

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL
AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE (CENTRAL AND EAST)

At a Meeting of **Area Planning Committee (Central and East)** held in **Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham** on **Tuesday 12 September 2017 at 1.00 pm**

Present:

Councillor P Taylor (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors G Bleasdale, D Brown, J Clark, I Cochrane, K Corrigan, M Davinson, N Grayson, K Hawley, S Iveson, P Jopling, A Laing (Vice-Chairman), M McGaun, R Manchester and J Robinson

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor O Temple.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor M McGaun substituting for Councillor O Temple.

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July were confirmed as a correct record by the committee and signed by the Chair.

4 Declarations of Interest, if any

Councillor A Laing declared an interest in Item 5a as Local Ward Member. She also advised that she would be speaking on the application but would leave the Chamber and take no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

5 Applications to be determined by the Area Planning Committee (Central & East Durham)

a DM/17/01950/FPA - Manor Way, Peterlee

The Committee considered a report of the Senior Planning Officer, Graham Blakey regarding the proposed erection of 84 dwellings including all associated landscaping and infrastructure (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.

Councillor A Laing, Local Member addressed the Committee to speak against the proposals. She reported that she had been since 1981, a school governor and local member in this area. During this time there had been increasing problems with car parking in and around the school grounds leading to congestion and delays for road users. There were concerns that should the development be permitted these problems would be exacerbated.

Councillor A Laing noted that over the last 3 months she had driven along the road to the T Junction and had waited up to 11 minutes trying to get out. She added that there was the Eastfields Estate next to the site and she felt that this would be overwhelmed with traffic if the application went ahead. She noted she agreed with the objections received by the public, page 30, paragraph 52 of the report.

Councillor A Laing added she referred to Easington District Local Plan (EDLP) Policy P9 (iii) which specifically stated that land should be set aside for car parking linked to the school as a drop off pick up point and that if the application was successful there should be a condition that this would be observed as there was no current proposal to do this.

Councillor A Laing added that the matter for material consideration is that Paragraph 50 of the NPPF encourages the provision of affordable housing based on evidenced need.

Councillor A Laing noted that Local Authorities were required to plan for a mix of housing, where affordable housing is needed a policy for meeting this need is established. She added that for Peterlee the up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment by the Council has established a requirement of 10% and Councillor A Laing noted that this afternoon colleagues were being asked to agree a development that not only falls short of that level but also includes no affordable housing at all.

Councillor A Laing noted that Members all served in areas which are in need of affordable housing. She added that Members were all acutely aware of the housing needs of those who are less well off in our communities and in this matter the NPPF agrees with us when it is encouraging us to agree to planning applications which include the provision.

Councillor A Laing noted that the Committee should reject the application on the basis of Paragraph 50 of the NPPF in as much as the absence of affordable housing weights against this application in the planning balance. Councillor A Laing noted throughout the whole planning procedure she had constantly opposed this development and she fully supported the views and the objections of the Dene House Ward.

Councillor L Fenwick, Peterlee Town Council addressed the Committee to speak against the proposals. She advised that the application did not have the support of residents. She referred to arrangements for handover of children at school, noting that this was done at the door by parents, which meant that they would need to park up for a period of up to 10 minutes or more during drop off and pick up times. The additional traffic created from 84 dwellings would cause significant issues and result in road users attempting to take short cuts to avoid traffic and thus imposing risk to pedestrians.

Councillor T Duffy, Peterlee Town Council addressed the Committee to speak against the proposals. Mr Duffy advised that 2,100 new homes were planned to be built in Peterlee in the near future filling in green spaces and extending the boundaries so that they would eventually meet with neighbouring villages. Residents had serious concerns as to how the existing infrastructure would stand up to increased usage, noting that the local MP and the Police Crime and Victims Commissioner were all acutely aware of the parking issues in the area. He further explained that as already mentioned by Councillor Laing, EDLP Policy 9 (iii) specifies that a car park should be provided within the curtilage of the site to alleviate on-street parking problems. This had not been mentioned in the planning report.

