

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL
AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE (NORTH)

At a Meeting of the **Area Planning Committee (North)** held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 27 April 2017 at 2.00 pm**

Present:

Councillor C Marshall (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors B Armstrong, P Brookes, I Jewell (Vice-Chairman), J Maitland, O Milburn, A Shield, L Taylor, O Temple, S Wilson and S Zair

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Bennett, J Cordon, J Robinson, K Shaw and K Thompson

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Bennett, J Cordon and K Shaw.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitutes.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 March 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 March were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman with the following amendment:

Page 7, paragraph 4 to read *'He therefore concluded that given the strong feeling of residents and lack of trust in the applicant, he requested that the application be refused'*.

4 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Councillor B Armstrong declared an interest in Item 5a as her partners was a retired Board Member of Derwentside Homes of which Prince Bishop Homes was a subsidiary.

Councillor O Milburn declared an interest in Item 5a as she was a Board Member of Derwentside Homes of which Prince Bishop Homes was a subsidiary.

Councillor S Wilson commented that although he was the local member for Item 5a although would be basing his decision on the report as presented.

5 Applications to be determined by the Area Planning Committee (North Durham)

a DM/16/04013/FPA - St Cuthbert's Drive, Sacriston

The Committee considered a report of the Senior Planning Officer regarding the proposed erection of 24 semi-detached dwellings including affordable units with associated services, infrastructure and landscaping (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Senior Planning Officer provided a detailed presentation which included photographs of the site and plans of the proposed layout. Members had also visited the site the previous day and were familiar with the setting and surroundings.

The Senior Planning Officer indicated that additional archaeological investigations were required by the County Archaeologist on the basis of evidence of a pre-historic burial cyst and earthworks in the nearby area. A condition to require that this was investigated, monitored and recorded as appropriate was suggested appended to any approval. The developer had agreed to this requirement.

In addition it was reported that 4 late submissions had been received, one of which was a 340 name petition objecting to the application on grounds of traffic, parking and the relocation of existing footpath. Concerns had also been raised regarding potential for flooding of the school playing site, visitor parking and a lack of open space to be provided.

Councillor H Liddle, local member, addressed the committee to object to the application also noting that Sacriston Parish Council also were in objection, however she would speak on behalf of them and herself in capacity as local member.

She further noted that she did not object to new development in Sacriston, however unfortunately the residents had been unable to reach a prior agreement with the developer on issues such as parking and the lack of play area. The main issues arose in the St Cuthbert's Drive area, where there were particular problems with parking. Further she commented that there was other land more suitable for development available within the area.

Ms L Edwards, local resident, addressed the committee to object to the application. She advised that her main concerns related to highways and access. The proposed development would relate to an increase in traffic and this caused safety concerns given the close proximity to the school. In addition the removal of a protected footpath was of concern.

Miss A Roberts, a pupil of the adjacent school, addressed the committee to speak in objection to the application. Miss Roberts advised the committee that school children were worried about their safety should the application be approved due to the increased traffic which would be created. School children had undertaken their own speed survey and it was reported that during a period of 30 minutes, 6 cars had been recorded exceeding the speed limit.

In addition to these concerns, Miss Roberts also advised that the school was already overcrowded and could not cope with additional pupils who may want to attend from the new homes. She further raised concerns that should the application be approved school children may have problems accessing their own playing field. Mr J Price, a pupil of the adjacent school, addressed the committee to speak in objection to the application. He advised that there had been a number of near misses on this stretch of road due to speeding cars. In addition should the application be approved the route to school would become more dangerous for children and pupils were also concerned that noise pollution from construction would distract classes.

In conclusion he advised that pupils also had concerns for the disruption of habitat of local wildlife including rabbits and moles.

S Jackson, Prince Bishops Homes, addressed the committee to speak in support of the application. He advised that the homes would target the rent generation, which a scheme to provided residents a minimum rental period of 5 years at 80% and the opportunity to save the other 20% in an ISA, so that they could afford to buy the property at the end of the period.

