

At a meeting of the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (HETTON, HOUGHTON AND WASHINGTON) SUB-COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 2nd JUNE, 2009 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Fletcher in the Chair

Councillors Copeland, T. Martin, Scaplehorn, J. Scott, Wake and Wakefield

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Charlton, I. Cuthbert, Miller and Snowdon.

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

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report together with a supplementary report and a circulatory 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).

09/00345/FUL – Change of use from public open space to vehicle hardstanding with associated drop curb. Erection of a retrospective fence to rear/side (amended 22.4.09)

Councillor Rolph spoke as an objector. She raised the following points:-

- The site lay in a settlement break and it was contrary to the guidance which recommended that settlement breaks be retained and enhanced.
- While the site was not designated as being open space it was surrounded by green open space and it should stay that way
- There was a need to protect the safe walking routes in the area.
- The road is safe and as such there was no need for this site to be changed to parking as the applicant would be able to safely park on the roadside.

- There would be drainage problems should the site be covered in hard surfacing.

Mr Robson, the applicant, spoke in support of the application. He advised that:-

- In his opinion the road was dangerous as it was narrow and had a 60mph speed limit. A wing mirror had been knocked off one of his vehicles which was parked on the roadside. He felt it was only a matter of time before there was a serious accident.
- He had improved the appearance of the area by landscaping the site and he had received positive comments about the improvements he had made.
- Planning Policy CN6 allowed for minor increases to gardens and his neighbours had all been allowed to extend their gardens.

The representative of the Director of Development and Regeneration addressed these comments. He advised that the highways engineers had used assessments and statistics to determine whether the road was safe and there had been no evidence to support the contention of danger. While there would be visual improvements the development would still be contrary to planning policy. Policy CN6 did allow for minor extensions to gardens however it did not allow extensions into settlement breaks. As such the recommendation was to refuse planning permission.

1. RESOLVED that the application was refused for the reasons set out in the report.

09/00880/OUT Erection of a building comprising 9 no. two bedroom apartments and 7 no. one bedroom apartments.

Cllr J Fletcher queried the layout of the access and the effect on road safety.

The representative of the Director of Development and Regeneration indicated that the application was in outline but that access was to be determined at this stage and that the highway engineering advice was that although there would be an increase in traffic over current levels it was unlikely to be as great as that generated by previous use of the site as a bingo hall and children's play facility. The access was not considered to raise highway safety issues. The recommendation was to approve the application with conditions as set out, except for a revised condition 16

2. RESOLVED that the application be approved for the reasons set out in the report and subject to the 23 conditions set out therein. Conditions 2 and 16 of which being amended to state 2: Details of the following matters (hereinafter referred to as the reserved matters) – Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in order to ensure a satisfactory form of development and to comply with policies B2 and T14 of the Unitary Development Plan

16. No development shall commence on site until precise details of the layout of the access road serving the development hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt this shall comprise precise details of the access road adjacent to the south-eastern corner and eastern boundary of the application site. The submitted scheme shall include minimum radii of 6 metres on the highway adjacent to the south-eastern

boundary of the development site and a minimum 1.8m verge/footway with associated street lighting and drainage works adjacent to the access road, unless otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Once agreed, the approved (access road) scheme shall be fully completed to the adoptable standard of the Local Highway Authority, in order to achieve a satisfactory form of development on site and in the interests of highway safety and to comply with the requirements of Policy T14 of the adopted UDP

09/01187/SUB – Erection of 303 dwellings and associated garages, roads, landscaping, open space, new access road to retained employments area, refurbishment and change of use of listed former Power Station building to mixed commercial use (D2, B2, A1, A2, A3 and A4) refurbishment of a further five listed buildings and stopping up of highway and change of use to residential/commercial use (Amended Description)

09/01189/LBC – Refurbishment and change of use of listed former Power Station building to mixed commercial use (D2, B2, A1, A2, A3 and A4) refurbishment of a further five listed buildings and stopping up of highway and change of use to residential / commercial use.

