

# Planning Services

## COMMITTEE REPORT

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### APPLICATION DETAILS

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APPLICATION NO: 7/2011/0214/DM  
FULL APPLICATION DESCRIPTION: DEMOLITION OF FORMER SOCIAL CLUB AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF 60 BED NURSING HOME  
NAME OF APPLICANT: GAINFORD CAREHOMES  
ADDRESS: FORMER SOUTHERNE SOCIAL CLUB, HAWKSHEAD PLACE, NEWTON AYCLIFFE  
ELECTORAL DIVISION: AYCLIFFE WEST  
  
DAVID GIBSON  
CASE OFFICER: [David.gibson@durham.gov.uk](mailto:David.gibson@durham.gov.uk)

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### DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSALS

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1. The site lies to the south of Burnhill Way and to the north of Hawkshead Place. A large building occupies the centre of the site. The building is largely surrounded by car parking with additional car parking to the west of the building. Access is gained from a road to the south of the site. The building is vacant and has been for some time. Its last use was as a Social Club. Numerous residents have commented verbally that this club used to cause late night disturbance at closing time with people leaving the premises and taxis beeping their horns and car doors slamming.
2. The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a 60 bed care home which will occupy the centre of the site. On site car parking and amenity space will be incorporated into the scheme within the site. The scheme is predominantly a two storey structure with additional rooms placed in sections of the roof space. The elevations consist of facing brickwork of differing colours which successfully breaks up the flat façade of the elevations and seeks to be in keeping with the surrounding area.
3. This application is reported to committee as it falls within the definition of a major development.

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### PLANNING HISTORY

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4. 7/2009/0083/DM – Change of use to B1/B8 - APPROVED

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### PLANNING POLICY

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#### 5. NATIONAL POLICY:

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development sets out the Governments overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system.

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing sets out the governments policies on housing development. Presumption in favour of development is given for schemes that are on brownfield land within existing settlements.

Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system

Planning Policy Guidance note 13: Transport sets out the governments policies on transport with particular emphasis on reducing the dependence on the use of the private car

Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy sets out the governments policies on the use of renewable energies

*The above represents a summary of those policies considered most relevant. The full text can be accessed at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/planningpolicystatements>*

## **6. REGIONAL POLICY:**

The North East of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS) July 2008, sets out the broad spatial development strategy for the North East region for the period of 2004 to 2021. The RSS sets out the region's housing provision and the priorities in economic development, retail growth, transport investment, the environment, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. Some policies have an end date of 2021 but the overall vision, strategy, and general policies will guide development over a longer timescale.

Policy 2 (Sustainable Development) sets out that proposals should seek to promote sustainable development through social, economic and environmental objectives.

Policy 3 (Climate Change) sets out the regional policy on contributing to the mitigation of climate change and assisting adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

Policy 4 (Sequential Approach to Development) provides that a sequential approach to the identification of land for development should be adopted to give priority to previously developed land and buildings in the most sustainable locations.

Policy 7 (Connectivity and Accessibility) seeks to minimize the need to travel by promoting public transport, travel plans, cycling and walking. Green Travel Plans are encouraged.

Policy 8 (Protecting and Enhancing the Environment) seeks to protect and enhance the environment. This in part should be achieved through promoting high quality design in all development and that it should be sympathetic to the surrounding area.

Policy 24 (Delivering Sustainable Communities) seeks to ensure that all development within the Region should be designed and located to deliver sustainable communities.

Policy 35 (Flood Risk) requires consideration to be given to the flood risk implications of development proposals.

Policy 38 (Sustainable Construction) sets out the regional policy to support sustainable construction in planning proposals.

Policy 39 (Renewable Energy Generation) requires at least 10% of the energy requirements of development proposals to be met by decentralized and renewable or low carbon sources.