Mrs K Duffy, local resident addressed the committee to speak against the proposals noting concerns relating to increased volumes of traffic, highways safety issues relating to primary school children and the impact it could potentially have on emergency vehicles due to access issues and parked cars.

She further commented that there were concerns regarding land contamination and assessment of the suitability of the land for housing development. In conclusion she reiterated the concerns of residents noting that it was also important that the green space was maintained in order to retain the division of Horden settlement.

As a point of order and in relation to comments made, the Chairman advised that there would be no bias in this Chamber and Members would judge the application based upon policy and principles outlined in the NPPF only.

Councillor A Laing, in declaring her interest at this point left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

In relation to comments made the Senior Planning Officer advised that the issue of affordable homes came down to the viability of the proposals and the resultant value obtained for the land. On that basis, the developer has demonstrated that they cannot construct any affordable housing on the site. Regarding comments made relating to safety around the school area, he noted that there had been no objections received from the schools.

Further to concerns raised regarding high safety issues, including accessibility for emergency vehicles, the Highways Development Manager advised that during peak times it was expected that the 84 dwellings would create approximately 55 trips. The numbers quoted by objectors were non-typical for a housing development of this size. He further provided clarification regarding flow of traffic towards Eastfields.

With regard to highway safety, he reported that traffic and accident statistics showed that there was no real problem in this area, with very low levels of collisions for the network. In conclusion he advised that parking proposals were designed to council standards and the proposed road widths were also suitable in size for emergency services vehicles.

Mr Prescott, Keepmoat Homes addressed the Committee to speak in support of the application. He advised that a lot of consultation with residents had been undertaken locally highlighting overriding concerns of highway safety. He advised that proposals would eliminate existing issues relating to school buses and would not create further issues than which already existed at school pick up and drop off times. In addition, proposals had the support of the fire brigade, local schools and highway engineers.

With regard to the issue of lack of affordable housing he reiterated that should a 106 condition be imposed, the scheme would be unviable.

Councillor J Robinson raised concerns regarding housing supply and issues regarding outdated policies contained within the Easington Local Plan. With regard to highway issues he added that the Aldi development would cause further impact on this stretch of highway and noted that although the level of recorded traffic incidents was low, this did not include accidents where police had not been called. He also told of his concerns regarding noise levels from increased traffic and the impact this would have on residents. He further added that further explanation regarding 106 monies was required.

He further pointed out that should the A19 be closed this stretch of highway was the only route into Peterlee.

The Senior Planning Officer provided clarification regarding the proposed conditions relating to contaminated land, remediation and the councils 5-year housing land supply. With regard to issues raised relating to lack of s106 monies, he noted that this linked to the viability of the scheme, advising that Durham Villages Regeneration Company had satisfactorily demonstrated to the Council that affordable housing could not be secured in this case.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding proposals made by Members to refuse the application based on EDLP Policies 37, 50 and 90 and Paragraph 14 of the NPPF. The Solicitor advised Members that it would be difficult for the Committee to justify refusal on the basis of highway safety given that this was completely at odds with advice given from highway professionals. Equally, government guidance was clear that the Council should not be asking for affordable housing obligations where this would make the development unviable. Therefore, refusal on these grounds would be likely to expose the Council to a risk of costs on appeal.

On the basis of advice provided Councillor J Robinson moved that the application be deferred for further consideration. Councillor J Clark seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED

That the application be **DEFERRED**.

b DM/17/01554/FPA - Laburnum Crescent, Seaham

The Senior Planning Officer, Graham Blakey, gave a detailed presentation on the report relating to the abovementioned planning application, a copy of which had been circulated (for copy see file of minutes). Members noted that the written report was supplemented by a visual presentation which included photographs of the site. The application was for erection of 48 affordable dwellings (30 houses and 18 bungalows) with associated works including highway widening and was recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

The Senior Planning Officer noted there were no updates since the report and there had been no objections to the application.

