject to the same conditions.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to comply with policy H17 (Backland and infill housing development) of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan.

8. No development shall take place unless in accordance with the mitigation and recommendations detailed within part F of the protected species report 'Bat survey with CSH Appendix, Thurlow Grange, Sedgefield, Report No.5, November 13, E3 Ecology Ltd'.

Reason: To conserve protected species and their habitat in accordance with Part 11 of the NPPF.

9. The development hereby approved shall achieve a Code for Sustainable Homes minimum rating of level 4, in accordance with details that shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority showing that: prior to the commencement of development, the development has been registered for formal assessment by a licensed Code assessor to achieve a Code for Sustainable Homes Design Certificate level 4; and, prior to the first occupation of the development, the development has achieved a Code for Sustainable Homes post construction certificate level 4, or alternative.

Reason: In order to minimise energy consumption in accordance with Part 10 of the NPPF.

10. The proposed car parking court arrangement between the block of 4no. apartments and Plot 1 will require a new 4.5 metres wide footway type vehicular access crossing to be constructed in the existing public footway. The new vehicular access crossing must be constructed in accordance with the requirements of Section 184(3) of the Highways Act 1980.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with saved policy D3 (Design for access) of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan.

11. Sections of existing public footpath including public lighting will need to be removed to facilitate the development and as a result existing public highway will need to be formally Stopped Under Section 247 Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with saved policy D3 (Design for access) of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan.

STATEMENT OF PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

In assessing the application, the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner to seeking to resolve issues during the application process whilst ensuring the prompt determination of this application within the statutory determination period.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

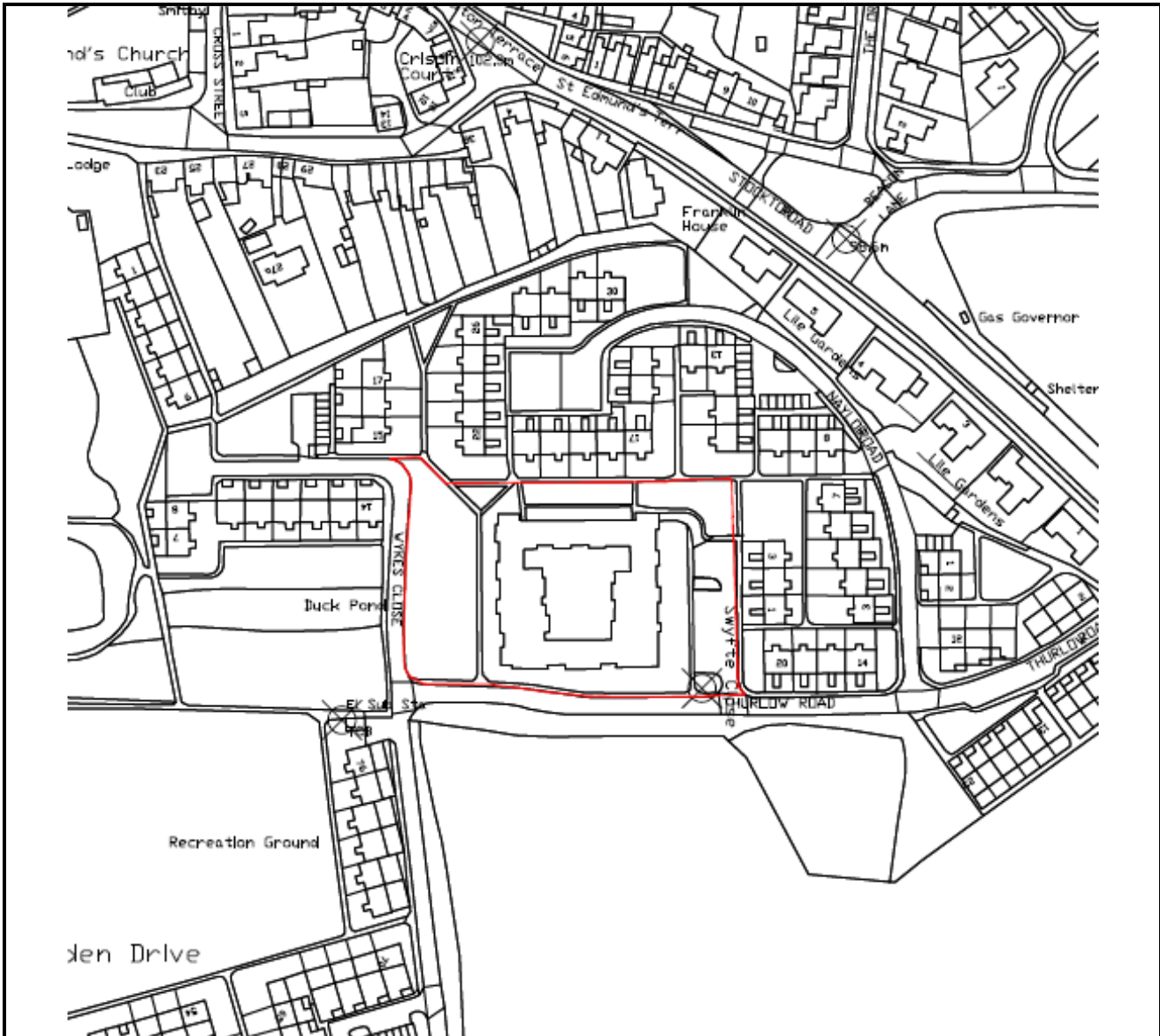
Submitted Application Forms, Plans and supporting documents