*The above represents a summary of those policies considered most relevant. The full text can be accessed at: <http://www.gos.gov.uk/nestore/docs/planning/rss/rss.pdf>*

## **7. LOCAL PLAN POLICY:**

As this application is located within the former Sedgefield Borough Council area the Local Plan Policies are contained within the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan (1996).

Policy D1 General Principles for the Layout and Design of New Developments sets out several key principles for the layout and design of new developments.

Policy D2 Design for People requires developments to take account of personal safety and security of property, access needs of users and provision of appropriate facilities such as toilets, baby changing facilities, public seating etc.

Policy D3 Designed with pedestrians, cyclists, public transport aims to ensure that new developments are accessible and safe for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, cars and other vehicles.

Policy H18 Acceptable Uses in housing areas sets out which uses are acceptable in housing areas. The policy specifically mentions residential institutions.

Policy H22 Sheltered Accommodation, Residential Care home and nursing homes, states that care homes should normally be sited within existing towns providing they do not have an adverse impact on adjacent land users.

Policy T1 Footpaths and Cycleways in towns and villages ensures that safe, attractive and convenient footpaths and cycleways are provided.

*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://www2.sedgefield.gov.uk/planning/SBCindex.htm>*

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## **CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES**

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### **STATUTORY RESPONSES:**

8. Northumbrian Water Limited has not responded to the consultation.
9. The Highway Authority has not raised any objections to the proposal. Conditions have been requested relating to improving site lines, a disabled footway and improvements to the bus stop.

### **INTERNAL RESPONSES:**

10. Environmental Health Section has no objections to the development.
11. The Low Carbon Section advise that an appropriate low carbon condition should be imposed on any planning permission.
12. The Ecology Section has no objections to the development, subject to a condition being required to ensure that the works are carried out in accordance with the method statement.

### **PUBLIC RESPONSES:**

13. Two letters were received with regards to this development. The letters are available to view on the application file but are summarised below.

14. The occupiers of 14 Hoode Close would prefer to see a well managed pub to increase the choice in the area for places to eat and drink.
15. The occupiers of 97 Hawkeshead Place welcome the proposal and think it is a vast improvement for the site, but would like to see some form of traffic management in the area.

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## **APPLICANTS STATEMENT**

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16. The applicant has not provided a statement in support of this application.

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## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT**

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17. In assessing the proposals against the requirements of the aforementioned planning policies, and having regard to all material planning considerations the main planning considerations in this case concern the principle of the development, the impacts on neighbouring properties, the surrounding environment, protected species, the highway network, and energy efficiency.

### **Principle of the development**

18. PPS3, Paragraph 20 states that the key characteristics of a mixed community are a variety of housing, particularly in terms of tenure and price and a mix of different households such as families with children, single person households and older people. Nursing homes should be encouraged within urban areas as they contribute towards the diversity and mix of housing types available.
19. PPS3, Paragraph 9 states that the Government believes that it is important to help create sustainable communities in all areas, which offer a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the requirements of the community. Local Planning Authorities should encourage new housing developments that help to secure a better social mix by avoiding the creation of large areas of housing with similar characteristics. Therefore, the location of a residential car home within an existing settlement will help contribute towards this aim. This policy is echoed in the Regional Spatial Strategy Policy 2 which ensures that development is sustainable.
20. Policy H22 of the Local Plan allows for the development of nursing homes within Newton Aycliffe provided that the development provides satisfactory vehicular access, parking, servicing and amenity areas in accordance with Policies D3 and D5. In order to be considered acceptable, the development should not adversely affect the amenity of nearby residents and its location is such that noise and disturbance from existing surrounding uses would not be detrimental to residents.

