

At a meeting of the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (HETTON, HOUGHTON AND WASHINGTON) SUB-COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 30th JANUARY, 2018 at 5.45 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Scaplehorn in the Chair

Councillors Bell, M. Dixon, Hodson, Jackson, Lauchlan, Mordey, Porthouse, Taylor, Turner, M. Turton, W. Turton, G. Walker and P. Walker

Declarations of Interest

17/00806/REM – Land at North Road, Hetton le Hole, Houghton le Spring

Councillor Turner declared an interest in the above item having previously spoken in objection to it at a meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee on behalf of Hetton Town Council. She asked to make a couple of points prior to leaving the meeting during consideration of the application.

17/01701/VAR – Land at former Homelands Estate – Incorporating Chestnut Crescent, Coronation Crescent and part of Beechwood Terrace

Councillor Walker declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the above application as an employee of Gentoo, the applicant, and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

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)

17/00806/REM – Reserved matters application following grant of outline planning permission (11/02362/OUT) for the erection of 300 no. dwellings at land at North Road, Hetton le Hole, Houghton le Spring

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. Further to the main report Members were provided with the outstanding consultation response from Natural England in connection with the ecological matters relating to the site, whereby, they confirmed that they had no objection to the approval of the reserved matters application, subject to conditions being applied as set out in the late sheets.

Councillor Turner sought clarification on the following points:-

- The position of the town houses within the development site;
- The traffic solutions in relation to any extra traffic which may impact upon the Four Lane Ends junction; and
- The preservation and enforcing of conditions in relation to the nearby bogs;

and then left the meeting whilst the application was considered.

Councillor Porthouse asked to see an overhead view of the roundabout and pictures of the proposed house designs and raised objections with Officers that these were not included within the presentation being shown to Members. Upon production of the detailed designs of the properties he raised his concerns that once again developers were leaving side elevations and gable ends blank and featureless.

The recommendation having been put to the vote, and with seven Members voting in favour and four against, it was:-

1. RESOLVED that the application for reserved matters be approved for the reasons as set out in the report and subject to conditions relating to the twenty three areas as set out in the bullet points detailed in the late sheets.

17/00866/LP3 – Erection of 5 no two bedroomed bungalows with associated parking and landscaping (Amended plans received 02/01/2017) at land between Chester Road and Stanley Terrace, Houghton le Spring

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 response to Councillor Hodson as to the ownership of the land and the reasoning behind the demolition of the previous terraced street, the Committee were informed that the houses had been deemed as unfit and of poor condition and had therefore been marked for demolition. The Planning Officer advised he did not know who the land had belonged to prior to demolition but was aware that it was now in Council ownership.

In relation to the unadopted access road of Stanley Terrace, Councillor Hodson was advised that access would be maintained to the properties from the rear via Stanley Terrace but that this would not be maintained by the Council Highways team. Councillor Hodson commented that his concerns were that, although the development was small, it would still put extra pressures in relation to traffic on nearby roads.

Councillor Porthouse asked if the properties would open directly onto the front street and main road and was informed that the development would see the properties set back and maintaining the line of the adjacent properties.

In relation to the plans, Councillor Porthouse commented that they were not very clear within the presentation to give Members a good understanding of the design of the properties within the development, and in particular the gable ends. The Planning Officer advised that they worked the best to try and include the designs to as much detail as they could but if required, the designs could be seen online or in hard copy through the Planning Officer direct.

In closing, Members felt that the development was a good use of currently derelict land, and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the application be granted consent under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 (as amended), for the reasons as set out in the report and subject to the seventeen conditions detailed therein.

17/01444/SUB – Demolition of vacant care home and erection of 23 no dwellings with associated works at Adey Gardens Care Home, South Street, Newbottle, Houghton le Spring, DH4 4EH

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.

Councillor Porthouse referred to the plain brick wall gable ends of the developments and Planning Officers advised that they did face onto neighbouring properties and therefore any windows in gable ends may bring problems of overlooking into adjacent properties.

In relation to providing an alternative feature than a window in the gable end to break up the simplicity of the wall, the developer advised that they found that should there be any form of impression or feature in a gable end neighbouring properties would complain believing that they were being overlooked by that property and therefore they kept them blank.