National Planning Policy Framework

Sedgefield Borough Local Plan 1996

Consultation response from the Highway Authority, NWL and NE DRES

Internal responses from Design and Historic Environment Section, Spatial Policy Section, Landscape Section, Ecology Section, and Arboriculture Officer



Planning Services

Demolition of Thurlow Grange and construction of 21no. dwellings

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceeding. Durham County Council Licence No. 100022202 2005

Comments

Date 12 December 2013

Scale 1:1250

Planning Services

COMMITTEE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

APPLICATION NO:	7/2013/0447/DM
FULL APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:	Re-Development of existing industrial site to include part demolition and rebuilding of existing buildings, erection of extension to existing office and associated works.
NAME OF APPLICANT:	Mr John Lanaghan, Gestamp Tallent Ltd
ADDRESS:	Geestamp Plant 1, Groat Road, Aycliffe Business Park, Newton Aycliffe, Co Durham
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	Aycliffe East
CASE OFFICER:	Steven Pilkington, Senior Planning Officer, 03000 263964, steven.pilkington@durham.gov.uk

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSALS

1. The application site is located at the north eastern edge of Aycliffe Business Park and to the south of Newton Aycliffe. This site forms part of a much larger complex of industrial units operated by Gestamp Tallent which are located to the south of Groat Avenue and east of St .Cuthberts Way.
2. This part of the Gestamp Tallent production facility (which makes car components) is located in between Groat Road and Skerne Road. Production is spread across 5 interlinked plants, this application site relates to Plant 1 which consists of a number of steel framed buildings with a series of pitched and flat roofs linking into a larger manufacturing unit and an office building. Planning permission is sought to demolish these buildings and replace them with one larger building. The footprint of the building would be identical to those demolished, covering some 5626msq, however the height of the building would be increased to a maximum of 22.4m at the apex of the shallow pitched roof. The building is proposed to be constructed from steel profile sheeting and coloured blue.
3. In addition to the proposed extension, external alterations are proposed to the office building to the front of the site, including the formation of a glazed canopy feature, new access doors, a two storey external lift and the part rendering of the elevation. This will help facilitate the re-use of an internal unused area as office space.
4. This application is being reported to Planning Committee as it falls within the definition of a major development and exceeds 5000m² in floor space.