The Chairman asked Members of the Committee for their comments.

Councillor G Bleasdale noted that there were no objections to the application, everyone was very happy with it and therefore moved that the application be approved.

Councillor J Clark noted was very happy to see affordable housing was to be provided and seconded the application.

Councillor G Bleasdale moved that the application be approved; she was seconded by Councillor J Clark.

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions detailed in the Officer's report to the Committee.

c DM/17/01682/FPA - Durham University, Lower Mountjoy

The Senior Planning Officer, Henry Jones, gave a detailed presentation on the report relating to the abovementioned planning application, a copy of which had been circulated (for copy see file of minutes). Members noted that the written report was supplemented by a visual presentation which included photographs of the site. The Senior Planning Officer advised that Members of the Committee had visited the site and were familiar with the location and setting. The application was for construction of a new teaching and learning centre with associated landscaping and access and was recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

The Senior Planning Officer noted the application was for a high quality teaching and learning facility, with the main objections being in terms of pedestrian and cycle movements.

It was noted that comments from Councillor D Stoker had been forwarded noting no objections in principle but raising some concerns with regards to the impact of the development upon already congested pedestrian routes. These concerns should be considered and whether any further improvement works could be undertaken to alleviate the issues.

The Senior Planning Officer provided the following updates since the committee report was published;

- Revised plans received increasing cycle parking provision and showing indicative signage locations in respects to a vehicular drop-off area. The Highway Authority have welcomed the changes in principle. Delegated authority is therefore sought to amend condition 6 so as to approve cycle parking design and location though include a requirement for a signage scheme to be agreed. The signage requirements under condition 11 remain
- Revised travel plan has been received and accepted. Delegated authority is therefore sought to remove condition 12 and add the travel plan as an approved document under condition 2

The Chairman noted speakers as regards the item and asked Mr R Cornwell to speak in relation to the item on behalf of the Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum and had slides to accompany his comments.

Mr R Cornwell noted that he had no objection to the principle of the development, but the Forum was very concerned about the safety of students making their way there. He added his remarks were made with particular reference to Saved Policy T1, which states that the Council will not grant planning permission for development that would generate traffic likely to be detrimental to highway safety, noting traffic included foot traffic. Mr R Cornwell noted his next two slides had been lifted from the University's Planning Statement. He referred Members to what the University wanted in terms of the new building to provide, noting in particular the hours of teaching to take place, 500 hours per week. Mr R Cornwell referred to other University requirements, such as the number of study spaces, and for catering, plus two lecture theatres.

Mr R Cornwell added that the aim of the new building was to facilitate 20% of all formal teaching, not just undergraduates, noting 1,451 postgraduates on taught courses too. He added that around 3,000 students would be taught in the new building at one time or another, though the capacity of the building was 2,000, though it was not being said that that number would be in the building at any one time. Mr R Cornwell noted that the University stated they were aiming for 80% capacity and that seems reasonable, though that was still 1,600 people.

Mr R Cornwell added that Highways Development had estimated 300 arriving in the 20 minutes before 9.00am, but given the capacity of the building and the size of the lecture theatres, he felt this didn't add up. He added that this was a large and expensive building and the University would want to make the most of it.

Mr R Cornwell noted that the Forum's submission estimated around 960 students would be arriving for 9.00am lectures or classes or private study and that 850 would be on foot, with most of the others coming by bus.

Mr R Cornwell noted that the Agent's response was that they had used "industry standard" methods, but added you have to look at whether the answer makes sense. Mr R Cornwell added that in this case it doesn't and that Durham plainly wasn't "industry standard".

Mr R Cornwell noted 850 students would be arriving on foot and converging on the new building from all directions. He added that we already know that very substantial numbers would be coming along Margery Lane/Quarryheads Lane and Church Street. He showed Members a photograph from around a year ago and added that you could see, as the Forum's count confirmed, the pavement was over capacity. It was in places very much less than one metre wide and Mr R Cornwell noted similar problems with numbers on Church Street and in that case pedestrians had to cross Stockton Road at the New Inn traffic lights.

