

**DELEGATED**

**AGENDA NO.**

**REPORT TO PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**6<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF PLANNING  
SERVICES**

**07/0770/OUT**

**Land at Wynyard Golf Club, Wellington Drive, Wynyard**

**Outline application for development comprising 150 bed golf resort hotel with ancillary restaurant and conference facilities, crèche, health club, gymnasium and spa and key worker accommodation; replacement golf club house, golf academy and driving range facilities, associated access, parking and landscaping together with alterations to the golf course layout and formation of new water features and mounding and the formation of a landscaped park/amenity area for residents.**

**Expiry Date: 7 June 2007**

## **SUMMARY**

The planning application relates to an area of land 41.5 hectares in size located on the Southern part of the Wynyard golf club. It seeks outline approval with all matters reserved for future approval except for the means of access for 4 star 150 bed golf hotel together with bars and restaurant, conference facility, health club and spa, replacement club house, and golf academy, key worker accommodation, partial remodelling of the golf course and a residents park

There is an acknowledged need for a hotel of this quality in the area and the chosen site is sequentially the best location and does not prejudice planning policy by being located within the Wynyard estate.

Concerns have been raised by residents and others primarily about the traffic impact on the local roads and that the character of the area will change unacceptably. It is accepted that the traffic associated with the development will have an impact on the area but the Head of Technical Services has confirmed the road system is capable of accommodating the traffic identified in the accompanying Transport Assessment. The character of the area will change once the facility is fully established but not to a level sufficient to warrant refusal of planning permission.

The development will bring important benefits both to the local community through the provision of the new residents park as well as providing new leisure facilities they will be able to access. It will also bring important economic benefits as a potential tourist destination as well as providing a number of new jobs.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

*It is recommended that the application be approved subject to conditions covering the following matters:*

- *Development carried out in accordance with the approved plans*
- *Approval of reserved matters in respect of, siting, design, external appearance and landscaping*
- *Restriction of permission to specified uses*
- *Existing golf club to cease use once replacement facilities have been provided*
- *Tree and hedgerow protection*
- *Further ecological investigations and agreements on timing of works*
- *Event management arrangements*
- *Wheel washing*
- *Provision of a travel plan*
- *Refuse and servicing plan*
- *The access from Wynyard Road to be physically limited for use only for emergency, cyclists and pedestrians with the details including the precise position of the access point to be agreed*
- *Occupancy restriction on key worker accommodation*
- *10% of energy used to be from renewable sources*
- *Management and maintenance arrangements for the residents park*
- *Materials*
- *Means of enclosure*
- *Hours of construction*
- *Surface water drainage and use of sustainable urban drainage systems*
- *Foul drainage*
- *Oil storage*
- *Only uncontaminated natural materials to be deposited on the site*
- *Motor vehicle and cycle parking to appropriate standard*
- *and any other relevant matters*

*The Proposal has been considered against the policies below and it is considered that the scheme accords with these policies and there are no other material considerations which indicate a decision should be otherwise.*

*Stockton on Tees Local Plan policies GP 1, S2, EN4, EN7C, EN9, EN11, TR9, TR15  
Tees Valley Structure Plan policies SUS2, ENV6, ENV13, ENV16, ENV19, T25.  
Regional Planning Guidance polices DP2, TOUR1, T11, ENV1, ENV3, ENV4, ENV7  
Regional Spatial Strategy submitted draft policies Nos 3, 16, 37, 39, 40, 54  
Planning Policy Statements 1, 6, 7 and 9 and Guidance Notes No 13 and 17*

## **BACKGROUND**

### Site Description

1. The application relates to an area of land 41.5 hectares in size located on the Southern part of the Wynyard golf club (Wellington Course) in Wynyard.
2. The application site is bounded to the north by the residential area of Wynyard Village, and the continuation of the golf course. To the west of the site is a belt of mature woodland, forming the boundary of Wynyard Park. Also to the west is Wynyard Hall, which is Grade II, listed. To the south of the site is Parkside Manor, a large dwelling, and beyond this, and to the east is open countryside.
3. The current use of the site is for existing golf club facilities, including the clubhouse, golf academy building, golf fairways and associated car parking. The majority of the new development proposed is to be located on the southern edge of the site, which currently forms part of the golf course.

### Planning History

4. Wynyard Golf Club forms part of the wider masterplan for the comprehensive, mixed use development of Wynyard, which was granted outline planning permission in 1988, for the development of a mixed use 793 hectare site. The Golf Club was granted planning permission in 1993, and has been operational since 1995. The clubhouse itself was granted planning permission in 1995, and has since been extended and altered. The original building was intended to serve as a temporary facility, whilst the club and course was developed, with plans for the final clubhouse to be developed alongside an associated hotel/country club.

