

At an Extraordinary Meeting of the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (SOUTH SUNDERLAND) SUB-COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY 8th MARCH, 2016 at 4.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Porthouse in the Chair

Councillors Ball, Bell, M. Dixon, English, I. Galbraith, Mordey, Price, Scaplehorn and S. Watson.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors D. Dixon, Jackson and P. Watson.

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

The Executive Director of Commercial Development submitted a report and circulatory report (copies circulated) relating to the South Sunderland area, copies of which had been forwarded to each Member of the Council, upon applications made under the Town and Country Planning Acts and Regulations made thereunder.

(For copy reports – see original minutes).

**16/00037/FUL – Proposed reduction in retail floor space to existing retail department store and the conversion of three floors to hotel use (Class C1)
Former Joplins, John Street, Sunderland, SR1 1DP**

The representative of the Executive Director of Commercial Development advised that this proposal would bring an iconic, landmark building back into use. It had been proposed that the fourth floor of the building would be removed; this was due to the poor condition of this floor and that it was not viable to bring this floor back into use. The removal of the fourth floor would make the building more subservient to the architecturally impressive Victorian buildings which surrounded it.

The proposal accorded with both national and local planning policies and as such the principle of the development was considered to be acceptable.

The building was not listed but was located within the Sunnyside conservation area; it was a decent example of mid-20th Century architecture and although when compared with the surrounding buildings it was not of great historic interest considering the social historical interest of the building it was considered that the building should be a non-designated heritage asset. This proposal would help to secure the future of the building.

The area was covered by the Sunnyside Planning and Design Framework 2008 which encouraged a mix of uses within the area including city centre residential accommodation. There were residential properties nearby and it was considered that the use of the upper floors of this building as a hotel would be compatible with the existing land uses and would not cause any disturbance to residents of the existing residential properties. In terms of amenity the proposal was considered to be acceptable.

It had been proposed that the basement would be used for car parking however this was not viable. It was instead proposed that there would be an amendment to the existing Traffic Regulation Order to allow taxis to access the front of the property to allow taxi drop offs; this combined with the public transport links and existing car parking in the area would ensure that the hotel was easily accessible and as such the application was considered to be acceptable in terms of highways.

A SUDS system of drainage would have been desirable however given the constraints of the existing building it was not possible to incorporate SuDS; the Council's Flood and Coastal Group Engineer had identified that there was no requirement for SuDS. As such it was considered that the proposal was acceptable in terms of drainage and flood risk issues.

It was not considered that the development would lead to increased noise disturbance for any residential or other noise sensitive neighbours.

Overall the proposal was considered to be acceptable and it was considered to be a much needed, well designed scheme which would improve the area.

The Chairman queried how access during construction would work given that the surrounding roads had TROs in place allowing only bus access. The highways officer advised that this was not a matter for the planning process. Should planning permission be granted then the developer would need to apply for a temporary amendment to the TRO should they require vehicle access to the site.

The Chairman then introduced the agent for the applicant Mr Chris Martin. Mr Martin advised that the development was intended to bring the building back into use and help to regenerate the area; he had been working closely with officers to bring forward a suitable application. In response to a query from Councillor M. Dixon relating to parking he advised that there had been discussions around using the Sunnyside Multi Storey Car Park although he did not know the specifics of the arrangement.

The Chairman then put the officer's recommendation to the Committee and with all Members being in agreement it was:-

1. RESOLVED that the application be approved for the reasons set out in the report subject to the 17 conditions set out therein.

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

(Signed) S. PORTHOUSE,
Chairman.