

DELEGATED

AGENDA NO

PLANNING COMMITTEE

DATE 31st May 2006

**REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF
DEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD
SERVICES**

06/0709/OUT

BRIDGE ROAD, STOCKTON-ON-TEES, TS18 3AX

**OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR STUDENT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND ASSOCIATED
MEANS OF ACCESS**

Expiry date 7th June 2006

SUMMARY

This application seeks outline planning permission for student accommodation on the former SCS Furniture Store site with a block of student accommodation. The application is in outline with all matters reserved except for means of access.

A previous full application for student housing development and associated external works on the application site (05/3429/FUL) was refused planning permission in February 2006 on the following grounds: -

01. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposed redevelopment of this site in isolation would constitute piecemeal development and thereby prejudice the achievement of the future comprehensive redevelopment of the surrounding area and regeneration of the local economy delivered through a high quality and commercially successful mixed use development for the area through an established masterplan and agreed design principles.

02. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal detracts from the architectural character and setting of nearby Listed Buildings and the character and appearance of the Stockton Conservation Area by reason of its design, general bulk and massing thereby resulting in an incongruous pattern of development detrimental to the amenities of the area.

The applicant has appealed against the refusal of planning permission and an appeal hearing has been scheduled for the end of June 2006.

As previously mentioned this application is in outline and seeks to establish whether the development of the site for student accommodation is acceptable in principle. It should be noted that detailed design is reserved for future consideration. One of the reasons for refusal of the previous full submission related primarily to the design of the scheme and it is considered with the imposition of strict controls on the future design the grounds for the previous refusal could be addressed.

The site occupies an important riverside location and forms part of a larger site known as Boathouse Lane. Given the important riverside gateway location, the Council has prepared a planning and design brief to guide future development on the site and surrounding area. The draft brief has been subject to a six week consultation exercise ending 6th March 2006 and all comments and subsequent amendments having been agreed by the Head of Planning Services are to be duly

considered by Planning Committee and then delegated authority has been granted to the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services together with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration to adopt the Brief. Importantly the brief seeks to deliver a high quality and commercially successful mixed use development for the area through an established masterplan and agreed design principles.

In terms of prematurity and prejudicing the achievement of the future comprehensive redevelopment of the surrounding area, this issue was considered in detail as part of the previous full application. It was recognised that the site is a highly sustainable location in a central urban location being close to existing facilities and services in Stockton Town Centre, including the University Campus and public transport. Clearly development on this site will influence the nature and scale of development elsewhere especially the development along the important river frontage. It is considered that with the imposition of strict controls covering the reserved matters including siting and design and the development being in accordance with an agreed masterplan then the issue of prematurity could be satisfactorily addressed.

RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDED that the application 06/0709/OUT be APPROVED subject to the applicant entering into a Unilateral Undertaking in accordance with the Heads of Terms below and the following conditions:

Unilateral Undertaking

Heads of Terms

- 1. A commuted lump sum of £8,000 for the provision of pedestrian improvements at the signals at Boathouse Lane.***
- 2. A commuted lump sum of £22,000 for the provision of public transport infrastructure.***
- 3. A commuted lump sum of £15,750 for the provision/improvement of open space.***
- 4. A commuted lump sum of £15,000 for improvements to the riverside footpath/cycleway.***

Conditions

01. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan(s); unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Drawing Number(s): - 0523/029, 0523/040

Reason: To define the consent.

02. The Reserved Matters shall be in accordance with an agreed Master Plan the boundaries of which correspond to those included in the Council's Draft Supplementary Planning Document Boathouse Lane Planning and Design Brief which shall be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to the submission of the first Reserved Matter.

The Masterplan shall indicate: -

The position of the main buildings;

The landscape framework and landforms;

The phasing of the development;

Detailed Design code of, materials, urban scale, design and massing of buildings to achieve an iconic regionally significant land mark building(s) maximising views, pedestrian/cyclists permeability/accessibility, treatment of public realm, landscaping, recycling facilities.

