

DELEGATED

**AGENDA NO
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

DATE: 6th December 2006

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

06/3288/LA

Parkside Centre, 9 Melrose Avenue, Billingham

Revised application for the extension to existing car park to create 41no. parking spaces (including disabled) and installation of 4no. 4m high lighting columns.

Expiry date: 3rd January 2007

SUMMARY

The application site is a Mental Health Day unit situated on Melrose Avenue, Billingham.

Planning permission is sought for the extension to the existing car park to create an extra 6 spaces for the centre, and the installation of four 4m high lighting columns. The creation of the car park will involve the removal of approximately 3 trees on the site.

The proposal has been publicised by means of individual letters of notification to neighbours. However, the consultation period expires on the 30th November 2006, after the drafting of this report and therefore any representations received will be sent out in an update report. To date no representations have been received.

It is considered that subject to the conditions set out below, the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the visual amenity and the streetscene, the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties nor highway safety and therefore the proposal accords with Policy GP1 of the Stockton on Tees Local Plan. As there are no other material considerations which indicate otherwise, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that planning application 06/3288/LA be approved subject to the following conditions, and any other considered relevant and necessary:

- 01. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.***

Drawing numbers(s) 0255-0883-8592-W3 Rev D, 0255-0883-8592-E3 Rev A, 0255-0883-8592-E5.

- 02. The sizes of the replacement trees as identified on plan no. 0255-0883-8592-W3 Rev D shall be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development commences. The replacement trees should be planted within the first planting season following commencement of development. Should the replacement trees die, become damaged or diseased within the first five years they shall be replaced within the first planting season following its demise with a species to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

Reason: in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

- 03. No development shall commence until a scheme of landscaping and construction methods has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall indicate those areas of landscaping to be retained, construction methods to be used around landscaping, a scheme for the protection of existing vegetation accordance with BS5837 and full details of surfacing materials.**

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity of the area.

- 04. The proposed security lighting hereby approved shall not be operated outside the hours of 0730 to 1900.**

Reason in the interests of the amenity of neighbouring residents

- 05. Before the use of the car park commences the lighting hereby approved shall be shielded and aligned to avoid the spread of light in accordance with the scheme to be the Local Planning Authority and thereafter such lighting shall be maintained to the same specification and adjusted, when necessary, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.**

Reason: To avoid light pollution in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the Adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan set out below

Adopted Stockton on Tees Plan policy GP1

BACKGROUND

- 1. The Parkside Centre is owned and operated by the Council's Children Education and Social Care division, and provides accommodation for a Mental Health Day Unit**
- 2. The applicant has sought to justify the additional spaces and sets out that the current parking facilities provides spaces for 35 vehicles. It has been estimated by the manager of the Unit that at least 15 cars arrive daily for full time staff. Visitors such as Police, Solicitors and Social Workers also use the conferencing facility and Review Unit and that averages and extra 10 cars at the site per day. In addition to this, buses taking patients to and from the unit,**

doctors, nurses and ancillary staff means that parking is a problem on the site. The new spaces are required to accommodate the additional demand.

3. This is a revised planning application. The previous application was withdrawn to rework the parking layout and to address the forthcoming disability discrimination laws.

THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

4. The Parkside centre is located to the west of Melrose Avenue and to the East of Corfe Crescent and Skipton Road in Billingham. The Centre comprises a 'U' shaped brick building set within its own grounds which comprise grassland, vegetation, trees and area of carparking and garages. The site is partially enclosed by low hedging

THE PROPOSAL

5. The parking spaces would be laid out in two areas. Firstly to the north of the site, on a grassed area adjacent to no.9 to 15 Melrose Avenue. This would entail the partial removal of a small area of shrubs and trees. The spaces would be located approximately 1m from the boundary to Melrose Avenue and a minimum distance of 1.5m from the footpath separating the site from the boundaries of 9 to 15 Melrose Avenue. Secondly, to the west of the site where the existing garage block would be demolished to make way for the new spaces.
6. Two of the four lighting columns are proposed for the northeastern boundary of the site, within the parking area, adjacent to the boundary of the site to Melrose Avenue and angled to face southwest. The remaining two are proposed adjacent the spaces towards the centre of the site and would face towards the Day Centre.
7. Tree planting is proposed along the southern elevation boundary of the site to Melrose Avenue to replace those lost to the development.

PUBLICITY

8. The proposal has been publicised by means of individual letters of notification to neighbours. However, the consultation period expires on the 30th November 2006, after the drafting of this report and therefore any representations received will be sent out in an update report. To date no representations have been received.

CONSULTATION

Environmental Health Unit

9. Full comments to be set out in update report

Landscape Officer

10. Full comments to be set out in update report

Head of Integrated Transport and Engineering

11. Full comments to be set out in update report

PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

12. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the relevant Development Plans are the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), Adopted Tees Valley Structure Plan (TVSP) and the Adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan (STLP).