## **THE PROPOSAL**

5. The application seeks outline approval with all matters reserved for future approval except for the means of access from Wellington Drive to the north. Approval is also sought for a Land Use Zoning Plan which defines the maximum extent of the areas within which the various proposed land uses and buildings can be developed. To illustrate the form the development could take various drawings have been produced including a Concept Masterplan, landscape layout, and both the existing and proposed golf course layouts. Other supporting documentation involves a "Concept Masterplan and Design Philosophy" together with a "Landscape Design Philosophy". These documents together indicate the built and natural form; scale and appearance the development can be expected to take and provides some guidance as to the Residents Park an area of 3.25 hectares provided, maintained and made available as a community facility for local residents. The proposal is further supported by a Planning, Design and Access Statement, a Transport Assessment and a Market Demand Assessment.
6. The supporting statements to the development proposal indicate that the existing clubhouse facilities and lack of branded accommodation, are not meeting the expectations of its members/visitors. This follows the development of the golf course as a renowned national and international golf club destination. The intention of the development proposal is therefore, to fulfil the potential of the club, by enhancing the

quality of its offer, and creating a golf resort destination. This will enable the club to host major tournaments and improve the golf academy. It is suggested that these additional facilities will also enhance the overall range of community facilities in Wynyard.

7. Prior to the application being made the applicant carried out a community consultation exercise in January of this year. This included a 2 day exhibition of drawings and a model, together with a public meeting. Follow up discussions have been held either in writing, individual meetings and/or discussions prior to the submission of the planning application. The submitted scheme is stated as being revised to fully reflect where possible the comments and requests made by residents during this consultative process.
8. The development proposal comprises the following:
  - 4 star 150 bed golf hotel;
  - bars and restaurant;
  - crèche and conferencing facilities;
  - health club, gym and spa;
  - outdoor sports facilities including tennis courts and football pitches;
  - replacement golf club house;
  - replacement golf academy and driving range;
  - key worker accommodation for hotel staff (21 apartments and 4 gatehouses);
  - residents' park
  - access roads and car parking;
  - partial remodelling of golf course; and
  - landscaping proposals.

## **THE CONSULTATIONS**

### 9. Parish Council

*“Grindon Parish Council registers strong objections to this proposal because:*

*1. It will cause excessive traffic on Wellington Drive, which was designed only with local use in mind. On top of regular deliveries of large loads plus employee arrivals/departures, there will also be many casual visitors to the Driving range, Hotel and health Club. This weight of traffic is inappropriate to what was intended to be a quiet and small estate. It will also cause night time disturbance to residents and add to the loss of amenity.*

*2. The security of the whole of Wynyard will be jeopardised by this proposal. The estate was designed to have controlled access, but this will be undermined by the proposal.*

*3. Whilst the provision of the park is to be welcomed, it is noted that the Golf club does not intend to take responsibility for ongoing maintenance, which raises serious doubts about the viability of this aspect of the proposal.”*

## 10. Head of Technical Services: Urban Design Highway

*“A 5 star hotel and improved golf facilities are planned for the Wynyard Golf Club site. A Transport Assessment has been prepared to support the application which has been considered. This has raised no objection to the application provided a suitable Travel Plan is provided and the access onto Wynyard Road is physically limited to pedestrians, cycles and emergency vehicles.*

*The development will generate additional traffic on the predominantly residential street of Wellington Drive. However, the traffic flow will still be well within the environmental capacity of Wellington Drive. The recommendations of the Design Guide for residential developments have been considered, and are not compromised by the development. The principles of the recently published Manual for Streets have also been considered and are met by the traffic impact of the development.*

*However further clarification is required on the following points;*

- At the moment plans indicate circa 300no. parking spaces for the hotel and sporting facilities. No justification of the parking provision has been provided; a demonstration of the parking allocation for the proposed development in line with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Parking Standards is therefore required.*
- Given the aspirations to hold world-class events a parking and event management plan will have to be developed in cooperation with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to ensure any associated impacts can be mitigated.*
- A refuse collection and servicing plan for the development is required. It is desirable to have refuse and service vehicles entering and leaving the site in a forward gear. Internal road widths should be able to accommodate large vehicles. Auto Track analysis for long and wide load vehicles to and from the servicing areas of the site will have to be demonstrated.*
- Provision for cycle parking for key workers and visitors to the facility should be provided in line with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Parking Standards.*
- Further clarification regarding the exact location and termination point on Wynyard Road is required from the applicant*
- Wheel washing facilities, a road cleaning regime and routing of construction traffic together with details of sufficient ‘on site’ compounds for contract vehicles are required.*

*Subject to the conclusions of the Transport Assessment being met and confirmation of the above points, there are no objections on highway grounds to the development.”*

## 11. Head of Technical Services: Urban Design Landscape

*“At present, the site is very open grassland interspersed with mature trees around which the golf course is located. As stipulated in the in the landscape design philosophy report most of the existing trees will be retained and their landscape contribution enhanced with additional tree planting. We would not object to the loss of the two trees mentioned in the report but understand the applicant will try to retain these if possible. A full tree survey should be undertaken by an Arboriculturist showing which trees are to be retained and which require beneficial management as part of the scheme.*

*The maturing tree belt on the southern edge of the development will soften any view into the site from Wynyard Road and act as an attractive backdrop for the development.”*

*“All the existing trees on the development site should be given full protection during the site work”*