The development shall be implemented in general conformity with these approved documents unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To allow the detailed proposals to be considered against a broad Masterplan and an approved Design Guidance document and to enable the Local Planning Authority to satisfactorily control the development and to ensure development sympathetic with the regeneration objectives of the area.

03. Notwithstanding any description of the materials in the application no development shall be commenced until precise details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external walls and roofs of the building(s) have been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control details of the proposed development.

04. Application for the approval of reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason : By virtue of the provisions of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

05. Approval of details of the siting, design and external appearance of the buildings and the landscaping of the site, shall be in accordance with the details of the scheme to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before the development commences.

Reason : To reserve the rights of the Local Planning Authority with regard to these matters.

06. The development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission, or before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved, whichever is the latest.

Reason : By virtue of the provisions of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act

07. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, a scheme for landscaping, tree and/or shrub planting. Such a scheme shall specify types and species, layout contouring and surfacing of all open space areas. The work shall be carried out during the first planting and seeding season following the substantial completion of the development, and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the date of planting, die are removed or become seriously damaged, shall be replaced with others of a similar size and species in the next planting season unless the Local planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To preserve the said trees in the interests of the amenities of the area

08. Notwithstanding the submitted information, further details of the paving, lighting, railings, footpath construction and materials, and retaining wall shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control details of the proposed development.

09. New discharges of foul and surface water must be on separate systems and surface water discharges must be prevented from entering public surface water or combined sewers.

Reason: To achieve a satisfactory form of development.

10. Development shall not begin until drainage works have been carried out in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To achieve a satisfactory form of development.

**11. Prior to any works commencing on site a scheme of finished floor levels for all buildings within the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The finished floor levels shall be no lower than 5.0 m AOD. and the buildings shall be built in accordance with these approved details
Reason : To reduce the risk of tidal flooding.**

**12. The development shall ensure safe routes of access to the building above the predicted tidal flood level and no lower than 4.60 m AOD.
Reason :To provide safe access and egress during flood events and reduce reliance on emergency services.**

**13. Throughout the construction period any facilities for the storage of oils, fuels or chemicals shall be sited on impervious bases and surrounded by impervious bund walls. The volume of the bunded compound should be at least equivalent to the capacity of the tank plus 10%. If there is multiple tankage, the compound should be at least equivalent to the capacity of the largest tank, or the combined capacity of interconnected tanks, plus 10%. All filling points, vents, gauges and sight glasses must be located within the bund. The drainage system of the bund shall be sealed with no discharge to any watercourse, land or underground strata. Associated pipework should be located above ground and protected from accidental damage. All filling points and tank overflow pipe outlets should be detailed to discharge downwards into the bund.
Reason :To prevent pollution of the water environment.**

**14. Prior to being discharged into any watercourse, surface water sewer or soakaway system, all surface water drainage from parking areas and hardstandings shall be passed through trapped gullies installed in accordance with a scheme previously submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.
Reason :To prevent pollution of the water environment.**

**15. Prior to the commencement of any works on site, a settlement facility for the removal of suspended solids from surface water run-off during construction works shall be provided in accordance with details previously submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The approved scheme shall be retained throughout the construction period.
Reason :To prevent pollution of the water environment.**

**16. Prior to the use commencing the building shall be insulated in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to ensure that adequate protection is afforded against the transmission of noise between living accommodation and bedroom in adjacent flats
Reason : In the interest of the occupiers of the premises.**

**17. Before the use commences, any living rooms or bedrooms with windows affected by traffic noise levels of 68 dB(A) L10 (18 hour) or more (or predicted to be affected by such levels in the next 15 years) shall be insulated in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority for the protection of this proposed accommodation from road traffic noise.
Reason : In the interest of the occupiers of the premises.**

**18. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until: -
a) A desk study report providing information on the previous land uses and an evaluation as to whether ground contamination [i.e.: landfill gas, leachate, ground/surface water pollution] is likely to be present shall be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA).**

b) If the outcome of the above indicates that the site may have a contaminative use or is likely to be contaminated [as defined in section 57 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 with respect to the proposed use], a site investigation including a risk assessment report shall be submitted to and approved by the LPA.

c) Full details of the proposals for the removal, containment or treatment of any contamination [the 'reclamation statement '] shall be submitted to and approved by the LPA.

d) If during any construction or reclamation works any contamination is identified that was not considered in the reclamation statement, the reclamation proposals for this material shall be agreed with the LPA.

e) On completion of the remediation scheme a validation report shall be submitted to and approved by the LPA.

f) All works referred to above shall be carried out by or under the direct supervision of a qualified environmental consultant using current guidance.