Mr R Cornwell explained that the Forum were seriously concerned that the very large volume of students walking down narrow pavements would be a safety problem. The worst time likely to be on the return trip when it will be dark in the winter months and the traffic will be behind them. He added that this was something that needed to be addressed before the building was brought into use.

Mr R Cornwell noted that therefore the Forum was asking that the Committee defer approval until these issues were addressed. He added that alternatively Members may seek to add planning conditions that would achieve the same end. He noted that Saved Policy T1 gave Members the grounds to do this. Mr R Cornwell noted the University was embarking on an estate masterplan that would see the number of students in Durham grow by around 6,500 over the next ten years and that this would have a transformative effect on both the City and the University. He added that the drip-feeding of planning applications like this one creates problems for the City which the County would have to pay for. Mr R Cornwell concluded by noting that this was why the Forum were asking that the necessary improvements to the footpaths and the infrastructure should be funded by a Section 106 payment by the Developer: the University.

The Chairman asked Professor A Houston from Durham University to speak in support of the Application.

Professor A Houston explained that the building would be the centre of academic facilities, together with conferencing facilities, and the estates masterplan had a careful, established approach. He added that the University generated £1.1 billion for the north east economy, with around 14,000 jobs and had reached capacity, and there was a need to develop to meet future needs.

Professor A Houston noted pre-application meetings had involved key stakeholders and the scale of the building responds to the area in its design, also taking into account the World Heritage site. He reiterated that the application would give much needed capacity and would be sustainably developed, maximising space and was a single integrated facility. Professor A Houston added that the application would have contributions in terms of 186 construction jobs, 281 indirect jobs and 32 full time equivalent jobs for the local economy.

Professor A Houston noted the application fitted in with the neighbourhood and that archaeology undertaken would add to the understanding of the site. He concluded by noting that the application would provide much needed teaching space, with an eye to economic sustainability, and also complied with policy.

The Highways Development Manager noted that the consultant had predicted using data of 320 persons per hour, contested by the Neighbourhood Planning Forum. He added that there had been no particular concerns with 16 per minute on footways on South Road and with 5 directions that people could arrive from. The Highways Development Manager noted 6 pedestrians per minute per metre and that levels were uncomfortable above 18 per minute per metre. There was not that level of impact. In terms of taking into account events, he noted 6 accidents on South Road, though none related to pedestrians crossing the road or off the footway. He noted the University's masterplan and highways improvements in the future.

The Senior Planning Officer advised Members that in addition to the Highways Development Manager comments and to help with pedestrian movements the development includes an increase in the usable width of the footpath to the development frontage from 1.35m to 2.25m.

Councillor P Jopling noted that her only concern was that there must be robust mitigation in terms of surface water, with adequate storage facilities.

Councillor G Bleasdale moved that the application be approved; she was seconded by Councillor A Laing.

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions detailed in the Officer's report to the Committee.

d DM/17/02155/TPO - Dunelm, Dene Road, Seaham

The Planning Officer, Paul Hopper, gave a detailed presentation on the report relating to the abovementioned planning application, a copy of which had been circulated (for copy see file of minutes). Members noted that the written report was supplemented by a visual presentation which included photographs of the site. The Planning Officer advised that Members of the Committee had visited the site and were familiar with the location and setting. The application was for the felling of 1 no. sycamore tree with a recommendation of minded to refuse, with the final decision to be made and issued through powers delegated to the Head of Planning in accordance with the Committee's direction.

The Planning Officer noted the application was as set out in the report and was at Committee at the request of the Local Member, Councillor A Napier.

The Chairman asked Mr K Todd the Applicant to speak in support of his application.

