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## **SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT ON APPLICATIONS**

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REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION SERVICES

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is circulated a few days before the meeting and includes additional information on the following applications. This information may allow a revised recommendation to be made.

### **LIST OF SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS**

Applications for the following sites are included in this report.

#### **South Area**

S2	Site of Former D H Safety Glass Premises. High Street East
S4	Hendon Health Centre, Meaburn Terrace, Sunderland.

**Development Control (South Sunderland)  
Sub-Committee**

**SUPPLEMENT**

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Number: S2

Application Number: 09/01678/FUL

Proposal: Proposed development of a 65 bedroom hotel with external car park and landscaping. Stopping up of existing footpath within the site

Location: Former D H Safety glasses Premises, High Street East, Sunderland Tyne and Wear SR1 2AX

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The key issues to consider in determining this application are:-

Land use.

The Impact of the development on the archaeology of the site.

Highways/parking.

Scale, massing, layout and setting.

Impact on the adjacent Listed Building.

**LAND USE.**

The site is allocated for commercial use under the specific allocation in SA.5 which is derived from the citywide policy EC.5 which states that hotels are considered acceptable. The proposal thus conforms to the UDP in terms of land use.

**ARCHAEOLOGY**

A response has been received from the County Archaeologist on the further details submitted.

Given the location of the site within the core of the medieval settlement, it was considered important for at least some preliminary trial trenching to be undertaken before determination of the planning application.

The interim report has been submitted and is considered sufficient for the determination of the application.

Only one trench could be excavated at this stage because of the presence of trees on the slope. A single trench was excavated at the base of the slope. Beneath loose demolition rubble a network of walls were recorded. A midden dump of shells was the earliest layer above natural bedrock. The environmental sample of this midden is awaiting analysis. Above the shell midden was a layer of sand and small pebbles, and a layer of green-yellow sand. Finds included 17th or 18th century pottery.

The results of this preliminary evaluation show that the site lay above the river foreshore. It is perhaps surprising that medieval deposits were not found, these have presumably been truncated by later activity. The clay bonded stone wall may represent an early building plot built over the riverside reclamation dumps. The other handmade brick walls represent a probable late 18th or early 19th century structure.

Archaeological deposits are likely to survive elsewhere in the site. Consequently it is considered a further programme of archaeological excavation is required before development can proceed. This work can be conditioned should planning permission be forthcoming.

The trees will need to be removed to allow this work to be undertaken; they will need to be removed for the development anyway.

The County Archaeologist is satisfied with the information submitted and requests the following planning condition is imposed on any consent whether for this development or any future development.

"No ground works or development work shall take place until a programme of archaeological excavation work has been completed. This shall be carried out in accordance with a specification provided by the County Archaeologist. The archaeological report shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before the development commences in the interests of the Archaeological significance of the area and to comply with policies B10,B11,B12,B13,B14,B15,B16 and B17 of the adopted UDP".

Reason: The site is located within an area identified as being of potential archaeological importance (Sunderland medieval borough). The investigation is required to ensure that any archaeological remains on the site can be preserved wherever possible and recorded".

It is considered that with the imposition of such a condition on any consent granted the archaeological aims of the UDP would be achieved.

#### HIGHWAYS/PARKING.

It is recommended that the car park entrance and exit arrangements shown on the submitted plans are altered. Changing the proposed exit, which is the nearest access along Low Street from the junction with Bodlewell Lane, to an entrance, would avoid potential confusion for motorists. The existing entrance could be reinstated as footway, with additional parking spaces or landscaping provided to the intervening area.

Some minor revisions are required to the parking layout to improve manoeuvring space and accessibility. If the path formerly known as Stob Lane is to be closed it will require a stopping up under Section 257 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 however this issue is further discussed below.

The proposal is thus considered acceptable in highway terms subject to suitable conditions in respect of fine-tuning the access and parking layout and is therefore in accordance with policies T14 and T22 of the UDP.