Reason : To ensure the proper restoration of the site.

19. The development hereby approved shall be used solely for the purposes of accommodation of students undertaking full time educational courses.

Reason :In order to define the consent having regard to the nature of the proposal and potential adverse impact of an unrestricted consent on the use of the site and the surrounding area.

20. A Management Plan and Travel Plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. The Plans shall establish clear targets and procedures for monitoring and review of such targets, and the Local Planning Authority shall agree any requisite infrastructure improvements and implementation timetable. The Plans shall be implemented as approved.

Reason : In the interests of promoting sustainable travel and highway safety.

21. Prior to the commencement of development a Section 278 Agreement shall be entered into for highway works to be provided to the access on to Bridge Road to accommodate only left in and left out traffic movements and be adopted to the tangent point approximately 10 metres back from Bridge Road.

Reason : In the interests of highway safety.

THE PROPOSAL

1. The site is located to the east side of Boathouse Lane and to the south of Bridge Road (Appendix 1 - site location plan). The land is currently vacant following demolition of the previous building (SCS Furniture Store). It is a prominent site and highly visible, with frontage to the River Tees and adjoining one of the main routes into Stockton Town Centre and is considered a Gateway location.

2. The application site is adjacent to a builder's merchant (Dove) to the west. The land to the immediate south is vacant, having been cleared some time ago of all buildings. The eastern boundary is made up by the River Tees. On the opposite side of Bridge Road, to the north, is Chandlers Wharf, a retail and leisure park containing outlets occupied by Burger King and Mecca Bingo. Approximately 65 metres northwest of the application site is the original Grade II* listed booking office of the Stockton - Darlington railway that adjoins a Hostel (number 50-56 Bridge Road), which is also listed (Grade II).

3. The application site forms part of a larger site known as Boathouse Lane, an area characterised by industrial and basic commercial buildings. The Council has prepared a Planning and Design Brief for Boathouse Lane to aid the area's comprehensive redevelopment.

4. As previously mentioned this application is in outline and seeks to establish whether the development of the site for student accommodation is acceptable in principle. A supporting statement covering planning policy, transport, need/demand for student accommodation and other planning issues accompanies the application. The applicant states that the proposed scheme would establish the principle of development of a vacant site, which is not allocated for any other use within the local plan. The development of this site would act as a catalyst for further redevelopment of the Boathouse Lane area with associated regeneration benefits for the immediate area as well as benefits for the Stockton area as a whole. The proposal would provide accommodation for a maximum of 300 students (assuming an occupancy rate of nearly 90%). The applicant goes on to say that it is situated within a sustainable location with regular bus services available between the town centre and the University, which are both within easy walking or cycling distance.

5. Access to the site is off Bridge Road (Appendix 2 – proposed access). It should be noted that the application site has full planning permission for the erection of a retail unit (app. No. 04/0474/FUL), which would access the site from a similar location. Siting, design, external appearance and landscaping are reserved for a future submission.

CONSULTATIONS

6. Neighbouring properties have been consulted which are primarily businesses and they have been individually notified of the application. The application has also been advertised on site and in the local press.

7. The following Consultees were notified and their comments they made are below: _

Head of Integrated Transport and Environmental Policy

The development is to be designed and constructed in accordance with the Council's Design Guide and Specification.

The existing (and proposed) site access forms a priority T-junction with Bridge Road approximately 45 metres from the Boathouse Lane signal controlled junction. If the access point is to be reopened safety issues would arise, particularly with right turning manoeuvres into and out of the junction due to the large volume of traffic on Bridge Road. Although the application drawings do not provide any detail with regard to the proposed access point it is assumed that the intention is to open the junction for all movements. Due to the proximity of the Boathouse Lane Signals this cannot be considered on safety grounds. A left in, left out only junction could be considered as an alternative and suitable engineering measures to enforce this restriction would be required under a section 278 agreement, Highways Act 1980.