### **Design and Layout**

21. The surrounding buildings are a mixture of new build house and flats and older terraced houses built in the 1970's as part of the New Town Development. The dwellings have a mixture of roof styles and a mixture of materials.
22. The design of the Nursing Home proposes two main floors and room in the roof space for use by the residents which is made up of bedrooms, dayrooms, dining room and ancillary bathrooms etc. all on the same level to enable easy movement throughout the building for the elderly residents. The top floor is built partly into the roof space to keep the overall height to a minimum. It is considered that the treatment of the external

elevations especially those fronting onto Burnhill Way have been designed to fit in with the relative height and massing of the adjacent blocks of housing and shops. The roofline of the building is broken up with 3 gable features. The fenestration and detail is generally simple and in keeping whilst not imitating the surrounding architecture of the existing streetscene and the wider area. Proposed materials on the external walls are to include contrasting brick work and tiles break up the flat façade of the building, therefore adding to the design and character of the building.

23. The proposed building is set into the middle of the site with car parking to the rear and amenity space to the front and sides. On the North East side a resident's garden area provides a larger amenity space where residents can sit out. It is considered that the amenity space is of a sufficient size and quality for the elderly residents and will help provide a private space in which to relax while not being so expansive as to give the impression of being open and unsecured. A landscaping condition has been imposed requesting full details of all soft landscaping features in order to minimise the visual impact of the development and to add further character to the site. This is considered to accord with Policy D1 of the Adopted Local Plan.

### **Impacts on the neighbouring residents**

24. The proposed development will replace an old derelict building that attracts anti-social behaviour and has a detrimental impact on the appearance of the area. This building will be removed and replaced with a high quality development that will improve the character and appearance of the area.
25. The proposed building will be located over 22 metres from the side elevation of the properties to the south on Hawkshead Place. These properties face west so will not look out directly onto the building. The properties directly to the east of the proposed development are located 17 metres away. These properties are orientated south east to north west so do not look directly onto the proposed building. The properties that look directly onto the proposed scheme are located over 35 metres away to the north east. The rear elevation looks onto the proposed development. It is considered that due to the separation distances involved and the orientation of the properties it is considered that this scheme will not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the neighbouring residents. The scheme will not lead to any additional overlooking or overshadowing and fully accords with the H22 and D1 within the Adopted Local Plan.

### **Impacts on Protected Species**

26. As the Southerne Social Club will be demolished it was considered that the development may have an impact on Bats, which are a species protected by law. PPS9 states that Local Planning Authorities need to ensure that developments do not have an adverse impact on Protected Species.
27. A reasoned risk assessment was therefore requested to be submitted as part of the application so the impacts of the development on protected species could be fully assessed. Following the submission of the risk assessment, the Ecology Section is satisfied that the development will not have an adverse impact on any protected species; however, a condition has been requested to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the mitigation outlined in the risk assessment. This will ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with PPS9.

### **Impacts on the Highway Network**

28. Nineteen car parking spaces will be provided as part of the scheme. Two cycle racks will also be provided adjacent to the main entrance. The number of car parking spaces is considered reasonable by the Highways Authority.

29. In order to ensure a satisfactory development the Highway Authority has requested a number of planning conditions be placed on any permission. These relate to a disabled footway which will link the development to the properties on Hawkshead Place, works to the bus stop to produce a raised curb to help with disabled access and the setting back of the entrance gate to ensure adequate sight visibility.
30. Subject to these conditions being fulfilled the development is considered to accord with Adopted Local Plan Policies D1 and T1 and the development is therefore considered acceptable from a highways perspective.

### **Energy Efficiency**

31. The application makes no detailed reference to the inclusion of embedded renewable energy generation nor does it demonstrate how the development would assist in reducing energy consumption. This is not in the spirit of the policies within the Regional Spatial Strategy which requires the incorporation of 10% embedded renewable energy in major new developments of all types. This proposal would therefore benefit from the incorporation of energy efficiency measures and embedded renewable energy generation and this could be achieved by imposition of an appropriate condition as suggested by the Low Carbon Team. This is in accordance with Policy 39 (Renewable Energy Generation) of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

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## **CONCLUSION**

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32. It is considered that the proposal will add diversity to the housing tenure in Newton Aycliffe and will contribute towards creating a socially inclusive community and will make efficient use of a previously developed site in an existing urban area. The development provides satisfactory vehicular access and parking, servicing and amenity areas so therefore accords with relevant policies of the adopted Local Plan. The proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking or overbearing impact and will not have a detrimental impact on the character of the streetscene. It is considered that the proposal will improve the character of the area due to its high standard of design and will help to regenerate a brownfield site.