#### SCALE, MASSING, LAYOUT AND SETTING -ENGLISH HERITAGE.

The applicant has submitted revised drawings and a Design and Access statement and from a Design and Conservation viewpoint, the scheme is generally considered satisfactory in terms of the overall scale and massing. The changes to the materials proposed to be used are considered an enhancement, as are various changes to the detail.

The City Council and English Heritage consider that further improvements are required to

- the entrance in the linking building,
- the fenestration to the ground floor front to High Street,
- the possible loss of Stob Lane and
- the future development potential of the remainder of the site.

In the latter respect it is considered important that this development does not prejudice the form of development of the remainder of the site.

With regards the entrance officers were concerned that the entrance in the early drawings seemed diminutive compared to the features of the adjoining Exchange Building. The applicant suggested that a canopy that is indicated but not detailed on the latest drawing might serve this purpose. The current detail is considered an improvement but has not been viewed by English Heritage. It is suggested that the entrance become (if only in outward appearance) a two storey design or

one and a half to give it more presence and be more compatible with the proportions on Exchange Building.

With regards to the fenestration to the ground floor generally, again, the issue is considered to be one of proportion of the ground floor windows to the windows above and it is considered they would benefit from being larger in format and also the proportion of glazed area to masonry increased. On balance officers prefer the approach of the previous design that brought the paired ground floor windows together by throwing an arch over the two and making them a little larger. which gives the impression of a rather more 'active' frontage.

In many areas of the design there is a lack of working detail which needs to be expanded upon, but which seems satisfactory in principle. It would be possible to condition these details should planning permission be granted.

The Council have received observations from English Heritage (EH) on the revised drawings and their comments and the response of the applicant are summarised below.

EH considers the changes to the materials do help to reduce the impact adjacent to the Exchange Building but still have concerns over the proposed development. This area has received significant public funding for improvements to historic buildings and to the public realm around the cleared sites. This investment was intended to set the scene for good infill development where buildings have been cleared and to improve the setting of the historic buildings. EH considers the proposed development fails to make the most of the opportunity that this collection of sites presents and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

EH strongly feels that, whilst the application only proposes the first building in a phased redevelopment scheme, the whole site should be considered at this time in order to take a strategic view of redevelopment of the area. This would in no way require full plans for the whole site at this stage, but at least an indication of how the rest of the site could be developed to make best use of the opportunities available. For example, scale and massing of buildings could be shown to indicate how the whole site could function in the wider townscape. The Council's Urban Design Strategy seeks development which reinforces the historic grain of the area and reintroduces development at the back edge of the pavement. If the proposed scheme were to be granted planning permission, the large areas of tarmac fronting onto Low Street could become a permanent part of the townscape with even less chance of the future development of the Low Street frontage. The provision of a breakfast/dining room at level 1 of the hotel, with views towards the river, also suggests that the Low Street frontage is unlikely to be developed and thus block views from the proposed dining room.

The applicant concedes these intentions have not been advanced through the preparation of plans and to provide any detail on possible future development at this stage may prove counter productive to all parties. The applicant considers the proposal should be judged on its own individual merits and development which may or may not occur in the future should not have any impact upon the determination of this application as this issue was discussed and agreed at a meeting between the planning authority and the applicant when it was agreed that plans showing indicative future building massing were inappropriate where they did not form part of the actual planning application. On this basis further information on future development was omitted at the express request of the Council on the basis that if plans did provide an indication of possible future building scale and massing, there would be no obligation on a future planning application to respect such indicative plans.

However advice handed down in PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment promotes the principle of early consultation with English Heritage and master planning when necessary. The advice sets out that new buildings are not set apart but woven into the fabric of the living working community; are carefully designed to respect their setting and follow fundamental architectural principles of scale, mass, height and alignment and the use of appropriate materials. In this respect the applicant has agreed to provide indicative material on the remainder of the site.