Bridge Road adjacent to the site has two lanes of traffic in each direction. Westbound vehicles travel quickly towards the site access from Victoria Bridge which restricts visibility (Although a 4.5 x 90m visibility splay is available to the right from the access). The present heavy traffic volumes on Bridge Road will reduce when the South Stockton Link Road east facing slip roads onto the A66 open.

The nearest controlled pedestrian crossing of Bridge Road is located at the western side of the Boathouse Lane junction. A commuted lump sum is required for the provision of a pedestrian phase and improvements at the Bridge Road/ Boathouse Lane signals to assist pedestrian links to the wider area.

I have no objection on highway grounds to this development subject to the following:

- A commuted lump sum of £8,000 for the provision of pedestrian improvements at the signals at Boathouse Lane.
- A commuted lump sum of £22,000 for the provision of public transport infrastructure.

- The access on to Bridge Road should subject to a section 278 agreement to accommodate only left in and left out traffic movements and be adopted to the tangent point approximately 10 metres back from Bridge Road.

Environmental Health Unit

No objection in principle subject to conditions covering noise disturbance between living accommodation, noise disturbance from adjacent road traffic and possible land contamination.

Cleveland Archaeologist Section

Previous comments enclosed which refer to the earlier Full application. This is a gateway site into the town and would benefit from a high quality landmark building. The current proposal is a fairly functional affair and something with more townscape value, to complement the Victoria Bridge and the listed buildings along Bridge Road, would be in order.

The Environment Agency

The Agency has no objections, in principle, to the proposed development subject to imposition of the following planning conditions covering floor levels, safe routes, storage of oils, drainage and settlement facility:

CE Electric UK

Standard mains record shown

Northumbrian Water Limited

Standard drainage conditions

Durham and Tees Valley Airport

No objection

English Heritage

This outline application will, no doubt, stimulate a comprehensive planning assessment of this site including an urban design appraisal and, ideally, a design brief, which will draw on the relationship to the listed buildings close by and the impact of tall buildings within the wider Stockton Town Centre.

The need for high quality design solution is paramount on this important gateway site into the historic town centre.

We hope that the applicant, in relation to design matters, will be given clear guidance on the form and quality of development that will be permitted including design quality, height limits and relationship to the conservation area and listed buildings close by.

One North East

It is noted that this outline planning application follows an application for full planning permission for student housing which was refused by your Council in February 2006. I understand that the applicants have lodged an appeal in respect of that decision which will be dealt with at an informal hearing.

Clearly the fact that the applicants are now seeking approval only in principle to develop this site for student housing removes some of the Agency's previous concerns relating to design issues, namely: scale, massing, active ground floor frontage, satisfactory design of elevation to river frontage and satisfactory materials' palette. In the event that the Council is minded to approve this outline application then these are issues, which the Agency considers should be addressed by the imposition of appropriate conditions to be resolved by the applicants at the Reserved Matters stage.

The Agency would also welcome the imposition of a condition requiring this scheme to be set in the context of a masterplanning exercise for an area with boundaries corresponding to those

included in the Council's Draft Supplementary Planning Document. This exercise would ensure that the applicants' proposal acknowledges the requirements of this wider area, satisfactorily addressing any issues arising, to ensure that this proposed development for student housing does not prejudice or jeopardise future development of the remainder of the masterplan area.

I confirm that the Agency would wish to be consulted further on any Reserved Matters applications.

Notwithstanding the above, ONE's previous comments relating to the implications of the development of this site for two of the Agency's strategic projects remain relevant for this current outline planning application. These comments are set out below:

North Shore

North Shore is one of Tees Valley Regeneration's and the Agency's five strategic regeneration sites in Tees Valley. Amec and Urban Splash have been selected as preferred developers to deliver a mixed-use masterplan that has outline planning permission. The development includes the provision of student accommodation for the University of Durham. There remain concerns that this proposed development, on a less integrated site in terms of its physical relationship to the University, has the potential to undermine established regeneration objectives for North Shore.