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

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1. The development hereby approved shall be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.
  2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:  
30-113/BP  
38-113\_02A  
38-113\_03A  
38-113\_04A  
38-113\_05A  
38-113\_08
  3. Notwithstanding any description of the materials in the application, no development shall be commenced until details of the materials and detailing to be used for the external surfaces, including the roof and render colour, of the building have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
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4. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping which shall include details of hard and soft landscaping, planting species, sizes, layout, densities, numbers, method of planting and maintenance regime, as well as indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. The landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

5. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first available planting season following the practical completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the substantial completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

6. There shall be no discharge of foul or contaminated drainage from the site into either groundwater or any surface waters, whether direct or via soakaways.

7. Site works (including deliveries and temporary site generators shall not be carried out on the premises outside the hours of 08.00 hours to 18:00 hours Monday to Friday, and 09.00 hours to 14.00 hours on a Saturday nor at any time on Sundays, Bank Holidays or Public Holidays.

8. Prior to the installation of any external lights, precise details of the specification and location of the lights shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

9. Prior to commencement of development a scheme to minimise energy consumption shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall provide for 10% embedded renewable energy. Thereafter the development shall operate in accordance with the approved scheme unless otherwise agreed in writing.

10. No part of the development shall be begun on site until a scheme for the installation of off-site disabled persons pedestrian crossing points on the existing public highway, between the site and the existing shop/post office on Silverdale Place, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The off-site disabled persons pedestrian crossing points on the existing public highway, between the site and the existing shop/post office on Silverdale Place, will need to be constructed prior to the occupation of the residential care home'.

11. No part of the development shall be begun on site until a scheme for improvements to the 2 no. nearest bus stops on Williamfield Way, including the 'raised kerb installation' where necessary, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority'.

12. Prior to the commencement of development, the proposed 1.5 metres high 450mm square brick entrance pier shown on the western side of the widened access onto Hawkshead Place and the 1.5 metres high 450mm square brick entrance pier on the eastern side of the access road on Hawkshead Place, on the Landscaping & External Works plan, drg. no. 38-113/07 must be set back 500mm to the rear of the existing 1.8 metres wide public footway. Details of the exact siting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to works commencing on site.

13. No development shall take place unless in accordance with the mitigation detailed within the protected species method statement submitted with the application including, but not restricted to adherence to timing and spatial restrictions; provision of mitigation in advance and adherence to precautionary working methods.

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## **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

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The proposed residential development comprising a 60 bed nursing home would represent the efficient and effective use of previously-developed land in a highly sustainable and accessible location, close to local amenities, public transport and educational facilities. The proposals are of an appropriate design, scale, layout and materials which would not result in significant adverse affects upon the residential character of the area, the privacy of adjoining residents, flora and fauna, or detriment to highway safety. As such the proposals are considered to comply with of Policies E15, H18, H22, T1, D1, D2 and D3 of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan (which is a saved plan in accordance with the Secretary of States Direction under paragraph 1 (3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004), and Policies 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 24, 35, 38, and 39 of the North East of England Plan - Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021.

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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- Submitted Application Forms and Plans
  - Planning Policy Statement/Guidance notes: PPS1, PPS3, PPS9, PPG13 and PPS22
  - Regional Spatial Strategy Policies 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 24, 35, 38, and 39
  - Sedgefield Borough Local Plan 1996
  - Responses from Highway Authority, Low carbon Section, Environmental Health section and Low carbon Section
-