EH considers that the loss of Stob Lane, whilst being an unpleasant environment at present, has the potential to become an attractive and useful route through from High Street East to Low Street. EH considers the route should not be removed simply because it makes redevelopment more difficult. Chares or Wynds such as this are considered an integral part of the character of a riverside location and could make a positive contribution to the redeveloped site (as shown at Tuthill Stairs leading to the Newcastle Quayside). It also helps to break up the larger site into separate development sites reflecting the historic grain of the area.

The applicant has noted the objections of English Heritage with regard to the loss of the footpath. The applicant considers that the detour along Bodlewell Lane is negligible and provides a significantly safer route. The existing footpath comprises of a number of steeply stepped sections which are dangerous to pedestrians, particularly during the winter months.

The applicant considers English Heritage's request to retain the footpath also appears somewhat contradictory to its aspiration to see a comprehensive redevelopment of the whole site as the applicants proposal to remove the footpath represents a clear demonstration of its long term aspirations for a comprehensive development of the site. In the event that the footpath was retained any future development would have to incorporate a tunnel which is considered unsatisfactory from a public safety perspective and is likely to be

raised as an issue by the Police Architectural Liaison Officer. As a compromise the applicant has agreed to remove the proposed hotel terrace and retain the footpath at the eastern edge of the development with a view to resolving the issue as the remainder of the site is developed.

EH considers the amendments to the architecture have moved in the right direction and the use of brick is welcome. However it is considered the entrance to the hotel is diminutive in scale adjacent to the Exchange Buildings and needs further work. EH remains unconvinced by the link building. The previous large brick building on the site sat up against the Exchange Building, a well designed new building could follow suit.

The rear elevation now has the feel of a riverside development with the regular pattern of larger windows. EH consider this should be followed through on the front elevation EH considers the building would need some careful detailing to ensure that there is depth to window openings and eaves. The large gable is considered a prominent part of the development but would hopefully be a temporary measure prior to redevelopment of the adjacent site.

The broad EH consensus is that it would be far better to wait for the right development for this site, than to accept this scheme because of the pressures of various leasing timescales. EH recommend that, whilst the principle of a hotel on this site is welcomed, the current application should be refused on the grounds that it would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the adjacent listed buildings.

#### IMPACT ON THE ADJACENT LISTED BUILDING.

There are some issues of concern in relation to the proposed development and the impact on the Exchange Building which is a Grade II Listed Building but the issues are generally of detail.

Discussions are ongoing with the applicant and English Heritage and amended plans are awaited.

#### CONCLUSION.

The proposal is considered acceptable in principle and based on discussions with the developer and English Heritage officers believe outstanding issues of detail can be resolved and a satisfactory scheme can be achieved.

Amended plans are awaited and a further meeting with all parties is to be arranged. However this will not take place until after this meeting. The statutory period for the determination of this application ends on 7 August 2009 and in order that the application can be determined within that timescale Members are

recommended to delegate the matter to the Director of Development and Regeneration.

**RECOMMENDATION; Delegate to the Director of Development and Regeneration.**

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Number: S4

Application Number: 09/02381/LAP

Proposal: Change of use of premises from D1 (non residential) to mixed use D1 and B1 (business) RESUBMISSION

Location: Hendon Health Centre, Meaburn Terrace, Sunderland, SR1 2LR

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Further to the report on the main agenda to committee, the site notice and neighbour consultation period has now expired with no additional representations received.

Therefore it is considered that the proposal is acceptable subject to the imposition of relevant conditions and as such accords with the requirements of policies B2, EN10 and T14 of the Unitary Development Plan, as such Members are recommended to approve the application.

**RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions**

1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date on which permission is granted, as required by section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to ensure that the development is carried out within a reasonable period of time

2 The occupation and use of the first floor offices authorised by this permission shall not begin until the car park within Wylam Grove to the southeast of Hendon Health Centre shown on drawing number ARCH/002A hereby approved has been brought into use, in order to comply with policy T14.



3 The car park shown on drawing number ARCH/002A shall be retained in perpetuity as a car park for the use of staff occupying the health centre building and visitors to the centre, in order to comply with policy T14.