Southern Gateway & Riverside Masterplan

A masterplan is currently being commissioned by Stockton BC (using Single Programme funding) to cover the southern riverside/town centre area of Stockton including the application site. In addition to the masterplan preparation, the Council's draft planning and design brief supplementary planning document for the Boat House Lane area (referred to earlier), although not yet adopted, has undergone its consultation exercise and out of this exercise the Council will respond and make recommendations.

One NorthEast considers that, in this context, the proposed development of this site is premature and potentially prejudicial to adjacent development sites and may set an unsatisfactory precedent for other similar piecemeal development within the Southern Gateway. There is particular concern that the development of the site, if developed outside of the comprehensive masterplanning exercise, may frustrate future access requirements of the adjoining sites.

Tees Valley Regeneration

Tees Valley Regeneration is broadly supportive of the redevelopment of Boathouse Lane. However, we feel that any redevelopment should take place in a comprehensive manner, through an established masterplan and agreed design principles. We therefore believe that the application is premature, and wish to make the following comments:

(1) Draft Boathouse Lane Planning and Design Brief and Southern Gateway Masterplan

A draft planning and design brief has been prepared by Stockton Borough Council to guide future development on the site served by Boathouse Lane. In addition, consultants are to be appointed by Stockton Borough Council to undertake a masterplanning exercise to determine development opportunities on a number of sites in, and around, the southern end of the town centre, and adjacent waterfront sites, including Boathouse Lane. This work is now advanced.

Taking into consideration that these two important pieces of work that will set the agenda and context for future development on the site and surrounding area have yet to be completed, any development at this stage would be premature. It would set a precedent for future development, encourage piece meal schemes, and therefore prejudice potential development opportunities.

It is our view that all developments coming forward in the Boathouse Lane area should be co-ordinated within the Southern Gateway and Riverside Sites Masterplan. Only by taking this approach will redevelopment of the area create a real sense of place on this strategic riverside site and gateway into Stockton. We would expect the masterplan to address

important issues such as, site access, mix of uses, phasing linkages between development sites, linkages from the town centre through to the river and provision of open space and community facilities etc. We therefore believe that the developer would benefit from working with the Council as the masterplan develops in order to bring this site forward and maximise its development potential.

(2) North Shore

North Shore is one of Tees Valley Regeneration's five strategic development sites in the Tees Valley. The regeneration of North Shore presents a unique opportunity for Stockton and the Tees Valley. It has the potential to transform Stockton acting as a driver for economic growth in the Tees Valley City Region. The vision for North Shore is to achieve a comprehensive redevelopment of the site by delivering a high quality and commercially successful mixed-use development. AMEC/Urban Splash have been selected as preferred developers.

A key element of the development is the expansion of the University of Durham's Queen's Campus, including a provision for student accommodation. Outline consent for North Shore will be granted shortly subject to signing a varied Section 278 Agreement. Therefore, the need for student accommodation and phasing of any proposed development is an important consideration.

(3) The Sequential Test

North Shore is located on the north bank of the River Tees directly opposite the University of Durham's Queens Campus. The new footbridge will provide direct pedestrian/cycle access between the two sites ensuring an integrated campus, where the need to travel between university accommodation and campus facilities is minimised. It is therefore considered that North Shore is a sequentially preferable site in a more sustainable location than Boathouse Lane.

(4) Need

We would request that Stockton Borough Council contact the University of Durham for a response on the need/demand for the additional student accommodation proposed in this application.

(5) Quality

As this is an outline application, Tees Valley Regeneration has no specific comments to make regarding quality. However, we do concur with CABE's view made on the previous detailed planning application (ref: 05/3429/FUL) that a design led approach to comprehensive redevelopment of the site is vital.

We therefore feel that it would be very beneficial to refer any proposed development as it comes forward to CABE's Design Review Panel. Boathouse Lane is a strategic site for Stockton in an important gateway location, achieving quality development on the site is essential if successful regeneration of the town is to be achieved.

