

**DELEGATED**

**AGENDA NO.**

**PLANNING COMMITTEE  
6<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2006**

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

**06/3043/FUL**

**Former Wimpey Headquarters site, Bowesfield lane, Stockton.  
Erection of 3 storey headquarter office building with associated service  
access, car parking and landscaping.  
Expiry date: 28<sup>th</sup> December 2006**

**Summary:**

This application is one of three applications proposed for the site. All applications relate to the land which forms the former Wimpey Offices and depot/storage yard (06/3027/OUT, 06/3028/FUL and 06/3043/FUL).

The application site measures approximately 1.8 hectares and lies approximately 2 metres to the south of Stockton Town Centre and is prominently situated adjacent to the newly constructed South Stockton Link Road and the A66. An existing office block lies in the western edge of the site with the former storage and distribution yard/depot that occupies the majority of the eastern area of the site; existing landscaping surrounds the site in the form of a tree belt and landscaping mound.

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a contemporary three-storey headquarters office building. The building would provide approximately 6,500 sq.m of floorspace and is intended to serve around 600 employees. A total of 284 parking spaces are provided

**Recommendations:**

***Planning application 06/3043/FUL to be delegated to the Head of Planning and Environment for approval subject to no adverse comments from statutory consultees and the following conditions below.***

***In the event there are still outstanding matters on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2006 the application be refused.***

***Approved Plans***

***Time limits***

***Materials***

***Drainage (foul and surface)***

***Landscaping Plan (hard construction)***

***Landscaping – Planting plan***

***Planting and Maintenance specification***

***Means of enclosure***

***Tree protection measures***

***Surface water run-off***

**Land Contamination**  
**Construction Noise (8am-6pm Monday-Friday, 8am-1pm Saturday)**  
**Proposed Levels**  
**Lighting details**  
**Covered cycle parking**  
**Bin Storage**

And any additional conditions is as seen to be necessary

Policy GP1, EN30 and EN32a of the adopted Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan, Planning Policy Guidance 4: Industrial, commercial development and small firms, Planning Policy Guidance No. 25: Development and Flood Risk, Planning policy Statement 1: Creating Sustainable Communities and Planning Policy Statement No.6: Planning For Town Centres are considered to be relevant to this decision.

**Background:**

1. This application is one of three applications proposed for the site. All applications relate to the land which forms the former Wimpey Offices and depot/storage yard to the rear of the site.
2. Application 06/3027/OUT seeks outline planning consent for development to the rear of the site and will form phases 3, 4 and 5 of the proposed development and involves space for smaller office space and an industrial campus.
3. Application 06/3028/FUL seeks planning permission for the front element of the site and includes both the refurbishment of the existing office building and the erection of two new office units.

**The Proposal:**

4. The application site measures approximately 1.8 hectares and lies approximately 2 metres to the south of Stockton Town Centre and is prominently situated adjacent to the newly constructed South Stockton Link Road, the A66 and is adjacent to Bowesfield Lane.
5. At present the site contains an existing office block in the west of the site with associated parking. There is an internal access to the former storage and distribution yard/depot that occupies the majority of the eastern area of the site. There is also some existing landscaping surrounding the site in the form of a tree belt and landscaping mound.
6. Planning permission is sought for the erection of a contemporary three-storey headquarter office building on land that would form phases 3 and 4 of the development proposed under the outline planning application for the development (06/3027/OUT).
7. The proposed building would measure a maximum of approximately 68m (long) x 47m (wide) and reach a maximum height of approximately 14.5 metres. The building would provide approximately 6,500 sq.m of floorspace and is intended to serve around 600 employees. A total of 284 parking spaces are to be provided.

## **Consultations**

8. The following Consultees were notified and any comments they made are below

### **Head of Integrated Transport and Environmental Policy**

The development should be designed and constructed in accordance with the Councils Design Guide and Specification (Residential and Industrial Estates Development) current edition, and to that end I comment as follows: -

Parking within the proposed development for employees is acceptable as is the number of disabled bays provided.

Parking for visitors is acceptable, although there is no provision for disabled visitors, therefore this needs to be rectified.

There should be covered / secure cycle storage for 66 number cycles.

There is a five a-side football pitch proposed on this site and possible pavilion. Clarification is sought as to whether or not this is for private use only.

