

**At an Extraordinary meeting of the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (HETTON, HOUGHTON AND WASHINGTON) SUB-COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 31<sup>st</sup> JANUARY, 2012 at 5.45 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor D. Richardson in the Chair

Councillors Lauchlan, Padgett, J. Scott, Tate and Wakefield

**Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Tate declared a personal interest in application 11/02873/FUL – Plot 19C, Hetton Lyons Industrial Estate, Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton-le-Spring and Items for Information, 11/02362/OUT – Land at North Road, Hetton-le-Hole, 11/02768/OUT – The Peel Centre, Spire Road, Washington and 11/03553/FUL – Land North of Sycamore House, Louvain Terrace Weat, as a Member of Hetton Town Council, which is a consultee in the applications.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Charlton, Fletcher, Morrissey and Scaplehorn

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

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

(for copy report – see original minutes)

**11/02873/FUL – Change of use from vacant land to inert waste recycling facility comprising external aggregate production stockpile, screened soil produce and pre-screened soil and inert waste areas, a 3-way split screen, a 360° excavator, 2no. skip/container plant storage areas and associated parking (RETROSPECTIVE) (AMENDED DESCRIPTION 13.07.2011), Plot 19C, Hetton Lyons Industrial Estate, Hetton le Hole, Houghton-le-Spring**

The Chairman advised that there were three speakers for this item, Cllr Blackburn, Ms. Kay Rowham, speaking in objection to the application and Mr. Marco Muia, Oaktree Environmental Ltd. speaking on behalf of the applicant. He invited the representative of the Deputy Chief Executive to present the application as set out in the report.

The Officer took Members through the report advising that there had been representations received from residents of four neighbouring properties and two petitions. She drew the Committee's attention to the objections that had been made, the relevance of them to the application and conditions that would be in place as part of the planning permissions should Members be mindful to approve the granting of the application.

The Officer referred to complaints made regarding dirt and debris being driven on to nearby roads by the vehicles accessing the site and advised that should the application be granted a further condition would be included to have an extra wheel wash facility provided on the site.

The Chairman invited Councillor Blackburn to address the Committee who thanked Members for allowing him to speak on behalf of the residents of Hetton Ward. He explained that Hetton was an ex-coal mining village which in part had some environmental elements of industry still within it. Through the hard work of local politicians and the community they had succeeded in restoring areas such as Hetton Lyons Country Park to be enjoyed by all. It had been instrumental to securing funding to ensure the park was transposed and regained.

He advised that complaints had been received over the previous site that Alltrac owned and would register it as anti social behaviour of a commercial scale and stated that residents in and around the area deserved better and the level of community interest could be noted due to the 200+ named petition that had been handed in to the Council.

In closing, he commented that to grant this application would only be a step backwards for the ward and felt that it would set a precedent for the other 24 wards in the city. He asked the Committee to refuse the application on these grounds and on behalf of the residents within the ward.

The Chairman then invited Ms. Kay Rowham to address the Committee. Ms. Rowham advised that she also spoke in objection to the application and on behalf of 337 residents who had signed a petition regarding Unit 19C.

She commented that she felt the report was biased in favour of the applicant as they had been informed that this application was solely based on Unit 19c and issues with Unit 6, also owned by Alltrac, could not be taken into account. However, she referred to page eight of the report where Officers felt that concerns raised over there being no details of a weighbridge, storage or staff facilities being supplied could be alleviated as they were provided at the Alltrac site at Unit 6, and felt that if the report could refer to it then so should the petitioners be allowed to.

Her second objection was towards whether the Council and other agencies, such as the Environment Agency would have the sufficient resources to be able to police the fifteen conditions if the application was granted. Residents felt that experiences with the existing site at Unit 6 clearly showed that the resources were not there to enforce against issues they had so how could they be reassured that resources would be in place to cover any issues or breach of condition over two sites.