Police Crime Reduction Architect

No comments received

PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATION

8. Where an adopted or approved development plan contains relevant policies, section 54A of the Town and Country planning Act requires that an application for planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the Plan, unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the relevant Development Plans are the Tees Valley Structure Plan and the Stockton on Tees Local Plan.

9. The following policies of the adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan are considered to be relevant to this decision;

Policy GP1

Proposals for development will be assessed in relation to the policies of the Cleveland Structure Plan and the following criteria as appropriate:

- (i) The external appearance of the development and its relationship with the surrounding area;
- (ii) The effect on the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties;
- (iii) The provision of satisfactory access and parking arrangements;
- (iv) The contribution of existing trees and landscape features;
- (v) The need for a high standard of landscaping;
- (vi) The desire to reduce opportunities for crime;
- (vii) The intention to make development as accessible as possible to everyone;
- (viii) The quality, character and sensitivity of existing landscapes and buildings;
- (ix) The effect upon wildlife habitats;
- (x) The effect upon the public rights of way network.

Policy HO3

Within the limits of development, residential development may be permitted provided that:

- (i) The land is not specifically allocated for another use; and
- (ii) The land is not underneath electricity lines; and
- (iii) It does not result in the loss of a site which is used for recreational purposes; and
- (iv) It is sympathetic to the character of the locality and takes account of and accommodates important features within the site; and
- (v) It does not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity to adjacent land users; and
- (vi) Satisfactory arrangements can be made for access and parking.

Policy HO11

New residential development should be designed and laid out to:

- (i) Provide a high quality of built environment which is in keeping with its surroundings;
- (ii) Incorporate open space for both formal and informal use;
- (iii) Ensure that residents of the new dwellings would have a satisfactory degree of privacy and amenity;
- (iv) Avoid any unacceptable effect on the privacy and amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties;
- (v) Pay due regard to existing features and ground levels on the site;
- (vi) Provide adequate access, parking and servicing;
- (vii) Subject to the above factors, to incorporate features to assist in crime prevention.

Policy EN28

Development which is likely to detract from the setting of a Listed Building will not be permitted

The Tees Valley Structure Plan does not contain any policy applicable directly to the application site. In general terms however the Structure plan is based on a strategy to ensure that most new development takes place within or on the edge of the main urban areas together with regeneration of rundown, urban areas.

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Communities lists design as one of the fundamental ways of delivering sustainable development and states that planning authorities should prepare robust policies on design and access. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its present defining characteristics.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing identifies the priority given to different housing sites and states that Local Planning Authorities should avoid developments, which make inefficient use of land.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport seeks to integrate planning and transport by reducing the reliance on the motor car, encouraging the use of more sustainable transport choices, reduce the need to travel, and promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, cycling and walking.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment provides comprehensive advice on controls for the protection of historic buildings and conservation areas.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

10. The main considerations in this application are the acceptability of the proposed development on this site, the relationship and impact on future development on the surrounding area and, access and highway safety. Each of these issues will be examined in turn.

Acceptability of the proposed development and impact on future development on the surrounding area

11. The application site is previously developed land and within a major urban area. The site has no specific allocation within the Local Plan so in policy terms is classed as white-land where existing uses are intended to remain. A draft planning and design brief has been prepared by the Council to guide future development on the Boathouse Lane area, which includes the application site. The key objectives of the document are:

- To ensure the appropriate, comprehensive redevelopment of a key River Tees corridor site within the wider context of the Stockton Middlesbrough Initiative;
- To create a Gateway into the town centre, including a regionally - significant landmark building;
- To create a diverse, attractive and exciting place to live work and visit;
- To ensure high quality urban design, which maximises the potential use of the water frontage location,
- To protect and enhance the natural and historic environment;
- To improve linkages with surrounding land uses.

12. The Brief highlights the application site as the optimal location for an iconic building or feature in addition to the optimal secondary access to the larger redevelopment area.

13. Following a six week period of consultation it is intended to adopt the brief as a Supplementary Planning Document, which will therefore be a material consideration in the determination of any subsequent planning application(s) received by the Council. Although not formally adopted at this time, the brief does provide a useful, relevant document, which sets out the Council's aspirations for the area. Consideration must therefore be given as to whether development of the application site in the manner proposed would sufficiently harm the proper planning and comprehensive redevelopment of the area.

