

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE (CENTRAL AND EAST DURHAM)**

At a Meeting of **Area Planning Committee (Central and East Durham)** held in Council Chamber - Easington Locality Office, Seaside Lane, Easington on **Tuesday 8 March 2011 at 1.00 pm**

#### **Present:**

**Councillor C Walker (Chair)**

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

Councillors M Plews (Vice-Chair), J Blakey, G Bleasdale, D Boyes (substitute for J Moran), P Charlton and D Freeman

#### **Apologies:**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Bailey, A Bell, S Iveson, R Liddle, J Moran and K Thompson

#### **Also Present:**

A Dobie (Principal Planning Officer - Easington Area Office), A Simpson (Development Control Manager - Durham Area Office), N Carter (Solicitor - Planning and Development), G Folley (Planning Officer - Easington Area Office), A Glenwright (Highways Officer) and P Nicholson (Committee Services Officer)

#### **1 Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 22 February 2011.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2011 were confirmed as a correct record by the committee and signed by the Chair.

#### **2 Declarations of Interest (if any).**

Councillors Blakey and Plews declared a personal interest in Application 4/10/955/FPA as they were both members of the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee.

#### **3 Applications to be determined by the Area Planning Committee (Central & East Durham).**

##### **3a PL/5/2011/0034 - Site of Former Aged Miners Hostel, Salters Lane, Shotton Colliery, DN6 2JQ.**

Consideration was given to the report of the Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) which recommended the application for refusal. The Principal Planning Officer explained that Members had visited the site that day, and gave a detailed

presentation on the main issues outlined in the report and sought members approval to amend the refusal reason which was agreed.

Councillor Todd the Divisional Ward Member was unable to attend the meeting so he submitted a letter in support of the proposed development which was read out by the Principal Planning Officer and circulated to members at the meeting.

He supported the application primarily on the current state of the vacant site which was previously a Miner's Hostel and had been in derelict condition for some time and that the proposed development would tidy up what was an extremely unsightly area which lay at one of the main entrances to Shotton Colliery. The application was for a small number of properties that should not have any real significant impact on housing provision itself, but would undoubtedly tidy up the site. Although the site was outside the settlement boundary, properties did lie to the north of the proposed development.

Mr W Scorer speaking in support of the application gave a powerpoint presentation and indicated that they were a specialised company that dealt with difficult sites and that they had a proven track record of success.

The site in question was previously terraced housing and the site of the former Aged Miners Hostel. He also indicated that Shotton extended beyond the line and that foundations could be clearly seen on the site, therefore the site was brownfield.

The policy reasons for refusal were based on the District of Easington Local Plan 2001 which was out of date and the County Durham Plan which had not yet been agreed.

He referred to the need to deliver new homes in an area starved of new property development. He went on to say that a dangerous structure had been demolished on the site to resolve a long standing problem. He also referred to the fact that they had withdrawn the original application and that they were never advised that the scheme would not receive support and that it would be refused on policy grounds.

He indicated that the development would provide benefits to Shotton with low cost housing to retain local people in a village which would give local people an opportunity to invest in their local community as well as supporting local services and local labour involved in the building process and asked that the application be approved.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that the Developers track record had no bearing on the consideration of the current proposal. The most recent demolition took place in 2006 and that the policies were old but were still relevant and part of the up to date development plan. He was not aware that the Council encouraged the developers and that discussions were underway before the building was demolished. The site was now considered as a new build.

Councillor Boyes indicated that he did not agree with developing outside the settlement boundary but this site was unsightly and proposed that the application be approved.

Councillor Charlton indicated that the site had been previously used as a living area and that there was currently an occupied caravan on site and seconded that the application be approved.

Members agreed unanimously to grant delegated powers to the Principal Planning Officer to determine the conditions to be attached.

**Resolved:** That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions and the Principal Planning Officer be authorised to formulate those conditions.

**Reasons for Decision:** The area had previously been a living area and there was an occupied caravan currently on the site. The site was brownfield reasonably close to Shotton and the development would tidy up an unsightly area. It was therefore considered that the benefits of the development would outweigh any planning harm arising from the conflict with policy.

**3b 4/10/948/VOC - The Former Newton Hall, Carr House Drive, Newton Hall, Durham, DH1 5LT.**

Consideration was given to the report of the Development Control Manager (Durham City Area Office) which recommended the application for approval. The Development Control Manager gave a detailed presentation on the main issues outlined in the report.

**Resolved:** That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions contained in the report.

**3c 4/10/955/FPA - Durham Crematorium, South Road, Durham, DH1 3TQ.**

Consideration was given to the report of the Development Control Manager (Durham City Area Office) which recommended the application for approval. The Development Control Manager gave a detailed presentation on the main issues outlined in the report and advised members that since the report was written it had become apparent that the crematorium lies within the Durham Green Belt and an Area of Landscape Value. Accordingly, the proposed work to be carried out must be measured against Local Plan Policies E1 and E10.

Policy E1.2 allows the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt for essential facilities associated with cemeteries and Durham Crematorium lies within such a land use and was closely associated with it. Accordingly, this application was in line with a development permissible within a Green Belt and there would be no impact upon openness.

Policy E10 allows development within Areas of High Landscape Value provided that no demonstrable harm results. This proposal, due to its size and well contained location, would have no such impact. As a result, this policy's objectives had been met.

The Chairman advised members that they were unable to visit the site as funerals were taking place.

Councillor Plews indicated that the development was required due to legislation requiring the removal of mercury from crematorium emissions by January 2012 and if not met a financial penalty would be imposed. She asked members to support her and approve the application.

**Resolved:** That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions contained in the report.

#### **4 Appeal Update.**

##### **Appeal Decision**

The Principal Planning Officer (Easington Area Office) gave details in relation to the following appeal, which had been considered by the Planning Inspectorate.

**(i) Appeals by Mr Michael Wilson  
Site at 2 Bath Terrace, Seaham, SR7 7EZ  
Planning Reference- PL/5/2010/0260 and PL/5/2010/0261**

Appeals were lodged against the Council's refusal of planning permission and Listed Building Consent for the retrospective erection of decking and balustrade on top of an existing garage/workshop at the site. Previously permission was refused, under delegated powers, because of its size, design and location which resulted in an excessive and unduly prominent form of development, which was detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and Listed Building as well as adversely affecting the residential amenities enjoyed by the occupants of adjoining and nearby properties in terms of visual intrusion, overlooking and loss of privacy. It was therefore considered that the proposed development was contrary to Local and National Planning Policy.

Both appeals were allowed and a condition requiring that details of the balustrade be submitted and completed in accordance with submitted plans was attached to the decision.

The appeal was allowed as the Inspectorate considered that, due to the separation of the Listed building from the structure, there was no harmful impact upon the setting of the Listed building. In addition it was considered that the works sit comfortably with the existing garden features, and would therefore not adversely impact upon the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. It was also considered due to the open nature of the garden areas that the decking would not adversely impact upon the current levels of privacy enjoyed at the site.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.