*“There is a Site of Nature Conservation (SNCI) ref. ST9 Warren Farm Verge running along side an old farm access track, which crosses the eastern side of the site south of the planned 17<sup>th</sup> Hole and new residents park. The wildlife value of this site is in mainly its ground flora, which is considered quite rich according to the wildlife trust report. This site appears from the plan to be dissected by the 17<sup>th</sup> hole which also the seems to show the removal of part of this SNCI. A wildlife survey of the whole SNCI should be carried out and all areas rich in flora in the way of the development lifted and removed to another suitable part of the site. The remaining section of the SNCI should be given maximum protection during sites works with a suitable security fence protected all areas during construction.”*

*“Full landscape details are requested”*

## 12. Environmental Health Unit

*Views are awaited*

## 13. Head of Regeneration

*“The proposed Hotel and Leisure developments at Wynyard Golf Club will be a valued asset in a growing visitor based economy. The proposal, whilst adding additional value to the overall ‘Visitor Experience’, would particularly make a valued contribution to the tourism economy in terms of accommodation, as Quality 4 Star hotels are currently in short supply throughout Tees Valley. The proposed development of the Hotel and Leisure facilities at Wynyard Golf Club also fit the requirements in the North East Tourism Strategy and the Regional Image Campaign aims and objectives. The North East aspires to be a region where present and future generations have a high quality of life. It is felt that such a development would support this and enable the area to be a vibrant, self reliant, ambitious and outward looking region featuring a dynamic economy, a healthy environment with a distinctive culture.”*

## 14. The Environment Agency

The Agency has no objection to the proposed development subject to a number of planning conditions being imposed relating to surface water run-off limitation; details of foul and surface water drainage (use of SUDs - sustainable urban drainage - is encouraged); oils storage; and only uncontaminated natural materials shall be tipped on the site. Possible land contamination should also be considered.

## 15. One Northeast

*“The Agency is generally supportive of the proposed development which will result in increased visitor numbers to the region which is a key aim of the Regional economic strategy (RES). The proposed additional inward investment to the area represented by the proposal is welcomed since it accords with the general thrust of the RES to provide improvements in the quality and quantity of visitor accommodation and facilities in the region.*

*As you are aware the RES promoted the need for quality of place within existing and proposed development. With this in mind, should the application be viewed favourably, the Agency would request the developer to pursue the highest standards of quality in the development of this site”... “In line with Government objectives to generate 105 of electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010 the application details regarding renewable energy measures within the scheme should also be provided.”*

## 16. North East Assembly

*“The proposal to create new and improved facilities at Wynyard Golf Club, will contribute to the intention to fulfil the potential of the club, by enhancing the quality of its offer, and creating a golf resort destination. It is recognised that the site is an established golf course, and the development proposal represents an improvement and significant expansion of the existing facilities on offer. On this basis the applicant has maintained that there is a strong location-based case, in support of the proposed development being located at the Wynyard Golf Club. The case is made that, only in the proposed location can the development meet its intended objectives, and deliver the identified benefits to the Wynyard community.*

*In the sequential approach established in RPG1 policy DP1 and submission draft RSS policy 3, the site is located in the fourth category ‘suitable sites in settlements outside urban areas.’ Development in this location is therefore not a priority in accordance with the locational strategy and objectives for the Tees Valley city region. However, it is recognised that the golf course is an existing facility, with the purpose of the development proposal being to upgrade and expand the on site facilities, and maximise the potential of the existing club. In this context, the development proposal is considered acceptable, subject to the local authority’s satisfaction that the sequential approach to development has been adequately explored and justified by the applicant.*

*Subject to the local authority satisfaction that the proposed development does not have an adverse impact on the environment or character of the setting and accessibility by a range of modes of transport is maximised, the development proposal is considered to be in general conformity with RPG1 policies SR2 and SR3.*

*The principle of the redevelopment and expansion of Wynyard Golf Club is in general conformity with RPG1 policy TOUR1 and submission draft RSS policy 16, which seek to encourage tourism developments that benefit the local economy and are guided by the principles of sustainability and information on market demand.*

*The housing provision in Stockton-on-Tees shows an oversupply of 695 dwellings. Whilst the development proposal would result in an oversupply, it is recognised that the housing units (24 in total) are required to serve a specific purpose, by providing accommodation for on site staff, and will not be available to the open market. In order to justify the development of housing in this location, particularly given the oversupply issue which exists in Stockton, it will be necessary to ensure that this housing remains in use for hotel staff, and is not made available to the open market.*

*Whilst the applicant has submitted a transport assessment, a travel plan has not been provided as part of the application. Given that the development proposal includes a combination of employment and leisure uses, is located outside the urban area, and is likely to attract significant additional journeys, it is considered that a travel plan should be provided. The NEA would therefore support the provision of a travel plan and consider that this approach would be in general conformity with RPG1 policy T11 and submission draft RSS policy 54.*

*The supporting statement to the application refers to the inclusion of energy efficiency measures, integrated renewable energy and SUDS in the proposed development. The inclusion of such measures are supported by the NEA and would contribute to achieving the objectives of RPG1 policies ENV1, ENV3, ENV4 and ENV7 and submission draft RSS policies 37, 39 and 40.*

## 17. Sport England

Sport England has considered the application in light of its Land use Planning Policy statement “Planning Policies for Sport” the overall thrust of which is that a planned

approach to the provisions of facilities and opportunities for sport is necessary in order to ensure the sport and recreational needs of local communities are met. It considers that this proposal is broadly in line with the following objective:

*“To support the development of new facilities, the enhancement of existing facilities and the provision and/or improvement of access to the natural environment which will secure opportunities to take part in sport and which can be achieved in a way which meets sustainable development objectives.”*

It notes no information has been provided in the planning application to indicate if any part of the development would allow access to the site's sport facilities by non-residents of the hotel. Whilst welcomes the significant investment in sports facilities that is proposed as part of the development, its support for the application is tempered by lack of background information to the proposal. It recognises however, that it is only an outline application and would wish to comment further should the development proceed to the reserved matter stage.