14. In terms of the proposed use for student accommodation, the applicant has submitted a supporting document, a section of which is concerned with need/demand for student accommodation. The applicant argues that taking account of the University of Durham's current provision and growth strategy this development would provide accommodation for less than 9% of the student population. Furthermore the University's suggested long-term goal which would be to provide a further 1000 bedspaces on land to the north and south shore of the river demonstrates that there is a high level of demand. On the assumption that this level of additional provision is

delivered the applicant argues that there would still be demand for the application site and has produced figures to support their assertion.

15. It should be noted that a key element of the development of North Shore (one of Tees Valley's Regeneration's five strategic development sites in the Tees Valley) is an expansion of the University's Queen's Campus which includes a provision for student accommodation. Tees Valley Regeneration (TVR) has stated that the need for student accommodation and phasing of any proposed development is an important consideration. Furthermore TVR consider that the North Shore is a sequentially preferable site in a more sustainable location than Boathouse Lane.

16. Considering the issue of need for the proposed student accommodation, the Local Plan contains no specific targets or precise allocations for this particular use and therefore the need or lack of it cannot be addressed through the provisions of the Local Plan. The University (the generator of need) has in place a strategy designed to meet its own needs and indeed the North Shore Outline approval contains provision for student accommodation for the University of Durham. However it must be noted that the University does not have a statutory requirement to provide accommodation for its own students and the thrust of ministerial guidance advises that it is not the role of the planning system to restrict competition. In the absence of evidence to suggest that the overall requirement for student accommodation within the Borough has been met then the proposed use is acceptable in principle subject to satisfying other planning requirements.

17. As previously mentioned the application site is considered as part of the Planning and Design Brief for the Boathouse Lane area. The Council envisages a mixed-use residential scheme for the area, and it is fully recognised that the site is a highly sustainable location in a central urban location being close to existing facilities and services in Stockton Town Centre, including the University Campus and public transport.

18. The application site already has consent for a retail shed and it is accepted that the implementation of this existing approval may frustrate the desire for the provision of a landmark/iconic building and a second access as set out in the Draft Boathouse Lane Development Brief. It is considered with the imposition of strict controls on the future design and siting these objectives are more likely to be met. It is therefore considered that there are sufficient controls available covering the reserved matters and the granting of outline for the principle of student accommodation would not prejudice the achievement of the future comprehensive redevelopment of the surrounding area.

19. The Council through a masterplanning exercise to establish agreed design principles is currently promoting a design led approach to the regeneration of the area. This exercise will also assist in assessing the appropriate design response in terms of appropriate urban scale and massing, maximising views, pedestrian/cyclist permeability/accessibility and the treatment of the public realm and comprehensive treatment of the surrounding area. A condition covering future reserved matters to be considered against a masterplan should provide sufficient control to ensure any future development is of the desired standard for this key gateway location.

Access and Highway Safety

20. Access to the site is off Bridge Road. The Head of Integrated Transport and Environmental Policy (HITEP) has considered the access arrangements and subject to the applicant entering into a unilateral undertaking to contribute towards the provision of pedestrian improvements at the signals at Boathouse Lane, provision of public transport infrastructure and section 278 works to the access, raises no objection on highway grounds to the proposed development.

CONCLUSION

21. It is considered that the principle of student accommodation is acceptable in this location. The proposed access satisfies the requirements of HITEP. The proposal is in accordance with relevant planning policy and guidance and is therefore recommended for approval with conditions.

Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services

Contact Officer Mr Gregory Archer

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Financial Implications – As report

Environmental Implications – As report

Community Safety Implications – As report

Background Papers – Stockton on Tees Local Plan, PPS1, PPG3, PPG13, PPG15, App. Nos. 04/0474/FUL and 05/3429/FUL

Human Rights Implications – The provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights 1950 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Ward	Stockton Town Centre
Ward Councillor	Councillor D. W. Coleman

Ward	Stockton Town Centre
Ward Councillor	Councillor P. Kirton