The site connects Bowesfield Lane to Bowesfield Crescent by a direct through route. This must be severed in order that through traffic through the site is prevented.

Further details of the Bowesfield Crescent secondary access are required.

Traffic generation has been selected as mean values from the TRICS database. It is argued that the site is near to residential and town centre facilities. However, the site is 2 number miles from the Town Centre and at present there are limited properties within close proximity, therefore the TA must be re-submitted with the correct 85 %ile TRICS rates. The traffic distribution is acceptable.

The junction of Bowesfield Lane / Bowesfield Crescent is a priority junction, with most traffic turning to or from the minor leg. The TA makes no assessment of the impact of additional traffic on the Northern leg of the junction. A full assessment of this junction is required and any mitigation measures detailed.

Full analysis of the Riverside roundabout was dismissed, as traffic generation was less than 10%. However, this is a junction with existing capacity problems and any additional traffic at Riverside roundabout must be carefully considered and mitigation for the impact of the additional traffic assessed.

### **Environmental Health Unit**

Further to your memorandum regarding the above, I have no objection in principle to the development, however, I do have concerns regarding the following environmental issues and would recommend the conditions as detailed be imposed on the development should it be approved.

- Possible land contamination
- Construction Noise

### **Development Plans Officer**

The site has an established use for B1 (office) given the existence of the former George Wimpey building. Given this existing use, office development on the site is considered to be acceptable in principle and off sets any policy objection based on the emerging RSS.

### **Landscape Officer**

I refer to our meeting of 23 November 2006 regarding the above and comment as follows:

Whilst the Bowesfield Campus Landscape and Visual Technical Report sets out general principles for development for this site no landscape details are provided. The application also fails to address the sites context or set out mitigation proposals of potential adverse impacts.

#### Detailed Drawings

Drg. B626 - 102 Outline Application Proposed Site Layout Whilst outline the application drawing provides an illustration of a potential layout. However the application as previously discussed fails to provide any contextual information regarding its accurate location to existing trees and highway network or proposed levels. Visually there appears to be a significant change in level on this site

With regard to the layout I make additional comments, which take into account the wider regeneration aims of the Council. There is an opportunity to integrate this site into its wider surroundings by landscaping the land between this application site and the SSLR. This landscaping would provide the necessary level of screening for the development site. Without the benefit of offsite planting I would have concerns that the development would be visually intrusive to views afforded to travelers using this busy link road. A Section 106 contribution should be sought for this work. The level of contribution for this off site work has been calculated at £63,000 at today's rates.

Drg ASS/495 Topographical Survey Existing Line and level survey information has been provided but details of proposed levels is required together with any cut and fill proposals. These must take in to account the sites proximity to trees that are to be retained and the existing highway network

The Topographical survey indicated a number of mature trees, which should be retained where possible in any new layout

#### Generally

Should approval be given to this application, conditions should be placed on the following:

Tree Retention. A tree survey shall be prepared in accordance with be BS 5837: 2005 Trees in Relation to Construction for approval by the LPA. All trees within the site and adjacent to the site should be fully recorded and where retained protected in accordance with BS 5837: 2005/ The applicant should also note:

- Protective fencing shall be erected at the limits of the Protection Zone;
- No changes in levels shall be permitted within the within the Protection Zones;
- Where tree roots are encountered, only hand digging will be allowed;
- Compaction to the root spread of the tree must be avoided;
- No storage of materials will be permitted within the Protection Zone;
- Excavations for any new service runs into the site must be located outside of the tree Protection Zones. Services must be routed away from all retained trees to prevent severance of roots during the excavation of trenches. Where this is not possible approved trenching methods shall be in accordance with NJUG10. Routes to be provided for our consideration prior to excavation.

Detailed Landscape Planting Proposals Details of the proposed planting are required, along with hard landscaping proposals for approval by the LPA. Full details shall be provided to the following minimum standard:

- A detailed landscape plan for hard construction (floorscape and incidental buildings and street furniture)) indicating materials and construction methods;
- Boundary treatment details;
- A detailed planting plan indicating soil depths, plant species, numbers, densities, locations, and sizes,
- Detailed planting and maintenance specification for a period of 5 years;
- Street Lighting and lighting of buildings The following lighting details must be provided in due course for consideration for discharge of external works conditions:
  - *Design of Lighting Unit (manufacturer and reference code);*
  - *Length of lighting column;*
  - *Colour of light source and level of luminance;*
  - *Colour of columns;*
  - *Lighting colour and luminance levels, if any of external wall of buildings,*

Should offsite contributions be conditioned then the soft landscape work associated with these would be undertaken by SBC as the land and proposed landscaping would remain in SBC ownership as Highway Land.