Members having fully considered the application, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the application be approved for the reasons as set out in the report and subject to the nineteen conditions detailed therein and the signing of an agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

17/01701/VAR – Variation of condition 2 (Plans) attached to planning application 14/02833/FUL (78 dwellings with associated garages and landscaping, construction of new estate roads and site access from Coaley Lane and demolition of 2 existing dwellings, and associated stopping up of highway (Amended Plans Received 10/08/15) to include removal of PV panels to roof and site plan showing retaining wall structures and boundary details at land at former Homeland Estate – Incorporating Chestnut Crescent, Coronation Crescent and part of Beechwood Terrace

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. Members were advised that further to the main report additional conditions were to be applied to any permission granted and were detailed within the late sheets for Members consideration.

The Chairman advised that Mr. Gordon Thompson had requested to speak in objection to the application and invited him to address the Committee.

Mr. Thompson thanked Members for the opportunity to address the Committee and advised that his main concern was in relation to the construction of the retaining walls, not believing that they had been constructed safely. He advised that he had spoken with a developer on site who had advised that they could build retaining walls on the development wherever they wished and just amend the drawings accordingly.

Mr. Thompson stated that the retaining walls were constructed with two course bricks and over 100 tonnes of material behind them; which the developers then built a house upon; seeing the kitchen from the properties looking directly into the bungalows below. He felt that it needed a construction engineer to visit the site and give their views on the retaining walls as he did not feel they had been constructed safely.

He also commented he had never felt the need to complain before but now his property was surrounded by and facing the brick walls of other properties.

The Planning Officer advised that in terms of structural stability the Engineering Manager of the development had provided a report which had shown that all of the retaining walls had been constructed to industry standards and best practice guidelines.

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

4. RESOLVED that the application be delegated to the Executive Director of Economy and Place who is minded to approve the application for the reasons as set out in the report, subject to the eleven conditions as detailed and subject to the receipt of the outstanding balance of Section 106 monies (or the completion of a deed of variation).

17/01781/FUL – Partial redevelopment and refurbishment of the existing Peel Centre Phase 1 to provide three refurbished / reconfigured units (comprising a food retail unit, a non-food unit and a 130 sqm unit for use as a coffee / sandwich shop, restaurant or bakery (Class A1/A3/A5), new cladding, canopies, signage, glazing and store entrances; demolition of units 4A & 4B and erection of a new discount foodstore; renewal and reconfiguration of the car park, new landscaping (overall 424 sq. m increase in floorspace) at The Peel Centre, Glover, 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.

Councillor Taylor drew the Committee's attention to page 68 of the agenda and the highways improvement and commented that he did not agree with statements set out as he felt that the proposal of the development would attract more people to the site and he was disappointed that the developer was not taking into account the opportunity of resiting the bus stop on the slip road to the A1231. The bus stop was very poorly sited in relation to the junction and he had serious concerns over pedestrian safety given that there had been a person killed in that area the previous year.

The Highways Officer advised that the application before the Committee was very much scaled back from the previous application they had considered and they had considered the expected number of trips to the proposed units and it was felt that the existing junctions and roads could support the number of expected additional shopping trips. However, Members should note that should a development come forward to submit an application to develop Unit 1 of the site then they would have to look at the impact on the traffic network again.

The Highways Officer noted the concerns of the Members but advised that the evidence provided indicated that there were no adjustments required at this stage. He also advised that Nexus and other bus operators were consulted as part of the application process and they had raised no concerns over the siting of the bus stops in the area.

Members having had their questions answered and having no further comment to make, it as:-

5. RESOLVED that the application be approved for the reasons as set out in the conclusion section of the report and subject to the twenty one conditions detailed therein and subject to the agreement and delivery of financial contribution, via an appropriate Section 106 agreement, to fund the delivery of the agreed to off-site highway improvement, and subject to the application being referred to the Secretary of State in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009.

Items for Information

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

6. RESOLVED that the items for information contained within the matrix be received and noted.

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

(Signed) B. SCAPLEHORN,
Chairman.