Mr K Todd thanked the Committee and noted the application was based on the proximity to residents on a bankside, with a recent tree fall having not had a great impact, though if this tree were to fall it would. He noted that the application was on behalf of his late Mother-in-law, who had been terrified of high winds, this had had a material effect on her life. He added that the tree in question could have substantial impact upon this property, as well as next door and the neighbouring substation. He added that pruning would make no significant difference and would just put off the inevitable. Mr K Todd concluded by noting that the situation was potentially catastrophic.

Councillor G Bleasdale noted she walked along this way a lot and was against the recommendation. She felt the tree was clutching the bankside and did not think there would be an objection in terms of removal if it was over an Officer's home and was against the recommendation.

Councillor J Robinson noted he was also against the recommendation and felt, as it was within a group of trees, its removal would not be too much of a visual impact. He added that paragraph 6 noted compensation and he noted the potential of what might happen if the tree were to come down. He felt there was no option other than to overturn the recommendation.

Councillor G Bleasdale moved that the application be approved; she was seconded by Councillor J Robinson.

Councillor A Laing added that she was glad that the tree was not in her garden and that she was sure it would have to come down at some point

The Chair clarified that the final decision would be with the Head of Planning.

The Planning Officer noted a condition to replant could be included if Members were minded, however Members noted this was not required.

RESOLVED

That Members were **MINDED TO APPROVE** the application, subject standard conditions with the final decision to be made and issued through powers delegated to the Head of Planning.

e DM/17/01827/FPA - Magdalene Gardens, Gilesgate Moor

The Senior Planning Officer, Chris Baxter, gave a detailed presentation on the report relating to the abovementioned planning application, a copy of which had been circulated (for copy see file of minutes). Members noted that the written report was supplemented by a visual presentation which included photographs of the site. The Senior Planning Officer advised that Members of the Committee had visited the site and were familiar with the location and setting. The application was for a retaining wall and was recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

The Senior Planning Officer noted the application was as set out in the report and was retrospective as the wall had already been constructed, with permission now sought. He added that a handrail on the steps had yet to be completed and piling had been used to stabilise the land, with gabion baskets placed up against the retaining wall for visual impact.

The Chairman asked Parish Councillor B Howarth to speak on behalf of Belmont Parish Council in objection to the application.

Parish Councillor B Howarth noted the Parish had requested that the application come before Committee, with the first wall not being part of the original application, rather noticed by the vigilance of the public. She added the previous baskets were of superior design and the piling work had been done well. Parish Councillor B Howarth noted that in light of information posted on a website the Parish felt that concerns to be raised included the impact on Footpath No.5, with a closure. It was added that they had been assured that this would be reinstated. Parish Councillor B Howarth added that the steps were a short steep flight, albeit with a concession in terms of a handrail, the public right of way had not been diverted.

Parish Councillor B Howarth noted that the Parish Council wanted the wall to succeed and welcomed the opportunity to discuss at a site meeting. She added that the wall was underway before the application was submitted, and asked how such major development feature could go ahead without permission. She concluded that the report referred to strict accordance with plans and conditions.

The Senior Planning Officer noted that it was recommended that works not be undertaken before permission was granted, though there were unique circumstances in terms of a wall that was required to be removed. The Developer subsequently made the decision to proceed as they felt it was essential structurally for the protection of residents already living there.

The Highways Development Manager noted the original structure had been approved, however a water pipe failure had changed the capacity of the ground to support the gabion baskets. He added it was not unusual to find steps on a public right of way and was satisfied in terms of that aspect.

Mr M Butcher, representing the Applicant, Avant Homes reiterated the comments in terms of the works being carried out in order to secure the land and prevent any further damage.

Councillor K Corrigan moved that the application be approved; she was seconded by Councillor A Laing.