#### 18. Natural England

Comments that insufficient information has been submitted for it to be able to comment as to whether the proposal may have an adverse impact in legally protected species. It therefore advises that the council undertakes a screening process of ecological issues associated with the development

#### 19. Highways Agency

Views awaited

#### 20. Spatial Planning

*“Planning policy TOUR 4 is not relevant to this proposal as it refers to proposals for new hotels within the built up area. This site is outside of the identified housing and employment areas of the Wynyard development and can not be classified as a built up area.*

*Apart from the various environmental designations that affect the site and the wider area (i.e. policy EN4, EN7c, EN9 and EN11) the only other policy from the 1997 adopted Local Plan relevant to the planning application is policy GP1. Clearly a view needs to be taken regarding this site and the impact the new built development will have on the landscape of the area. I assume colleagues in Landscape Architects and Natural England have been consulted to provide informed opinions on these issues.*

*Policy S2 of the adopted Local Plan alteration number 1 is also relevant to the proposal. This refers to major retail development and proposals for key town centre uses in locations, which lie beyond defined centres. All proposals must satisfy the criteria outlined in this policy (see below).*

##### *Principle of development.*

*As the application seeks outline planning permission, the major issue in determining this application, from a planning standpoint, is the principle of development. PPS6 paragraph 1.8 identifies hotels and conference facilities as a town centre use.*

*Policy S2 of the adopted Local Plan provides a local interpretation of PPS6, particularly paragraph 3.4 of that document. The policy identifies that all proposals for town centre uses*

*outside of a defined town centre must demonstrate, need for the development, that development is of an appropriate scale, there are no more central sites for the development, there are no unacceptable impacts on existing centres and that locations are accessible.*

*The applicant has stated that as the proposal is a Golf resort it will not compete with hotels within established town centres and will not undermine the main objective of PPS6 and alteration number 1, i.e. increasing the vitality and viability of established town centres in order to strengthen and regenerate them.*

*I note that the applicant has submitted a planning statement and needs assessment to support the application and that given the individual circumstances of the proposal a reduced scope has been applied to the sequential study. The main issue with regard to the principle of the proposal relates to whether or not this proposal should be assessed against and meets the tests identified in Local Plan Alteration Number 1 and PPS6.*

*In this particular instance the applicant seeks an exceptional development which involves extending the facilities at Wynyard Golf Club so that it becomes an 'international' golf resort hotel (4\*) with conference facilities and spa. The applicants supporting statement indicates that this proposed location is not contrary to policy as there is demonstrable need for the development, there will be numerous economic and tourism benefits for the borough, there is long standing policy support for high quality tourist facilities.*

*From the supporting evidence it is quite clear that the emphasis of the development supporting the existing golf course and the additional sports facilities makes this proposal a very different operation from that which would normally be expected within a town centre location. It is therefore agreed that the proposal could be considered materially different from a normal town centre hotel and it is acceptable in principle outside of a town centre location.*

*Clearly this materially different circumstance means that the number of viable locations for the development is limited. This sites existence as an established golf course and the existing linked trips made to the site make it a potentially suitable location for the development. It is therefore considered that the specific circumstances of the proposal are materially different to those generally experienced by such applications. Given this particular circumstance and the positive impact the development will have on the regeneration of the area it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable."*

#### 21. Northern Gas Networks

*No objections*

#### 22. CE Electric UK

*No objections raised*

#### 23. No response has been received from Police, Care for Your Area, and Tees Forest Hartlepool Borough Council, Parks And Countryside Officer, Northumbrian Water Limited, The Ramblers Association, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust

### **PUBLICITY**

24. Neighbours were notified and the application was also advertised on site and in the local press. As result of this publicity 8 letters/emails have been received from local residents as well as letters of objection submitted by Cameron Hall and on behalf of Wynyard Park Limited. The concerns and objections are summarised below.

25. Mrs J Dunn 4 Fulthorpe Grove (comments submitted before application formally submitted)

- Contrary to claims made by the Golf club, the proposal is not supported by local residents and the statistics provided stating support from residents should be disregarded unless proven
- Wellington Drive is not designed or constructed to safely take the extra traffic including buses and delivery traffic
- Access via Wellington Drive is opposed by local residents
- Alternative access via Wynyard Road is opposed by Wolviston Parish Council

26. Mr Kevin Morerell 10 Fulthorpe Grove Wynyard Park

- Does not object to the principle of the planning application but cannot agree to the application unless the local road infrastructure is improved
- Wellington drive is not designed to support commercial traffic and during the Seve Trophy verges were damaged
- Unless road is improved accidents will increase