PLANNING HISTORY

5. There is a lengthy planning history dating back to 1978 across the wider site, however, none of these applications are considered to be of particular relevance to this particular development.

PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY

6. The Government has consolidated all planning policy statements, guidance notes and many circulars into a single policy statement, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), although the majority of supporting Annexes to the planning policy statements are retained. The overriding message is that new development that is sustainable should go ahead without delay. It defines the role of planning in achieving sustainable development under three topic headings – economic, social and environmental, each mutually dependant.
7. The presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF requires local planning authorities to approach development management decisions positively, utilising twelve ‘core planning principles’. The following elements of the NPPF are considered relevant to this proposal.
8. *Part 1 – Building a strong, competitive economy.* The Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country’s inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and a low carbon future.
9. *Part 4 – Promoting sustainable transport.* Transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. Smarter use of technologies can reduce the need to travel. The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel. However, the Government recognises that different policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas.
10. *Part 7 – Requiring Good Design.* The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, with good design a key aspect of sustainable development, indivisible from good planning.
11. *Part 10 – Climate Change.* Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. Planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
12. *Part 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.* The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils; recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by

establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

LOCAL PLAN POLICY:

13. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the weight to be attached to relevant saved local plan policies will depend upon the degree of consistency with the NPPF. The greater the consistency, the greater the weight. The relevance of this issue is discussed, where appropriate, in the assessment section of the report, however, the following saved policies of the Sedgfield Borough Local Plan are considered relevant.
14. *Saved Policy IB1 – Locations of Industry and Business* – Sets out that the Council will maintain in appropriate locations a range of land available for industry and business uses.
15. *Saved Policy IB2(B) General Industrial Area* – Outlines that the Aycliffe Industrial Park is designated a General Industrial Area.
16. *Save Policy IB6 – Acceptable uses in General Industrial Estates* – Sets out that Business, General Industry and Warehousing uses will be considered acceptable in principle.
17. *Saved Policy IB13 -Extension to industrial and business premises* – Identifies that extensions to industrial and business premises will normally be approved provided that adjacent industrial or business premises are not adversely affected, the site is not over intensively developed and the environmental effect in terms of residential amenity or traffic movement is not significantly detrimental to the character of the area.
18. *Saved Policy D1 (General principles for the layout and design of new developments)* Sets out the general principles new development should comply with, including the achieving the objective or conserving energy, ensuring satisfactory access and parking provision, protecting the amenity of neighbouring land users.
19. *Saved Policy D3 (Design for access)* Requires that developments should make satisfactory and safe provision for pedestrians, cyclists, cars and other vehicles.
20. *Saved Policy D4 (Layout and design of new industrial and business development)* Sets out that the layout and design of new industrial and business development will normally be expected to have a high standard of building

The above represents a summary of those policies considered most relevant in the Development Plan the full text, criteria, and justifications of each may be accessed at <http://content.durham.gov.uk/PDFRepository/SedgfieldLPSavedPolicies.pdf>

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

STATUTORY RESPONSES:

21. *Highway Authority* offers no objections to the scheme given that the proposals would be confined to the private areas relating to Gestamp Tallent with no direct impact on the adjacent public highway. It is highlighted that there would be an additional 20no. employees on site as a result of the proposals, however the existing extensive car parking that already exists on site is considered sufficient to serve this increase.
22. *Northumbrian Water Limited* - Has no objections to the scheme, but for information highlight that there is a public sewer which crosses the site.
23. *Great Aycliffe Town Council* – Has no objections to the proposals

INTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES:

24. *Landscape Section* - Offers no objection highlighting that there is limited opportunity for mitigation planting.
25. *Ecology Section* - Has no objections, subject to the proposed mitigation measures.
26. *Environmental Health* – Raise no objections to the scheme as the proposed development is located within an existing industrial estate.
27. *Sustainability Officer* – Sets out that improvements to the sustainability and energy consumption of the building should be secured by condition.