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions detailed in the Officer's report to the Committee, as amended.

f DM/17/01983/FPA - Site Of The Former The Royal Arms, Yoden Road, Peterlee

The Senior Planning Officer, Chris Baxter, gave a detailed presentation on the report relating to the abovementioned planning application, a copy of which had been circulated (for copy see file of minutes). Members noted that the written report was supplemented by a visual presentation which included photographs of the site. The application was for the erection of 12no. two bedroom flats and was recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

The Senior Planning Officer noted further information had been submitted in terms of contamination and therefore condition 9 could be removed. He added that an updated layout in terms of parking had been submitted and therefore condition 2 would be updated. He also noted that at paragraph 50 it stated £2,400 towards Durham Heritage Coast Management Plan, and this should have read £3,000 as set out within the recommendation. The Senior Planning Officer concluded by noting paragraph 61 referred to a public art contribution and this would be removed.

The Chairman noted no speakers in relation to the application and asked Members of the Committee for their comments.

Councillor A Laing noted as a Local Member that people had been waiting to get rid of this site and was delighted to move approval of the application.

Councillor A Laing moved that the application be approved; she was seconded by Councillor S Iveson.

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions detailed in the Officer's report to the Committee with changes identified by the Planning Officer, and to a 106 agreement as detailed.

g DM/17/02004/VOC - Land To The South Of Crowtrees Lane, Bowburn

The Senior Planning Officer, Chris Baxter, gave a detailed presentation on the report relating to the abovementioned planning application, a copy of which had been circulated (for copy see file of minutes). Members noted that the written report was supplemented by a visual presentation which included photographs of the site. The application was for variation of Condition 2 of planning permission DM/14/02309/FPA to remove a footpath link onto the A177, and was recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

The Senior Planning Officer noted there were no updates further to the agenda papers.

The Chairman asked Local Member, Councillor J Blakey to speak in objection to the application.

Councillor J Blakey thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak and noted that in reference to the original application that the footpath was the selling point as it removed the dangers for children walking to school. She added that historically the public right of way was not registered, however was used as such for workers to the quarry and National Coal Board workshops that existed at the time. Councillor J Blakey noted the application had come back to Committee with the nice bits taken out and while she could appreciate that some things can change in terms of an application she would ask the Committee to refuse this application.

The Chairman asked Local Member, Councillor M McKeon to speak in objection to the application.

Councillor M McKeon noted the large number of affordable homes and added that if those residents did not own a car then they would find it hard to get to the appropriate bus stop. She added that there was commerce to the west and new development in Bowburn. She concluded by noting that local people were annoyed and there would be a loss to the public if the application was approved.

The Chairman asked Mr G Metcalf on behalf of the Applicant, to speak in support of the application.

Mr G Metcalf noted the footpath as shown on the slides was in the incorrect location and was in fact between two houses accessing farmland. Clarification was sought as regards its exact location and the Committee were updated accordingly. He added that it was possible that the fence could be kept up and access would have been denied.

Mr G Metcalf noted that the Applicant had initially explored the footpath link, in third party ownership, and upon further investigation it was covered in vegetation and trees and un-accessible, indeed a risk to residents because of the condition. He noted there would be a need to lay additional flags and improve access across the verge. There was a need to maintain safety for visitors to the site and to not encourage any potential anti-social behaviour. Mr G Metcalf added that the development was Secure by Design and had been built in accordance with this, developers being liable for any ongoing cost.

The Senior Planning Officer noted the footpath up to the boundary on the original plan and noted the hardstanding area which was in third party ownership. He noted no objections either from the Highways Agency. He added the only requirement on the Developer was to provide hardstanding to the boundary and providing an opening in the fence.

Councillor P Jopling asked if the footpath had been used for generations was there a right of way issue if it was taken away, despite not being officially on a map.

The Solicitor - Planning and Development noted that whether the route had become a public right of way was not an issue for this Committee to determine. The issue before Members was whether condition 2 should be removed or retained.

Councillor M McGaun queried whether homes had been sold on the proviso that a footpath be provided. It was noted that this had been the case and some residents were of an understanding that a short-cut would be provided.