Proposed Levels including with any cut and fill proposals. shall be submitted for approval.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Techniques to minimise surface water run off shall be considered as part of the surface treatment of the car parking areas. There may also be an opportunity to integrate this development site into the wider sustainable drainage system, of the adjacent Bowesfield Park.

In conclusion I have concerns that the application has the potential to have an adverse visual impact on the wider regeneration initiatives of the council but suggest that these concerns can be overcome by the provision of off site landscaping. This offsite landscaping being secured via a S106 Contribution.

### **Highways Agency**

In order to determine the predicted impact of the proposed development on the trunk road network, Mayer Brown should provide the following additional information / analysis:

Details of the TEMPRO growth factors that have been used

Details of the committed developments used, including traffic forecasts and distribution

Check the status of the previous Bowesfield Farm and Bowesfield Park proposals (include as committed development if appropriate)

Trip generation should be based on 85th percentile trip rates

Full highway capacity assessment of the A66 Bowesfield Interchange, including merge / diverge assessments of the slip roads for 15 years after opening

Framework Travel Plan for the site

In addition to the above, the parking provision for the proposed headquarters should be reduced to comply with maximum parking standards for this area.

### **The Environment Agency**

No objections, but request that planning conditions are imposed on any approval to cover the following issues;

\* Surface water run-off

\* Land Contamination

### **Northern Gas Networks**

No objections

### **Northumbrian Water Limited**

Require the developer to contact them with regards to connect to the water supply and foul/surface water discharge systems. Concerns are also raised in relation to the proximity of the development in relation to the main that runs through the site.

### **English Nature**

Based on the information provided, Natural England advises that the above proposal is unlikely to have an adverse affect in respect of species especially protected by law.

### **Tees Archaeology Section**

Thank you for the details of the above planning applications.

Our records show that this site was initially developed as the Richmond and Tees Bridge Ironworks in the late 19th century. These sites consisted of large foundry's fronting Bowesfield Lane with expansive waste heaps spreading out towards the river.

These industrial sites had been cleared by the early 1970s and it is unlikely that there are significant remains surviving. I therefore have no objection to the proposals and no further comments to make.

### **NEDL**

No objections but refer the developer to the Health and Safety Executives publications on working with and in around electricity.

9. The application has been advertised on site and in the Local Press as well as individual letters being sent to neighbouring residents. The neighbour consultation period expired on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2006. No letters of objection have been received to the proposed development.

### **Planning Policy Considerations**

10. Where an adopted or approved development plan contains relevant policies, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application for planning permissions shall be determined in accordance with the Development Plan(s) for the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the relevant Development Plans are the Tees Valley Structure Plan (TVSP) and the Stockton on Tees Local Plan (STLP).
11. The following planning policies are considered to be relevant to the consideration of this application:

#### **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.

##### **Policy EN 30**

Development which affects sites of archaeological interest will not be permitted unless:

- (i.) An investigation of the site has been undertaken; and
- (ii.) An assessment has been made of the impact of the development upon the remains; and where appropriate;
- (iii.) Provision has been made for preservation 'in situ'. Where preservation is not appropriate, the local planning authority will require the applicant to make proper provision for the investigation and recording of the site before and during development.

##### **Policy EN32a**

Proposals for new development will not be permitted within Flood Zones 2 or 3 as shown on the Proposals Map, or other areas identified as at risk of flooding, unless the applicant can demonstrate by means of a Flood Risk Assessment and sequential tests that: -

- i) There is no alternative site at no risk or at lower risk of flooding; and
- ii) There will be no increased risk of flooding to the development; and

iii) There will be no increase in risk of flooding elsewhere as a result of the development.

Where permission is granted for development in flood risk areas, or for development that would increase the risk of flooding, appropriate flood alleviation or mitigation measures, to be funded by the developer, must be undertaken.