PUBLIC RESPONSES:

28. The application has been publicised by way of individual notification letters, press notice and site notice, no representations have been received.

APPLICANTS STATEMENT:

29. Geestamp Tallent LTD specialise in the manufacturing and supply of chassis components to the automotive industry occupying a large site with Aycliffe Business Park. The site has continued to expand from the formation of the original business in 1948 with several extensions and additions to its manufacturing facilities and employs in excess of 1000 people at the Newton Aycliffe Site.
30. The proposal refers to the part redevelopment of an existing industrial building, known as plant 1, located centrally within the existing site. The proposed works will also encompass the modernisation of the existing reception area to the south west of the development site.
31. The replacement buildings will provide for improved production, assembly and storage within the site to service the company's increasing output, building on the sustained investment into the site

*The above represents a summary of the comments received on this application. The full written text is available for inspection on the application file which can be viewed at:
http://www2.sedgefield.gov.uk/planning_search/alldetails.php?ID=34691*

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

32. Having regard to the requirements of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the relevant Development Plan policies, relevant guidance and all other material planning considerations, including representations received, it is considered that the principal planning issues relate to the principle of development,

visual amenity of surrounding area, highway safety, amenity of adjacent land uses and ecological interests.

The Principle of Development

33. The application site is located within Aycliffe Industrial Park, a General Industrial Estate as designated by saved policy IB2 of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan. Within General Industrial Estates, saved policies IB6 and IB13 sets out that re-developments and new extensions to industrial and business premises will be considered acceptable in principle provided that the site is not over intensively developed and the amenity of neighbouring land uses, the character of the area and highway safety is safeguarded.
34. This approach is consistent with the NPPF which sets out that a key dimension to sustainable development is the economic element, including the contribution to building a strong competitive economy and ensuring that sufficient land is available to support growth.
35. In considering the proposal against the above policy context, it is noted that the existing manufacturing operation is well established within Aycliffe Industrial Park expanding over a number of years to become a major employer within the area. The upgrade of the existing manufacturing buildings would provide improved production, assembly and storage facilities, with a view to improve the output of the plant. The site is relatively self contained within the estate and the redevelopment of the existing buildings is wholly consistent with the existing Local Plan, the development is therefore considered acceptable in principle.

Visual amenity of surrounding area

36. The layout and design of the proposed factory extension has been influenced by the functional requirements of the business. Although the building will occupy the same footprint of those to be replaced, the eaves height and ridge height would be increased particularly in relation to the single storey elements of the existing buildings (up to 11m in height).
37. Saved policies D4, IB6 and IB13 of the Sedgefield Local Plan sets out that extensions to industrial premises should have a high standard of design while seeking to protect the character of the area. In appraising the development against this policy context, as previously identified the application site forms part of a wider complex owned and operated by Gestamp Tallent. The majority of these buildings have been extended over the years to a similar scale to the proposed and are also constructed from steel profile sheets coloured blue, to give a corporate identity to the site.
38. The proposed development would result in a large building and would be prominent from the highways that immediately adjoin the site. However it would be typical of the uniform steel clad buildings found on large scale manufacturing enterprise and would be seen against the backdrop of existing developments on site and set well back into the industrial estate from main distributor roads. The topography of land surrounding the application site, and Newton Aycliffe in general is also relatively flat, meaning that wider views of the site are limited. Landscaping buffers are also present to the north and to the A167 to the east. It is therefore considered that the building would have a relatively limited visual impact overall and also one that is appropriate to this part of the Industrial Estate.