Councillor J Robinson noted there was nothing in the Applicant's statement that suggested that they did not know what they were signing up to, else what was the point of conditions. He asked if a decision could be made today and the Solicitor advised that it could be; either the condition was necessary in which case the application could be refused or it was unnecessary in which case it could be approved.

Councillor J Robinson said that he has not heard anything to persuade him that it was necessary to remove the condition and therefore moved that the application be refused and the Applicant adhere to the original conditions.

He was seconded by Councillor A Laing.

RESOLVED

That the application be **REFUSED**.

h DM/17/02275/OUT - Land To The West Of Hawkstone Lodge, High Hesleden

The Senior Planning Officer, Chris Baxter, gave a detailed presentation on the report relating to the abovementioned planning application, a copy of which had been circulated (for copy see file of minutes). Members noted that the written report was supplemented by a visual presentation which included photographs of the site. The application was an outline application for the erection of a detached dwelling with all matters reserved and was recommended for refusal.

The Senior Planning Officer noted that the application was as per the report, with a 38 signature petition in support of the application having also been received.

The Chairman asked Local Member, Councillor L Pounder to speak in support of the application.

Councillor L Pounder thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak and noted that she spoke on behalf of herself, Councillor R Crute and the 38 people in support of the application. She noted that the applicant wished to retire to this property and that the site was that of a former smithy, with evidence of this still at the site. She added that it falls within the settlement boundary and suggested that in effect the site was brownfield and so therefore could be considered for new development and included as part of the hamlet.

Councillor L Pounder added that the neighbouring settlements were larger, medium sized villages and towns and that the Council acknowledged the need for more housing.

She added it was in a sustainable location and would add to the patronage of The Ship Inn as well as other community venues such as the play-park, school and shops. Councillor L Pounder added that she felt the application was compliant with Paragraph 55 of the NPPF, would fill a social role and add to the health and vibrancy for future generations. She noted a similar application at Castle Eden in 2012, a Class Tier 6 hamlet, and only seems logical to be acceptable at High Hesleden also, with a presumption in favour of sustainable development. She added this other application would have been approved at appeal.

Councillor L Pounder noted that the Council could not demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land and this application would contribute to such supply and added there would be no detrimental impact upon amenities or neighbouring properties.

Councillor L Pounder concluded by noting in terms of Paragraph 14 of the NPPF she felt there was no demonstrable impact from this application, on planning balance.

The Chairman asked Mr C Pipe to speak on behalf of the Applicant in support of the application.

Ms C Pipe noted there had been no objections received, there would be no adverse effect and the site was that of the former smithy and therefore was an integral part of the village. She added that the report noted that the application would support services in neighbouring villages and added that the local pub in High Hesleden needed the support to help keep facilities and services going. She referred to other similar applications which had been approved, where in those cases it had been miles to the nearest schools and shops, and also some applications similar had been approved at appeal. Ms C Pipe respectfully asked that the Committee approve the application.

The Chairman asked Mr J Brewis, the Applicant to speak in support of the application.

Mr J Brewis noted he had lived all his life in the village and wanted to move from the large family farm, to slow down and retire, noting no family to take over at the farm.

The Chairman asked Members of the Committee for their comments on the application.

Councillor P Jopling noted she could not see how the Committee could refuse the application, with issue of using a car to get there being ridiculous. Councillor G Bleasdale also saw no reason to refuse the application.

It was noted that if the application was to be approved there would need to be a suite of conditions attached to the permission.

The Senior Planning Officer suggested that the issue of conditions be delegated to the Officers, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, to include issues such as: standard timescales; reserved matters details; approval of the plan; contamination condition, standard further investigation works; together with a Section 106 agreement to secure an ecology contribution towards the Durham Heritage Coast Management Plan.

Councillor P Jopling moved that the application be approved; she was seconded by Councillor G Bleasdale.

RESOLVED

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to conditions being agreed by Officers in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, and subject to a 106 agreement as identified by the Planning Officer.