27. Mr W Alexander 8 Burntoft Wynyard

- Objects on the basis that no consideration has been given to vehicle access night and day to the hotel/conference facility
- No consideration to access and parking to the public park/access area
- Bus and service vehicle access along narrow leading to the club not considered
- Road to the estate (A689) already heavily congested
- Already suffer background noise from the club despite past promises

28. Dr Sarup Tayal 22 Wellington Drive

- His house will very near proposed key worker accommodation, which will dominate the area, and be visually intrusive. It should be relocated
- The accommodation will overlook his property and lead to a loss of privacy. Already suffering from that with the existing club
- Development will inevitably lead to increased traffic and concerned that Wellington Drive will not be able to cope with the increased demand thereby leading to noise pollution and problems of safety and danger to the environment
- Whole development is unacceptable and should be rejected

29. Mrs Muriel Reynard 2 The Kennels Wynyard park

- Objects on the grounds that the approach road to the Hotel and golf club is totally inadequate to accommodate the volume of traffic
- Wellington Drive is too narrow
- This is a housing estate and the access should only be utilised by residents and not for such a development.

30. Sir John Hall Wynyard Hall Billingham

- Not against such a facility in the area and is seeking to develop an extension to Wynyard Hall for a 150/200 bed hotel with the existing hall continuing as conference banqueting facility
- Understood from past discussions with the Council that there would be no further developments in the south east corner of the estate (the site of the present planning application) and that there would be no new access point off Wynyard Road. That is why the location of the hotel in the original masterplan was on the western part of the estate close to the Westgate
- Wellington drive and The Wynd which is only 5.5m wide, were only designed a residential estate roads and the greater intensity of use from commercial uses was never anticipated.
- The population of Wynyard cannot sustain any of the commercial activities and therefore must draw in visitors from outside and disturb a quiet peaceful residential area.
- An honest appraisal of the daily vehicular movements should be provided which, it is guessed would show a substantial increase
- People won't walk to the facility but will drive
- Car parking facilities (stated at 288) are considered too low for the stated uses
- Lack of public transport for 140 jobs created as only 25 key worker residential units are to be provided. Most likely to use cars
- Concerned also the key worker housing will not be used as most likely to live locally.
- What will happen to the redundant clubhouse once new one is built?
- The land used presently for the golf academy in one document states it may be developed as a school and its access would also have come off Wellington Drive at the main entrance to the golf course, another document states it may remain as a 9 hole training course – this needs to be clarified
- The location for the hotel complex is wrong and should be placed at the northern end of the golf course closer to the A689 where it would cause less intrusion.

31. Resident of Wellington Drive:

- Does not object to the principle of the hotel development
- Concerned that not individually notified and the that proposal was hidden on the website
- Lives a building site end of Wellington drive and already suffers from delivery traffic leaving verges in poor state. Would be magnified if the new development went ahead
- Agrees with concerns raised by others over access and increased traffic flow
- Moved to Wynyard for its ambience and security which would be shattered by the new build and increase in traffic, late night revellers at weddings, increase in visitors etc
- Should have a separate access

32. Linda Lawty and Keith Salmon 18 Davison Close Wynyard

- Objects to the proposal as the land to the rear of their garden would be the only access to the residents park

- Bought the property as understood this land was not to be developed because of the drain under the land
- Use of the land as access to the park would result in a loss of privacy to the rear of the house
- If permission is granted then it should be subject to the provision of 6ft high fence and planting of suitable trees and bushes to increase privacy and reduce noise.

### 33. Cameron Hall Developments

- Not against the development of a hotel complex in the Wynyard vicinity but have serious concerns over the impact at the development at the golf club on the amenity of the residential neighbourhood
- The housing area would suffer increasing intrusion from the considerable volume of activities associated with the development
- The Transport assessment does not reflect the impact of traffic on what is a quiet residential neighbourhood
- Concern that that the proposal will involve the use of new access onto Wynyard Road for “pedestrian and vehicular access, emergency access and construction traffic”. It had always understood that such an access was totally unacceptable and would like the matter clarified
- Even for construction traffic the 2-3 year development process must raise highway safety concerns
- For the scheme to be viable the uses proposed will require significant number of visitors from outside of the area. This will have a serious impact on the amenity of the area. Only a limited number of visitors would be generated from within Wynyard itself
- The site is located away from the centre of gravity of the estate and this in itself is likely to mean most local visitors will use their cars instead of walking/cycling given no other modes of transport are available
- Majority of workers to the site will come by car notwithstanding some key worker accommodation is to be provided
- Benefits to the local community are incidental
- For special events, based on the experience of the Wynyard Classic, agreements would have to be in place for extra car parking and pedestrian movements
- Applicant wrong to dismiss other possible locations for the complex. One could be built with a golf course on the Wynyard business Park. Plans are also in hand for a prestige hotel based on Wynyard Hall would will be able to operate without disruption and disturbance to the lives of Wynyard residents
- Considers the site at Wynyard Golf course is not suitable given its relationship to nearby housing and will do little to improve the sustainability of Wynyard as a whole
- The residents park is distant from the majority of the population and will provide little other than very local benefit
- One matter of detail, a new pathway from the first green will be provided on land owned by Cameron hall to which it has not given any permission or even been advised.