The Representative of the Director of Development and Regeneration advised that the application site was in two wards, Shiney Row, as stated in the report and also Copt Hill.

The Members expressed concerns relating to access to the site and the impact on the surrounding road network.

Councillor Wakefield advised that the vehicle access into the site would be fundamentally the same as it already is however with the increase in traffic which would be caused it would result in the junction being unsafe. He felt that Voltage Terrace should not be changed to be a through road as it had always been a cul-de-sac. The turning circle for buses looked like it was intended to be a roundabout to provide access to the field behind the site. He felt that the allotments should be retained and felt that there would be problems from mixing residential land with industry.

Councillor Scaplehorn asked whether there was a need for the houses. The representative of the Director of Development and Regeneration advised that although there was a recession house builders were still looking for sites and there needed to be a supply of housing land.

Councillor Wakefield commented that the listed buildings should be looked at to see whether they were worth protecting as over time there had been massive changes made to them.

3. RESOLVED that the recommendations to refuse on both applications were agreed for the reasons set out in the report.

09/01280/SUB – Erection of extension to existing Industrial unit, (Eastern Elevation) and associated ground works and landscaping.

Mr Reg Trantor Regional Director spoke in support of the application on behalf of the applicant, Heyrod Construction Ltd. He advised that:-

- The company wanted to base its manufacturing facility at Washington.
- The development will bring more employment into the area
- There have been no problems with parking or access.
- There would be a landscaping contractor employed to ensure that the site was suitably screened from the adjacent green space.
- It would be a low building and would not be as tall as the other buildings in the area. The building would not be visible from beyond the trees.

Councillor Wake advised that he could see nothing wrong with the development as long as it did not have an effect on the Leamside Line. He was advised that the development would have no impact on the Line.

The Chairman stated that she would like to see the site before making a decision.

Councillor J. Scott agreed and moved that the decision be deferred so that a site visit could be undertaken.

This motion was unanimously agreed.

4. RESOLVED that Consideration of the matter be deferred to allow a site visit to take place

09/01287/FUL – Installation of 2no. 17.7m high wind turbines (including blades) Amended Description 30.04.2009

The Members raised concerns over the possibility of the turbines creating a noise disturbance.

The representative of the Director of Development and Regeneration advised that they were to be located next to the A690 and they were approximately 50 metres away from the school. As such there should not be a noise disturbance. There had been assessments carried out to check whether the turbines would create an increase in noise levels but these had involved a single WT1500Kw wind turbine whilst the proposal related to two WT1600Kw models. Accordingly the Environmental Health Section recommended that approval if granted be subject to a condition requiring a further noise assessment to determine operational noise levels.

5. RESOLVED that The application be approved for the reasons set out in the report circulated at the meeting and subject to the 4 conditions set out therein and further subject to condition number 3 being amended to read as follows:

3. Before the development hereby approved is commenced, the wind turbines shall be assessed to ensure that the potential noise levels do not unduly impact on the amenity of the schools

pupils and nearby residents. If it can be demonstrated to the Local Planning Authority that the noise from the turbines is limited to an LA90, 10min of 35dB (A) up to wind speeds of 10m/s at 10m height, then a full assessment will not be necessary as the guidance on wind turbines advises that these levels would offer sufficient protection of amenity and therefore background surveys would not be necessary. Should this be the case, the appropriate information should be submitted for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Where it is not possible to demonstrate the above a full assessment shall be undertaken in accordance with (ETSU-R-97 The Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms). The results of the survey together with any mitigation measures needed to ensure that the noise from the wind turbines (LA90, 10min) will not exceed the background level by more than 5dB (A) during the day and night shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully completed in accordance with a timetable to be agreed in writing by the LPA in the interests of the amenity of nearby residential occupiers and school pupils and to accord with policies B2 and EN5 of the adopted Unitary Development Plan.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Appeals

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) concerning the above for the period 1st March, 2009 to 30th April, 2009.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

6. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(Signed) J. FLETCHER,
Chairman.