39. In order to facilitate the proposed external lift shaft adjoining the reception area a number of immature trees will need to be removed. The Councils Landscape Officer highlights that there is limited scope of mitigation planting due to the developed nature of the site. Although the loss of the trees is regrettable, given the lack of landscaping on the site, it is considered acceptable on balance as these make limited contribution to the surrounding area. It is also considered unlikely that these trees would reach maturity given their proximity to existing buildings and highways infrastructure.
40. Alterations are also proposed to the appearance of the existing brick built office building to the front of the site. These include creating a feature entrance doorway, the introduction of a rendered front panel, along with an external lift to the side elevation. These changes would help to modernise the appearance the building and wider site.
41. While it is acknowledged that the development will result in the provision of a building of a significant size, it is considered that it would not be an incongruous in the context of the existing buildings on site, or in wider visual terms. The development is therefore considered to accord with policies D4, IB6 and IB13 of the Local Plan in this respect.

Highway Safety

42. Although no additional floor space would be created within the site the changes to the production, assembly and storage facilities, would improve the output of the plant. It is also estimated that an extra 20 jobs would be created. This would have some potential impact on parking demand and comings and goings from the site.
43. In considering these impacts, the Councils Highways Officer considers that the existing parking provision on site would adequately serve the development. He has also advised that the proposal would only directly affect the private highways belonging to the applicant, and that the wider industrial estate is served by roads built to industrial estate standards capable of accommodating any limited increase in traffic. Overall the proposal is, considered to accord with Policies IB13, D1, D3 and D4 of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan and would protect the highway safety of the wider road network.

Impact on amenity of adjacent land users

44. The application site is boarded by other industrial and commercial uses. These range in nature from manufacturing facilities, officing, storage facilities and small retail units. In considering the potential impact on these neighbouring landusers, the Councils Environmental Health Unit has advised that given the location of the site within an existing industrial estate it is unlikely that the development would cause a statutory nuisance. It is also considered that a loss of amenity is unlikely to arise over and above existing operations on site.

Ecology

45. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to take into account, protect and mitigate the effects of development on Biodiversity Interests. In this instance the applicant has submitted ecology survey report and assessed the potential impacts of the development on protected species. The Ecology Section offers no objection to the scheme subject to the implementation of the mitigation set out in the report. Therefore, it is considered that the granting of planning permission

would not constitute a breach of the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010.

Other Issues

46. Paragraph 103 of the NPPF and Local Plan policy D1 require consideration be given to issues regarding flooding particularly from surface water run-off while requiring that developments adequately dispose of foul water. In this instance the new buildings would occupy the same foot print as the structure to be developed utilising existing connections into the existing drainage infrastructure. Northumbrian Water has no objections to this approach, although they have pointed out an existing sewer may need to be diverted to accommodate the development. It is however considered this is a matter of the applicant and Northumbrian Water to resolve in the first instance outside of the planning system.
47. Planning plays a key role in helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, providing resilience to the impacts of climate change and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF. In line with this and policy D1 of the Local Plan which sets out that the development would be expected to achieve improvements in relation to its energy and sustainability performance. Limited details have been supplied to show how this would be achieved and as such, a condition is recommended requiring the submission of a sustainability strategy.

CONCLUSION

48. The re-development will contribute to the economic and social element of sustainable development, providing continued investment into a key local employer in the local area.
49. The proposal is considered acceptable given the allocation of the site as a General Industrial Estate within the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan and is also considered to have an acceptable visual impact, affect on highway safety and on the amenity of adjacent landusers. The development would also not impact upon any ecological interests.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason – required to be imposed pursuant to section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the following approved plans –

Proposed Site Layout, 1193 (S)03 P2, Received 11th October 2013
Proposed Site Plan, 1193 (S)04 P2, Received 11th October 2013
Existing Site Plan 1146 (S) 04 P2, Received 11th October 2013

Reason : To define the consent and ensure a satisfactory form of development is obtained in accordance with Policies IB13, D1 and D4 of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan.

3. Prior to the commencement of the development a scheme to embed sustainability and minimise carbon emissions shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved scheme and retained while the building is in existence

Reason- In order to minimise energy consumption and to comply with the aims of policy D1 of the Sedgefield Local Plan and Paragraphs 93 and 97 of the NPPF.