#### 34. Cobbetts LLP on behalf of Wynyard Park Limited

- Wynyard Park Ltd (WPL) is developing a prestige employment park north of the A689 and strongly objects to the proposal on three grounds and asks the application be rejected.

##### Contrary to policy

- The applicant fails to demonstrate why any disaggregation of the proposed package of proposals is not appropriate and as such the analysis of policy in the planning statement is fatally flawed.
- It agrees a hotel is needed but it does not necessarily have to have a golf course attached and the preferences of the operator for this should not be the determining planning factor
- The location chosen is inherently unsustainable and draws attention to the policies set out in PPS1 and PPS6. Wynyard has only minimal facilities and public transport through the village. Residents are entirely dependant on the private car
- In the absence of over-riding need, the development is directly contrary to national planning policy and should be directed elsewhere
- The applicant has not demonstrated there is no location sequentially preferred where the development could take place
- Planning policy of the local plan (TOUR 3) restricts the provision of new hotels outside of the built up area to conversions of existing building. Construction of new buildings is clearly contrary to the local plan

##### Location

- The business park requires a hotel and conference centre as well as other leisure and retail facilities for the potential 15000 employees on the site, to fully meet its development potential
- It is preparing comprehensive proposals as part of the business park
- The provision of a hotel and associated facilities at Wynyard Golf Club will not be perceived or further the objectives of either the planning authorities or WPL
- It is unrelated to the business activities and private car journeys will increase the environmental impact along Wellington Drive
- As the applicant rejects Wynyard Park as a location for the hotel based on separation and distance, it cannot therefore claim the presence of the business park justifies the development

##### Highway congestion

- Applicant's highway analysis ignores the very significant congestion that is likely to occur as the business park is developed
- Since it argues that the principal road cannot accommodate the expected flow, it follows that no additional traffic should be put onto the network in the vicinity of the A19/A689 junction until remedial measures have been identified and a proper contribution made to the resolution of these difficulties.

#### 35. Campaign for the Protection of Rural England

*"We welcome the development of attractive new facilities in the area. We do have a concern over potential invasive lighting, especially for the golf facilities, given proximity to local residential needs. We would also comment on access concerns to the site."*

## **PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

### National Planning Policy

36. National Planning policies are set out in Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and the newer Planning Policy Statements (PPS).

37. Relevant to this application are:

PPS 1 "Delivering Sustainable Development"

PPS 6 "Planning for Town Centres"

PPS 7 "Sustainable Development in rural areas"

PPS 9 "Biodiversity and Geological Conservation"

PPG 13 "Transport"

PPG 17 "Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation"

38. 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, Tees Valley Structure Plan 2004 and the Stockton Borough Local Plan 1997.

### Regional Planning Policy

RPG1 - Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (November 2002)

39. RPG 1 was published in November 2002. The guidance sets out the broad strategic planning policies as well as a broad development strategy for the region over a 15 to 20 year period. The aim of the Spatial Strategy is to:

"Continue to strengthen and diversify the economy, improve living conditions and safeguard the region's outstanding cultural and natural heritage to create a truly sustainable future for the North East."

40. Relevant policies are

- DP2
- TOUR1
- T11
- ENV1
- ENV3
- ENV4
- ENV7

Regional Spatial Strategy (2005)

41. A review of the planning framework at the regional level is under-way with the production of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS). An RSS Submission Draft (“View: Shaping the North East”) was published in July 2005 and has been subject to an Examination in Public and the draft findings published. The RSS is currently expected to be adopted in 2007, and will supersede RPG 1 as the Regional Spatial Strategy.

42. Relevant policies are:

- Policy 3
- Policy 16
- Policy 37
- Policy 39
- Policy 40
- Policy 54

#### Tees Valley Structure Plan

43. The Tees Valley Structure Plan policies that particularly need to be considered include:

- SUS2 (Sustainable Development Policy) states the Tees Valley authorities should give regard to several factors through their local plans, development control decisions and partnership activities, including: give preference to brown field sites, and prevent the unnecessary use of Greenfield sites; promote the re-use of vacant land and buildings; encourage development in locations which minimise the need for travel and can be well served by public transport; maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and district centres.
- ENV6 (Protection, inter alia, of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance) development not permitted unless it is demonstrated that need for the development outweighs need to safeguard site. If permitted mitigation measures are required.
- ENV13 (Control of Urban Development) development outside limits to development will be strictly controlled
- ENV16 (protection of trees and hedgerows)
- ENV19 (character, appearance and amenity of the countryside to be improved and enhanced)
- T25 (Transport Requirements for New Developments) promotes the location of new development to give priority to walking, cycling and public transport access.

#### Stockton Borough Local Plan

44. Policy GP1 is the general policy and sets out ten criteria that all development proposals need to be assessed against. These criteria are as follows: -

- 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 public rights of way.

45. Policy S2 of the adopted Local Plan alteration number 1 is also relevant to the proposal. This refers to major retail development and proposals for key town centre uses in locations, which lie beyond defined centres. All proposals must satisfy the criteria outlined in this policy.

