

At a meeting of the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (HETTON, HOUGHTON AND WASHINGTON) SUB-COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 2nd OCTOBER, 2018 at 5.45 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Scullion in the Chair

Councillors Blackett, M. Dixon, Essl, Hodson, Jackson, Lauchlan, Porthouse, Rowntree and P. Walker

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were given on behalf of Councillors Scaplehorn and Williams

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

The Executive Director of Economy and Place submitted a report and late sheets (copies 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)

18/00705/MAW – Relocation of pre-cast concrete wall, extension of concrete hardstanding area and installation of picking station with associated conveyors and weigh bridge at Timberpack Waste Recycling Centre, Staithes Road, Washington, NE38 8NW

The representative of the Executive Director of Economy and Place informed Members that representations had been received from Councillors Taylor and F. Miller and advised that a late sheet had been circulated outlining the objections and a response from Officers in Environmental Health addressing their concerns. The Chairman adjourned the meeting for five minutes to allow Members time to consider the late sheet as circulated.

The representative of the Executive Director of Economy and Place presented the application advising the Committee of the key issues to consider in determining the application in relation to the principle of the development, residential and visual amenity, highways matters, drainage and flooding and ecology.

Councillor Hodson referred to additional condition two contained within the late sheet and asked why the operator would only be asked to submit a further noise assessment following any complaints from received within six months after installation and was informed by the Officer that Environmental Health Officers were confident; having consulted data received from the noise assessment and that which the department already has; that the application would not give rise to any increase in noise or subsequent complaints from its approval.

Councillor Hodson went on to ask for clarification as to what would be regarded as a substantiated complaint and was advised that it would have to be a complaint which could be investigated by Environmental Health and then subject to the findings identifying that the application site was the source of the noise being complained about.

In response to a question from Councillor Lauchlan regarding the findings of the noise assessment being before the installation of the new machinery, the Officer advised that the applicants had taken readings from other operational sites in the country where the machinery was currently used to produce their report. Councillor Lauchlan thanked the Officer for the information and commented that it would have been beneficial if that information had been set out within the report.

The Chairman then welcomed Councillor Taylor to the Committee who had requested to speak in objection to the application.

Councillor Taylor thanked Members for the opportunity to address them and advised that he spoke in objection to the application on behalf of his ward constituents who lived in the vicinity of the recycling centre. He informed Members that in addition to the representations as set out in the late sheet there had historically been a number of complaints regarding noise levels in the area from residents.

Councillor Taylor then informed Members that he had been forwarded a copy of the noise assessment undertaken on behalf of the applicant and it identified a number of locations in and around the site where readings had been taken from. The noise assessment listed Barmston Court and Horsley Road as two of the sites where noise sensitive receptors had been used and findings recorded. Councillor Taylor commented that since the production of the noise assessment there had been further housing development in the area and both Hebden Court and Chillingham Close were closer properties to the application site and findings from these locations had not been taken into consideration.

Councillor Taylor commented that he felt that noise assessment findings from the properties in closer proximity to the site should also be taken as these would be those most affected by the development and asked Members to consider deferment of the item until these assessments could be undertaken.

The Chairman invited Councillor F. Miller to address the Committee and she advised that she had visited sites in the past and was aware that previously the Environment Agency had requested that measures be put in place to help address concerns over noise from nearby residents but that there were still issues that needed addressing. In 2013 visits had been made to the site and when asked to switch off particular machinery the offending noises had ceased so it had been obvious where they were emanating from.

The Officer informed the Committee that they must be conscious that any complaints in relation to noise would be perceived to be from the site as it currently was. The application before Members was for a new piece of machinery and therefore could not be the source of the noise that residents were complaining about.

In relation to the location of noise receptors for the noise assessment Officers had advised that background noise had been taken from homes much deeper into the Teal Farm estate and therefore the data collated was from a far wider range than was necessary. The noise assessment showed a map of source points surrounding the site where data was gathered from and all levels had been satisfactory and it was the view of Officers; based on the data received; that the proposal would not have the impact of any increase in noise from the site.

Councillor Porthouse commented that the Committee were only considering the application before them today, and although he was sympathetic with the issues regarding noise from the site, this was outside of the proposed application as it was in relation to the current situation and not the machinery which was not even installed at this time. There were other routes to take to raise those concerns and have them addressed.

Councillor Hodson drew Members attention to the report, commenting that they were being asked not to consider noise from the current site but yet this had been used as the basis to set the hours of operation within the conditions and therefore could not understand how Members could not consider the concerns raised today as being relevant in making their decision.

Members were informed that the proposed application was hoped to bring improvements to the workings of the site and were reminded that this would be no more vehicular movements or tonnage and was to just help better process the current deliveries.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Bennett to the Committee who was in attendance to speak on behalf of the applicant, Timberpack. Mr. Bennett thanked Members for the opportunity to address the Committee and advised that the applicant was very open in listening to concerns from residents and explained that they had many visits to the site in the past.

Mr. Bennett informed Members that the site could be a dangerous and that this application would enable them to keep this piece of machinery segregated from pedestrian movement around the site. He advised the Committee that this machinery would only be used to process contaminated materials, and therefore 90% of materials delivered to them would not require this machinery.

He referred Members to a document he had submitted, which was circulated to Members and explained that following monitoring of this machine at other sites the continuous noise level of the proposed machinery would be approximately 73.9dB(A), with occasional peaks at 78.6dB(A) and that these were similar or lower than the existing noise levels generated on site by vehicular movements.

Members having no further questions and having fully considered the application and representations, it was unanimously:-

1. RESOLVED that the application be approved for the reasons as set out within the report and late sheet and subject to the ten conditions detailed therein.

18/01023/FUL – Construction of a 14,585 sq.m (c. 157,000 sq.ft) B2 Manufacturing / B8 Logistics Warehouse, with associated earthworks, landscaping, parking and access proposals at site of former B and Q Warehouse, Armstrong Road, Armstrong Industrial Estate, Washington

The representative of the Executive Director of Economy and Place presented the application advising the Committee of the key issues to consider in determining the application.

The Officer drew Members attention to a typographical error in condition 9 of the main report; advising that where it referred to condition 7 it should in fact be condition 8. Members were also informed that conditions 3 and 4 of the main report were identical and therefore condition 4 should be deleted should Members be minded to approve the report.

Members drew attention to the dB levels within the conditions for this application appearing to be considerably lower than that of the last application and sought clarification as to the reason for this. The Officer commented that Environmental Health would take the lead on providing the relevant noise levels for applications and it was suggested that this area could be considered at one of the future training events for Members so that they could better understand the reasoning behind their decisions.

Members having fully considered the application and having no further questions, it was unanimously:-

2. RESOLVED that the application be approved for the reasons as set out within the report and late sheet and subject to the twelve conditions detailed therein.

Items for Information

Members having fully considered the items for information contained within the matrix, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the items for information as set out in the matrix be received and noted.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

(Signed) A. SCULLION,
Chairman.