B Milburn, Applicants Agent, addressed the committee to speak in support of the application. He advised that drop in sessions for the public had been arranged and 6 letters had been received in response to that consultation, the comments contained within having been carefully considered.

Regarding the issues raised relating to highways, it was noted that Highways Engineers had assessed the capacities and flows of the main estate roads and junctions and had raised no concerns. It had been calculated that the development would create 1 additional vehicle every 4 minutes. It was also noted that although collisions were recorded within the area, none had had taken place within the estate or on bend.

In conclusion he advised that the developers were highly committed to the development and respectfully asked that the application be approved.

The Senior Planning officer in response to comments made relating to provision of school places advised that there was currently capacity in all levels of the school system within the area.

Councillor Wilson in referring to traffic movements during peak times asked there were spaces for 48 vehicles how would this create only 15 movements during peak hours. He added that surely the increase in vehicles would have an impact on that

stretch of road. In addition he queried what constraints there would be on construction traffic and how this would work / coincide with school rush hours.

In response the Senior Planning Officer advised that the existing Hawthorn hedge did have its own safety implications in its current position, although would be relocated under the proposed scheme. Regarding traffic movements and the increase in vehicles, the Highways Engineer advised that a trip generation table was used to determine the impact on highways. Anything under 30 trips was deemed to be acceptable in accordance with Department for Transport guidance.

Councillor Maitland raised a query regarding green field land and whether this should not be protected in brown field land was available. The Senior Planning Officer in response advised that this requirement was not so prescriptive in the NPPF.

Councillor Shield further commented that he was concerned that the area would be losing much needed play / open space and he did have concerns regarding safeguarding children. Looking to relevant policies he referred to car parking provision noting that based on the 1.75 cars per household formula, the number of spaces provided was above that recommended. In addition he referred to policy T15 of the saved Chester-le-Street District Plan, relating to access, adding that he was unsure whether proposals could be considered to be in breach of this policy.

In response the Senior Planning officer advised that proposals were not deemed to be of a level required to refuse the application on highway grounds.

Further discussion took place regarding highways safety and it was suggested that parking issues were an issue across the county around school areas. The Highways Engineer advised that should the application be approved the Head Teacher may wish to review her school travel plan.

Councillor Shield added that with reluctance he **MOVED** that the application be approved subject to the conditions listed in the report. Councillor Jewell added that although he concurred with Councillor Shield's sentiments and acknowledged that it was a difficult situation he **SECONDED** the proposal.

Resolved:

That the application be approved subject to the conditions as listed within the report and that; delegated authority be given to officers to change detail of pre-commencement conditions including working hours.

b DM/17/00262/FPA - Land To The West Of 2 Heathmeads, Pelton

The Committee considered a report of the Planning Officer regarding the construction of 4 no. 2 storey detached houses with associated garages, gardens and access road (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Planning Officer provided a detailed presentation which included photographs of the site and plans of the proposed layouts. Members had also visited the site the previous day and were familiar with the setting and surroundings.

Members were advised that there had been one late representation received from Pelton Parish Council objecting to the application on the grounds of loss of amenity, access concerns, proposed dwellings being too large for the site and the impact that the development and construction would have on neighbouring residents. The Planning Officer advised that the site was deemed to be in a sustainable location and the proposed layout maximised privacy distances.

The Planning Officer further advised that should members be minded to approve the application any permission would be subject to no objections being received from the Coal Authority.

Councillor Shield raised a query with regard to brownfield land and whether the proposal was considered to be infill arrangement. The Planning Officer confirmed that as the site was surrounded on 3 sides this would be the case.

Councillor Shield **MOVED** that the application be approved subject to the conditions listed in the report and subject to Coal Authority comments. Councillor Jewell **SECONDED** the proposal.

Resolved:

That the application be approved subject to the conditions listed in the report and subject to any comments received from the Coal Authority.

Signed.....

Date.....