46. Other relevant policies are:

- Policy EN4 (relating to development affecting Sites of Nature Conservation Importance)
- Policy EN7c (relating to the protection of areas of special landscape value)
- Policy EN9 (relating to the protection of the special historic interest of Wynyard Park)
- Policy EN11 (relating to the planting of trees in the community forest area)
- Policy TR9 (relating to the provision and convenient use of public transport services)
- Policy TR15 (relating to the design of highways and the provision of off-street parking to accord with the Council's standards)

## **MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

47. In light of the consultation responses, concerns raised by residents, planning policy and the planning history of the site, a number of planning issues are considered material to the consideration of this application.

### Planning Policy and the principle of development

48. This is an outline application with all matters of detail reserved for future approval except for the means of access. It also seeks approval for the Land Use Zoning Plan, which if approved would establish where various elements of the proposal would be generally located. Drawings are provided showing the potential layout of the site and the design of the buildings but these are for illustrative purposes only. Accordingly, all the application is seeking is approval in principle for the development of a golf hotel and spa in the identified location adjacent to the existing golf course and replacing the existing Club House.

49. In making that decision, the Council, as the Local Planning authority, needs to have regard to the relevant planning policies and make a decision consistent with those policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

50. The primary issue in relation to planning policy is whether the development is in a sustainable location and whether the relevant tests as set out in the various planning policies (i.e. PPS6, RPG policy D2 and STLP policy S2) have been met. One of the

key tests is whether the chosen site is sequentially the best location for such a development. Planning policy in respect of hotels would normally seek in the first instance for them to be located within Town Centres. In this case, the applicant's consultant states that the scheme needs to be looked at in its totality, arguing that the development is location specific and as such cannot be viewed as appropriate to a town centre. The individual uses cannot be "disaggregated" i.e. split between different locations. Two reasons are given. Firstly, to be successful in the market place, the operation of the golf resort, hotel and spa must have a single branded identity providing the full range of goods and services – hotel room, health club, bar, restaurants, driving range and other sport and leisure facilities. Secondly, the proposed range and scale of provision will also play an important role in meeting an unmet need, providing important community facilities for local residents who will be able to take advantage of the new facilities provided on their doorstep. The facilities would be fully accessible to the local community.

51. Wynyard Business Park in its objection would argue otherwise. It considers the applicant has failed to demonstrate why disaggregation is not appropriate and whilst accepting the general principle that the area needs a hotel it does not consider that a case has been made for an over-riding need for it to be located as part of the existing golf course. The view it takes is that the site is not sustainable and it has not been demonstrated that it is sequentially the best location. Accordingly, it takes the position the development is contrary to national planning policy and should be located elsewhere.
52. As part of the planning submission the applicant has carried a limited sequential test looking at potential alternative sites but based on the premise that the proposed hotel and spa has got to be reasonably close to the existing golf course. Five areas of search were examined and the study concluded that there were no sites known to be available, suitable and viable in the area that are more sequentially preferable to the proposed site.
53. The evidence produced makes it clear that the proposal would be a very different operation from that normally expected to be provided in a town centre location. Given that it is inherently different, and examining the limited number of alternative sites available, it is accepted that in planning terms the site is sequentially the best location and does not prejudice planning policy by being located within the Wynyard estate.

#### Need for the development

54. Part of planning policy requirement is that the applicant is required to demonstrate need for the proposed development. In this, the application is supported by a detailed market assessment report, prepared by specialist consultants. This document assesses the quantitative and qualitative demand and states there is a clear need for additional visitor accommodation in the Tees Valley area, a fact supported by the Head of Regeneration. He also states the development would fit in with requirements of the North East Tourism Strategy and Regional image Campaign and bring significant benefits to the area.
55. Its tourist potential is an important planning consideration. Submission draft RSS policy 16 encourages tourism developments which are accessible, and benefit the local economy, people and the environment. The proposal will improve and expand

an existing facility, in line with market demand, and in this it meets the objectives of RPG1 policy TOUR1, and submission draft RSS policy 16. It will also provide 150 new jobs and potentially a further 184 in the wider economy.

56. It is noted the commercial objectors are both seeking to ultimately bring forward their own hotel developments and both clearly accept the general principle that there is need for a hotel of this quality in the area

#### Location and sustainability

57. Notwithstanding that there is a clear case for the hotel in the area, objectors are concerned that sited as part of the existing golf course it is not the best or most sustainable location. The case made is that it would be better located elsewhere either within the business park or as part of Wynyard Hall where the impact on local amenity would be much less in terms of traffic and disturbance. It is claimed the business park with its potential to have 15,000 employees on the site and its need for hotel and conference facilities to fully realise its aim as a prestige development, is a better location and is more sustainable in terms of being accessible to all modes of transport not just the car. A development at Wynyard Hall it is claimed would also be able to operate without disruption and disturbance to the lives of Wynyard residents.
58. For reasons already explained, the applicant is of the view that the golf resort facility needs to operate from one site and the facilities provided would also benefit the local community. Provided elsewhere these benefits would be much reduced.
59. It is accepted that it is preferable for one complex to be provided, but it has to be recognised that its proposed location will impact on the amenities of local residents particularly in terms of traffic. These implications are discussed in more detail below. Other concerns from local residents are that locating the facility adjacent to and accessing it through residential housing will change the whole quiet residential ambience of the area as well causing a potential security risk. However, the applicant has given careful thought to the position of buildings on the site, locating them on average 400m away from local houses. It also has to be acknowledged that the golf course and club house already exists and if this development goes ahead the club use and its function rooms will be removed further from housing. The character of the area will change once the facility is fully established but not, it is considered, to a level sufficient to warrant refusal of planning permission.

