

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **Area Planning Committee (South and West)** held in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Spennymoor on **Thursday 23 November 2017 at 2.00 pm**

### **Present:**

**Councillor H Nicholson (Chairman)**

### **Members of the Committee:**

Councillors J Atkinson, D Bell, L Brown, J Clare (Vice-Chairman), C Martin, A Patterson, G Richardson, L Taylor and S Zair

#### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Huntington, Shuttleworth and Tinsley.

#### **2 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute Members in attendance.

Councillor Nicholson reminded Members of the Committee that they should try, wherever possible, to appoint a substitute Member if they were unable to attend the meeting.

#### **3 Declarations of Interest**

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

#### **4 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **5 DM/17/02794/FPA - South Church Care Home, 21 Auckland Road, Bishop Auckland**

The Committee considered a report of the Senior Planning Officer regarding an application for the conversion of a nursing home into 12 residential units at South Church Care Home, 21 Auckland Road, Bishop Auckland (for copy see file of Minutes).

L Eden, Senior Planning Officer gave a detailed presentation of the application which included a site location plan, aerial photograph of the site, a site photographs, proposed site plan, proposed elevations and internal layouts.

Councillor Richardson referred to the site being in a flood risk zone and asked how this would be managed and whether there was an ongoing flood risk. Councillor Nicholson informed Councillor Richardson that approximately 8 years ago the Environment Agency had carried out an £8m flood defence scheme to address flooding issues. The Senior Planning Officer added that because the site was within an area designated within flood zones 2 and 3 the Environment Agency was consulted as a statutory consultee. While the Environment Agency initially objected to the application, this had subsequently been withdrawn following the introduction of the proposed Condition 9 of the planning permission.

Councillor Clare informed the Senior Planning Officer that Members of the Committee had received an email about the application conflicting with Policy BE14 of the Wear Valley District Local Plan and sought clarification on this and also asked whether Policy BE14 was relevant to the application.

The Senior Planning Officer replied that the area of land covered by Policy BE14 was larger than the application site. The application only related to the existing former care home site and would have no impact on the wider space, indeed the site would be enhanced by an increase in green space.

Councillor Atkinson referred to the possible danger of pedestrians crossing the road at the site and asked whether there could be any future costs associated with the development to make a safe road crossing. The Senior Planning Officer replied that highways officers had been consulted on the application and had raised no issues, with the existing access point and parking arrangements being acceptable.

Councillor Brown asked why a tree survey had not been carried out as advised by the Arboricultural officer. The Senior Planning Officer replied that at the pre-application stage the applicant had been encouraged to carry out a tree survey but this was not forthcoming. Trees could be removed from the site without causing overall harm and tree protection was conditioned at Condition 7 and landscaping at Condition 6.

Councillor Patterson considered it was good that the application would bring an empty building back into use. She was pleased that conditions for cladding and exterior render were included in proposed permission and **moved** approval of the application.

**Seconded** by Councillor Clare and

**Resolved:**

That the application be approved subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure a financial contribution totalling £24,310 towards offsite open space and recreational provision and the conditions contained in the report.