Lastly, she asked the Committee to take into account the fact that over the last two years of Unit 19C trading, and seven years of Unit 6, the applicant had never demonstrated that they were willing to comply with the conditions imposed upon them, and asked Members to refuse the planning application that was before them.

The Chairman thanked the speakers for their objections and asked Mr. Marco Muia (Agent), Oaktree Environmental Ltd to address the Committee. Mr. Muia advised that most of the points raised by the two objectors had been covered in the Officer's presentation of the report but wished to reiterate that the site was an inert waste recycling facility, situated in the middle of an industrial estate and was in accordance with the Planning Policy.

He advised that as a result of the Member's site visit that had been undertaken a request for a bund to be installed had been made which the applicant had agreed to and was now in place on site and that other alterations to the site could not be made until the application was approved and the relevant conditions in place to adhere to. At any time the Environment Agency and Planning Department had the statutory duty to enforce action against any breach of the conditions that were made on the site.

Mr. Muia advised the Committee of changes which the applicant had already made such as reduction of the operating hours of the site and the removal of a crusher and explained that the applicant was looking to carry out approximately one load per hour, with 20 loads in one day being the absolute maximum. He also advised that now that the bund was in place a further noise assessment could be undertaken.

In closing he asked the Committee to consider that prior to the planning application being made only one complaint had been made regarding Unit 19C and asked that the application be granted approval.

Members also raised concerns over the planning application and the suitability of the premises for the industrial estate due to its proximity to Hetton Lyons Country Park.

The representative of the Deputy Chief Executive outlined to Members the consequences of refusing planning permission contrary to the report recommendation which was to approve the application. He advised that the Committee would need to provide sound planning reasons on which to refuse permission, but that in any event it remained the view of the Council's Planning Officers that a refusal of permission could not be substantiated.

At this juncture the Chairman proposed a short adjournment to the meeting.

On reconvening Councillor Tate, seconded by Councillor Scott, moved that the application be refused on the grounds that the development is located adjacent to Hetton Lyons country Park which is an area of high environmental quality enjoyed by local residents and visitors, and that the proposal if allowed would detract from the visual amenity of the area and the appearance and the enjoyment of the Park. The proposed development is in a sensitive location immediately adjacent to the Park and will give rise to litter and dust which will enter the Park and which as a consequence will significantly detract from its appearance and enjoyment.

Upon being put to the vote the new substantive decision was carried with 5 Members voting in favour, viz:-

Councillors	Lauchlan Wakefield	Padgett	Scott	Tate
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and 1 Member abstaining, viz:-

Councillors D. Richardson

Accordingly, it was:-

1. RESOLVED that the application be refused for the reasons as set out above.

**11/03177/EXT1 – Application for a new planning permission to replace an extant planning permission 05/03963/SUBB in order to extend the time limit for limitation at Willows Reservoir, East of 23 Eddison Road, Swan, Washington**

2. RESOLVED that the application be deferred as requested by the applicant.

**11/03181/OUT – Outline application for the erection of 125 houses with associated landscaping and highway works with access to be determined and remaining matters reserved for future consideration at site of Emerson House, Emerson Road, Emerson, Washington**

3. RESOLVED that the application be deferred for further consideration.

**11/03537/EXT1 – Application for a new planning permission to replace an extant planning permission, in order to extend the time limit for implementation 08/03582/OUT. Application for outline planning permission for the erection of a B8 distribution unit, including detailed permission for means of access, including stopping up and diversion of public footpath and bridleway at Plot 2, Mandarin Way, Pattinson Industrial Estate, Washington**

4. RESOLVED that the application be deferred for further consideration.

## **Items for Information**

5. RESOLVED that site visits be undertaken to the following application:-

- 11/03553/FUL – Land north of Sycamore House, Louvain Terrace West, Hetton le Hole at the request of Councillor Tate.

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

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) concerning the appeals received for the period 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2011.

(for copy report – see original minutes).

6. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(Signed) D. RICHARDSON,  
Chairman.