#### Traffic, access and highway safety

60. Traffic generated by the proposed development is one of the major concerns of local residents who are of the view that the local road system is not capable or designed to accommodate the likely flow of goods vehicles and private cars visiting the golf resort. In particular that Wellington Drive is unsuitable and as a result verges will be damaged and risk of accidents increased. Also night traffic will increase, noise will increase and that has not been properly assessed. Outside of Wynyard the A689 is already congested and this development will add to the problems. Other concerns are construction traffic will be a significant problem for a number of years, that insufficient car parking is proposed and that the Transport Assessment does not properly reflect the likely impact of growth of traffic at the business park nor its effect on the residential streets, that even residents are more likely to come by car because of its location relative to the majority of houses and that most workers

will also come by car. Again objectors' stresses there are few alternative means of getting to the site other than by car.

61. The application is supported by a formal Transport Assessment prepared by consultants. The Head of Technical Services has reviewed this document and is of the view that while the development will generate additional traffic on the predominantly residential street of Wellington Drive; the traffic flow will still be well within its environmental capacity. Also, the recommendations of the Design Guide for residential developments have been considered, and he considers are not compromised by the development. The principles of the recently published Manual for Streets have also been considered and are met by the traffic impact of the development. He does however, have some concerns that level of parking proposed needs to be justified, cycle parking provided, a parking and event management plan will need to be agreed as well as a refuse collection and servicing plan. Further clarification of the exact location and termination point of the pedestrian/emergency access point on Wynyard Road is required from the applicant. Otherwise he has no objections on highway grounds to the development. These concerns can be controlled by planning conditions.
62. With regard to potentially increasing the traffic congestion on the A689, the Highways Agency has been consulted because the likely impact on the Trunk Road network. Whilst it has not formally responded, it is understood not to have any fundamental concerns.

#### Landscape and ecology

63. The location of the proposed land uses has been selected to take account of the local topography and shallow fall from north to south across the site. The maturing band of trees will help screen the area from Wynyard road to the south. The landscape philosophy set out in the documents submitted with the application is to follow the 18<sup>th</sup> century English landscape tradition model retaining most of the trees, planting more trees and creating new water features. A full tree survey will be required but this can be part of the reserved matter conditions requiring the submission of full landscaping details.
64. In terms of ecology the applicant has carried out an extended phase 1 survey of habitats that reveals that the habitats within the site are of generally low nature conservation value with little evidence of protected species being present except for roosting and foraging bats in the trees. Potentially 3 trees suitable for bats may be lost as well as a potential harm for nesting birds. The applicant recognises that additional specialist surveys will need to be undertaken to support any subsequent detailed planning applications and the development conditioned accordingly. In addition the applicant will need to demonstrate that no significant harm will occur to the adjacent Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

#### Residual matters

65. A number of other issues have been raised that have not already been discussed and require to be addressed.
66. The proposed residents park whilst welcomed has been criticised by some in terms of the possible loss of privacy for occupants of dwellings backing onto the park and

also how is going to managed and maintained. These are primarily matters of detail that can be resolved and controlled appropriate conditions.

67. Concerns about the key worker housing (a two storey block) which will be closer to the existing housing, intruding on the privacy of local residents can again be controlled through design at the reserved matter stage
68. Uncertainty over the future use of the existing clubhouse once replacement facilities have been provided can be resolved by conditioning approval such the use shall cease once the new clubhouse has been provided.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

69. The application is only seeking approval in principle for the golf course and spa and there is an acknowledged need for a hotel of this quality in the area. It is considered, given the need for it to be located at or near to, the existing golf course, that the chosen site is sequentially the best location and does not prejudice planning policy by being located within the Wynyard estate.
70. It is accepted that the traffic associated with the development will have an impact on the area but the road system is capable of accommodating the extra traffic without compromising highway safety. The character of the area will change once the facility is fully established but not a level sufficient to warrant refusal of planning permission.
71. In terms of landscape and ecology it is not anticipated that significant damage will be caused and instead improvements should be secured including the creation of new wildlife habitats
72. The provision of the resident's park is welcomed and subject to controls to ensure adjacent residents privacy in not unduly affected and it is fully managed and maintained, it will be an asset to the area. The development will bring important benefits both to the local community not only through the provision of the new residents park but providing as well new leisure facilities which they will be able to access. It will also bring important economic benefits as a potential tourist destination as well as providing a number of new jobs.
73. All other issues raised by residents and other have been fully examined and considered but on balance it is considered the application site is a sustainable location and approval can be recommended subject to appropriate planning conditions to secure necessary controls over the development.

## **Head of Planning Services**

Contact Officer: Peter Whaley - Telephone No. 01642 526061

## **Financial Implications:**

None

## **Environmental Implications:**

See report

**Human Rights Implications**

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

**Community Safety Implications**

The provisions of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

**Background Papers:**

Application files:

**Ward and Ward Councillors:**

|                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Ward            | Northern Parishes    |
| Ward Councillor | Councillor J Gardner |