The following planning policies are considered to be relevant to the consideration of this application:

Adopted Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan

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

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

13. The main material planning considerations are the likely impact on the visual amenity and the streetscene, the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties and access and highway safety considerations.

Visual Amenity and the Streetscene

14. The existing unit is a predominantly single storey building situated in a residential area and was erected on a distributor road within the estate when the estate was first built.
15. The proposed new spaces will be located to the north of the centre on a grassed area, and a 1.5m high privet hedge currently helps to screen and soften the new development. A group of hawthorn trees is located towards the centre of this grassed area, and other single trees line the northern boundary of the site. Those trees, the grassed area and the privet hedge are important in the overall streetscene of the area. The new parking to the east of the site requires the removal of approximately 3 trees directly behind the hedge along the boundary of the site to Melrose Avenue. However, replacement planting elsewhere on the site is proposed.
16. Vehicles will be visible from behind this hedge from Melrose Avenue. Nevertheless, it is considered that the hedge would help soften the impact of the physical bulk of the parked cars, and the cumulative impact of those vehicles and those already parking adjacent to residential properties would not have an unacceptable impact on the streetscene.
17. The car parking spaces themselves would be screened to some extent by the 1.5m hedge. The lighting columns would be clearly visible, both lit and unlit and cannot be screened from views. However, there are other vertical structures close by including street lighting columns and a telegraph pole, and so it is not considered that those columns would be an a new, unusual nor conspicuous element in the streetscene. However full construction details and protection measures will be required before the ground works start to ensure survival of the hedge and remaining trees.
18. It is not considered that the loss of the garages would be to the detriment of the streetscene nor detract from local character. Similarly, it is not considered that their replacement by an area of parking would have an adverse impact in visual terms.
19. The full comments of the Council's Landscape officer will be addressed in an update report, however it is anticipated that the removal and replacement the trees will be acceptable.
20. It is therefore considered that the propose development would have an adverse impact on visual amenity or the streetscene and therefore accords with adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan policy GP1 in this respect.

Amenity of Occupants of Neighbouring Properties

21. The creation of parking bays adjacent to the properties of 9-15 Melrose Avenue and could have an impact on the amenity of the residents in terms of disturbance arising from noise and light. However, it is considered that the parking spaces at a minimum distance of 9.5m from neighbouring properties would help avoid noise and light disturbance arising from the comings and goings in the car park. As the Day Unit operates between the hours of 0900 and 1830, the period in which the extra vehicular and pedestrian traffic could impact upon the occupants is limited. Although the additional cars will be visible from the above properties, it is considered that the 1.5m high hedge

and trees within the site will help to diffuse headlights and screen parked cars.

22. The erection of two 4 metre high lighting columns adjacent to the boundary of the site to Melrose Avenue is required to provide security for the car park and employees leaving the site during times of poor light/darkness. It is proposed that these lights will only be operational within the period 0730 to 1900 to give some flexibility around the opening hours of 0800 to 1830, and this will reduce any potential impact on neighbouring residents. The new lighting would add to that arising from existing streetlights, but provided that the new lights are properly angled and shielded, it is not considered that the both the individual and cumulative impact of the lighting would be of such significance as to warrant refusal of planning permission on those grounds. A condition requiring the submission of full details of the operation and lighting arrangements to restrict the hours of use and prevent light spill and so that the lights do not shine directly into any dwelling will be attached to any permission granted.
23. The remaining two lighting columns are proposed on the adjacent to the car parking which faces the Day Unit. Given the position of the lighting, relative to the nearest residential property, and the control afforded by the condition outlined in paragraph 22, it is not considered that these two lights would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.
24. It is considered that subject to the imposition of appropriately worded conditions relating to details of lighting and their operating times, the proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties. The proposal therefore accords with adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan policy GP1 in this respect and is therefore acceptable.

Access and Highway Safety considerations

25. It is considered that the proposal will reduce on street parking and therefore improve highway safety. Although the full comments of the Head of Integrated Transport and Environmental Policy have not been received it is anticipated that the proposal will be acceptable in terms of highway safety. It is therefore it is considered that the proposal will accord with adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan policy GP1 and is acceptable in this respect.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

26. In light of the above assessment, it is considered that subject to the conditions set out above the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the visual amenity and the streetscene, the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties nor highway safety and therefore the proposal accords with Policy GP1 of the Stockton on Tees Local Plan. As there are no other material considerations which indicate otherwise, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

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Financial Implications

As report.

Environmental Implications

As Report

Community Safety Implications

N/A

Human Rights Implications

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

Background Papers

Adopted Stockton-on-Tees Adopted Local Plan (June 1997)

06/3091/REV

06/2229/LA

Ward Billingham Central

Ward Councillors Councillor N Teasdale
Councillor B Woodhouse