

**At a meeting of the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (HETTON, HOUGHTON AND WASHINGTON) SUB-COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on WEDNESDAY, 30<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2013 at 5.45 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Thompson in the Chair

Councillors Davison, Heron, Lauchlan, Padgett, Richardson, Scaplehorn, Scott, Wakefield and Walker

**Declarations of Interest**

13/02594/LAP – Replace existing timber perimeter fencing with 1.8m high galvanised steel palisade fencing

Councillors Richardson and Scott made an open declaration in the above application as Chairmen of the Coalfields Area Committee and Coalfield Area Place Board respectively.

13/01703/FUL – Erection of a commercial / industrial building at land East of Unit 34 Crowther Road, Washington

Councillor Thompson made an open declaration in the above application as he was the ward Councillor who had requested that the item be referred to the Sub Committee for discussion and in that he wished to speak in objection to the application having predetermined the issues.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Blackburn, Tate and Wood

**Applications made under the Town and Country Planning Acts and Regulations made thereunder**

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report, supplementary report and report for circulation (copy circulated), which related to Hetton, Houghton and Washington areas, copies of which had also been forwarded to each Member of the Council, upon applications made under the Town and Country Planning Acts and Regulations made thereunder.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

**13/02442/VAR – Variation of condition 2 : Approved plans of planning approval 12/02556/REM (Approval of reserved matters (in connection with outline planning approval 11/01612/OUT) for 158 dwellings (including 10% affordable homes) and associated landscaping and infrastructure) comprising rearrangement of plots 67-70 and 82-84 and modifications to the internal highway layout at SIG Combibloc Limited, Blackthorn Way, Sedgely Industrial Estate, Houghton-le-Spring**

Members having fully considered the application, it was:-

1. RESOLVED that the application be granted approval for the reasons as detailed in the report and subject to the twenty conditions set out therein.

**13/02444/FUL - Change of use from open space to private garden with boundary enclosures, erection of shed / summerhouse, part retrospective at Thornton Cottage, Redburn Row, Houghton-le-Spring, DH4 6PX**

The representative of the Deputy Chief Executive presented the application as set out in the body of the report, summarising the issues around the principle of the development.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Ellis to the Committee who had requested to speak in objection to the application and on behalf of Mr and Mrs Chappow.

Councillor Ellis spoke to the Committee in objection to the application raising the following issues:-

- The land is public land, having been maintained for the last 40 years from the public purse and does not belong to the applicant;
- The application was retrospective as works had already taken place on the site;
- The applicant has no legal right to do works beyond the grass verge but has and continues to.

Councillor Ellis asked that the Committee refer these issues to the enforcement team within the Council for action and asked why no action had been taken against the application previously.

The Officer advised that the report set out in full the relevant matters for consideration by the Committee with regards to the application and advised that the grant of planning permission does not transfer ownership of land and that applications can be made for land that does not belong to the applicant.

Members sought clarification as to whether the land was owned by the Council and if so, should the applicant be applying to purchase or rent that land from the Council and when asked if the Council would pursue the issue around ownership of the land, the Officer advised that this would be an issue for Property Services to investigate if

seen to be necessary but that this was not a material planning consideration to be taken into account by the Committee.

Members having fully discussed the application and having had their questions answered, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the application be approved for the reasons as detailed in the report and subject to the six conditions as set out in the report.

**13/02594/LAP – Replace existing timber perimeter fencing with 1.8m high galvanised steel palisade fencing, to include 10 no pedestrian access gates and erection of 1.5m high close boarded fencing to divide plots at allotments site opposite John Street / Rear of Britannia Terrace, Fence Houses, Houghton-le-Spring**

The representative of the Deputy Chief Executive presented the application as set out in the body of the report, summarising the issues around the principle of the development.

Members welcomed the application and saw it as an improvement to the current site, and it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the application be granted consent in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations (as amended) for the reasons as set out in the report and subject to the three conditions as detailed therein.

At this juncture it was proposed that application 13/01703/FUL be moved to the final item for discussion on the agenda to allow the Chairman to remain for the remainder of the items.