4. No development shall commence unless in accordance with the mitigation detailed within the Bat Risk Assessment Report Survey Report compiled by Argus Ecology received 11th October 2013 including but not restricted to adherence to spatial restrictions; adherence to precautionary working methods as stated in the reports.

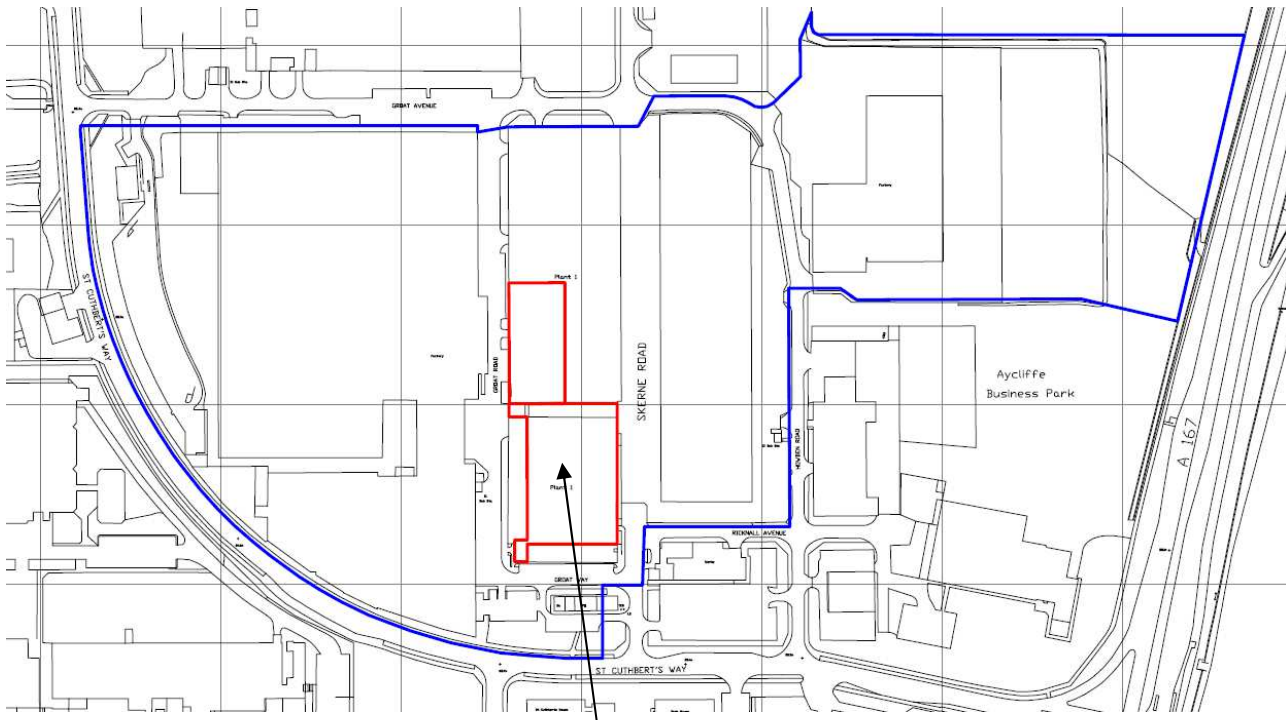
Reason: To ensure the preservation and enhancement of species protected by law in accordance part 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

STATEMENT OF PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

In dealing with the application, the local planning authority has adopted a positive and proactive manner, the decision has been made within the 13 week target provided to the applicant on submission and in compliance with the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to promote the delivery of sustainable development.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Submitted Application Forms, Plans and supporting documents
National Planning Policy Framework
Sedgefield Borough Local Plan
County Durham Plan (pre submission version) and
Statutory responses from, Highway Authority and Northumbrian Water
Internal responses from Landscape Section, Ecology Section and Sustainability Section



Application Site



Planning Services

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceeding. Durham County Council Licence No. 100022202 2005

Comments

Date 28th November 2013

Scale 1:1250

This page is intentionally left blank