The following planning policy documents are also considered to be relevant to this decision:

Planning Policy Guidance 4: Industrial, commercial development and small firms  
Planning Policy Guidance No. 25: Development and Flood Risk  
Planning policy Statement 1: Creating Sustainable Communities  
Planning Policy Statement No.6: Planning For Town Centres

### **Material Planning Considerations**

12. The main planning considerations of this application are the impact on planning policy, the character of the area, amenity of the neighbouring properties, access and highway safety, flood, risk and archaeological interest.

#### **Principle of development;**

13. The application site lies within the limits to development and can be classed as previously developed land. The site is currently unallocated under the adopted 1997 Local Plan.

14. While not being specifically allocated for employment use within the adopted Local Plan the site is situated within Bowesfield Lane Industrial estate. Part of the wider Bowesfield Lane Industrial estate is allocated under policy IN2 (k) for General Industrial (B2) and Storage and Distribution uses (B8).

15. Both Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6) and the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) encourage specific uses to be located within defined centres and that developers should apply a sequential approach if there are no suitable sites within town centres. However, the site has an existing Office (B1) use and although the site lies outside Stockton Town Centre the principle of further B1 use on the site is considered to be acceptable subject to policies GP1, EN30 and EN32a of the adopted Local Plan.

#### **Character of the area;**

16. The proposed Headquarter Office is of a modern, contemporary design and given the existing and derelict nature of the site from its previous uses it is considered that the proposed development would enhance and improve not only the application site but the surrounding area as a whole.

17. The site also occupies a prominent position adjacent to the South Stockton Link Road and the A66 and would play an important role in the regeneration of this currently vacant brownfield site. The need for use of high quality materials to ensure that the scheme and design is successful cannot be ignored although can be addressed via a planning condition.

18. Given the above the proposed development is considered to be visually acceptable and is in accordance with policy GP1 of the adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan.



### **Landscaping features**

19. Overall it is considered that the proposed development is visually acceptable although could be better integrated into the site via the retention of existing planting and by introducing additional vegetation. Various pieces of additional information are also required although these can be addressed via planning conditions.
20. Whilst the landscape office has referred to a commuted lump sum which is required for landscaping this has been addressed as part of application 06/3028/FUL, to which the area to be landscaped lies adjacent to.

### **Amenity;**

21. Given the commercial nature of the proposed development, the site and the surrounding premises it is considered that the surroundings will not have a detrimental impact on the future workers of the proposed building, nor will the headquarters office have such an impact on the surrounding sites and users that the proposed development would justify a refusal under the criteria laid out in policy GP1.

### **Access and Highway Safety;**

22. Both the Head of Integrated Transport and Environmental Policy and the Highways Agency have requested that additional information be supplied in order the impacts of the proposed development can be fully considered. The applicant's have been made aware of the additional requirements and are working towards submitting the additional information in the near future.
23. In light of the current situation it is considered that the Highways issues can most probably be resolved, however, should either of the statutory consultees raise any significant issues this may be sufficient enough to justify a refusal of the application.

### **Flood Risk;**

24. The Environment Agency have been consulted on this application and have commented that they are satisfied that the proposed development does not pose any significant impacts on flood risk, although planning condition is suggested in relation to surface water run off. On the whole the proposed development is therefore judged to be in accordance with policy EN32a of the adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan.

### **Archaeological Interest;**

25. Although the site was developed as the Richmond and Tees Bridge Ironworks in the late 19th century, these industrial sites had been cleared by the early 1970s and it is unlikely that there are significant remains surviving. The development therefore poses little impact on archaeological remains and is in accordance with policy EN30 of the Local Plan.

### **Conclusion.**

26. In conclusion it is considered that the proposed development is visually acceptable, would have to regenerate the site and is in accordance with policies GP1, EN30 and EN32a of the adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan and is consequently recommended for approval subject to the outstanding highways issues being resolved.

**Corporate Director of Development & Neighbourhood Services**  
**Contact Officer: Simon Grundy**  
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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**

Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan

Regional Spatial Strategy

Tees Valley Structure Plan

Planning Policy Guidance 4: Industrial, commercial development and small firms

Planning Policy Guidance No. 25: Development and Flood Risk

Planning policy Statement 1: Creating Sustainable Communities

Planning Policy Statement No.6: Planning For Town Centres

**Ward and Ward Councillors**

Parkfield and Oxbridge Ward

Councillors C. Coombs and R Rix