**13/02390/FUL – Demolition of existing school buildings and erection of new school with associated hard and soft play areas at Usworth Grange Primary School, Marlborough Road, Sulgrave, Washington, NE37 3BG**

Members having fully considered the report, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the application be granted approval for the reasons as detailed in the report and the fifteen conditions as set out therein.

**13/02569/FUL – Change of use from Class C2 (Residential Institutions) to 28 no. flats (Class C3) and associated external alterations (AMENDED DESCRIPTION) at Fell House, Albion Terrace, Springwell, Gateshead, NE9 7RJ**

Councillor Scaplehorn sought clarification as to why the number of parking spaces had been reduced and was advised that this application was more akin to social housing and therefore did not require the same number as a housing scheme would, therefore, through discussions with the engineers they were happy with 20 spaces within the curtilage of the site.

Councillor Scaplehorn went on to say, ordinarily, he would agree with that proposal but that the area was notorious for parking issues that were already of concern in the area.

Members concerns having been taken into account, and having had their questions answered, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the application be granted approval for the reasons as detailed in the report and the three conditions as set out therein.

**13/02714/FUL – Construction of a multi-screen cinema and up to 6 no. use class A1-A5 units with associated hard and soft landscaping, servicing and amendments to existing footpath and car park including the stopping up and diversion of footpath and closure of the existing subway and provision of alternate pedestrian crossing point at Cheviot House and adjoining land, Washington Town Centre, Washington, NE37 1HE**

6. RESOLVED that the application be deferred.

**Items for Information**

7. RESOLVED that site visits be undertaken to the following planning applications:-
  - 13/00198/FUL – Land at Murton Lane / South of Firtree Lane, Easington Lane, Houghton-le-Spring;
  - 13/01617/FUL – Land East of Gillas Lane, Houghton-le-Spring; and
  - 13/00297/OUT – Land off Herrington Road / Opposite The Stables, West Herrington, Houghton-le-Spring.

At this juncture, Councillor Richardson took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

**13/01703/FUL – Erection of a commercial / industrial building (use classes B1/B2/B8) with associated works to include stopping up and change of use of existing footpath across site and to north side of Crowther Road to part of cartilage of new unit and grass verge, creation of new footpath link to Harvey Close, creation of new vehicular access onto Crowther Road, erection of new fencing and pedestrian gate, provision of soft landscaping at land east of Unit 34 Crowther Road, Crowther, Washington, NE38 0AQ**

The Chairman welcomed and introduced Councillor Thompson and Mr. Hepburn to the Committee who had come to speak in objection and favour of the application respectively.

Councillor Thompson thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak and advised that he spoke in objection to the application on behalf of his fellow ward Councillors. He explained that there were grave concerns over the closure/reroute of a footpath.

He advised Members that the Industrial Estate was a vibrant and busy one with constant vehicular movement. The application would see half of a footpath being closed which he and his ward councillors were of the opinion that it should be closure of the full footpath. If the full footpath were not closed or rerouted then it would see the remaining half of the footpath leading from a grassed, quiet area, straight into the busy car park of a busy industrial estate, with no further footpath access.

Councillor Thompson reiterated that he and his fellow ward councillors had no objections to the facility or the proposed closure to the footpath as outlined but asked that consideration be given to alternatives to the remainder footpath so as to not to draw members of the public into a busy industrial estate. He asked that the application be deferred to look at alternative solutions or a condition be added to ensure that the remainder footpath access be closed or improved.

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Hepburn to the Committee who spoke in favour of the application, stating that the application had followed three years work which had involved working in conjunction with the highways section of the Council to ensure that they hit every requirement necessary to go ahead with the application.

He explained that the new route had very little pedestrian usage and it was felt that those numbers using the route were en route to the industrial estate. He explained that they currently occupied neighbouring properties within the estate and were looking to bring in more blue chip companies to the estate.

Members having fully considered the application and representations given, it was:-

8. RESOLVED that the application be approved for the reasons as set out in the report and subject to the ten conditions detailed therein.

## **Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Appeals**

9. RESOLVED that appeals received and determined for 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2013 be received and noted.

(Signed) G. THOMPSON,  
Chairman.