

DELEGATED

AGENDA NO

PLANNING COMMITTEE

25 September 2007

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

07/2190/OUT

Land Forming Part of Town End farm, Kirklevington

Erection of education facilities with ancillary parking, supporting infrastructure, new access, landscaping and playing fields.

Expiry Date: 19 October 2007

Summary

This application seeks outline planning permission for the construction and change of use of a new replacement school, including senior, preparatory, pre-preparatory and nursery facilities with ancillary parking, new access, supporting infrastructure, landscaping and playing fields for the existing Yarm School. Appearance, Scale and Landscaping being reserved for a future submission.

The application proposal is, therefore to establish the principle of the development. In view of the scale of the proposal and the location of the development, an Environmental Statement (ES) has been submitted with the application. Also supporting the application is a Planning Statement including Statement of Community Involvement, Design and Access Statement, Transport Assessment, Travel Plan Framework and a Site Sequential Study.

It is proposed that this development is facilitated by the disposal of the existing school sites for residential development and a separate application will be submitted for residential development on the existing school sites.

The applicant states that Yarm School has operated from its current site for 20 years but has identified a requirement to relocate its operations to a purpose built education campus, responding to inefficiencies of operating 4 no. disparate sites with limited scope for expansion.

To facilitate the relocation of Yarm School a capital receipt is required for the redevelopment of the existing Friarage and Grammar School Lane sites which would subsequently become surplus to requirements and available for development.

The application has generated a significant number of comments highlighting concerns over traffic as well impact on the open countryside. It has also secured a degree of local support following a public exhibition.

It should be noted that the development is an unallocated site located outside the established urban limits and such development would normally be resisted unless material considerations indicated otherwise. However it is considered that there are important material benefits arising from the proposed development and the economic and education benefits to Yarm and the wider area. As such it is considered they outweigh the policy objections, which would otherwise apply to the scheme.

On balance it is considered that, the development can be supported and the application is therefore recommended for approval subject to going through departure procedure.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members be minded to approve planning application 07/2190/OUT subject the signing of a Section 106 Agreement, to the conditions below and the application be referred to the Government Office for the North East as a departure from the approved development plan:

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

| Plan Reference Number | Date on Plan |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2848AL(90)010 | 170707 |
| OX4323SK008 | July 2007 |

Reason: To define the consent.

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

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

- 03. Approval of details of the appearance, scale and landscaping, shall be in accordance with the details of the scheme to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before the development commences.**

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

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

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

- 05. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 and Schedule 2, Part 32, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order amending or re-enacting that order with or without modification) no extensions or additions to the school, or the provision of any additional building, shall be constructed without the prior written permission of the local planning authority.**

Reason: To adequately control the level of development on the site to a degree by which the principle of the permission is based.

- 06. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the existing and proposed levels of the site including the floor levels of the buildings to be erected shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To ensure that earth-moving operations and the final landforms resulting are such as to compliment and not detract from the visual amenity or integrity of existing natural features and habitats.

07. Prior to the commencement of the development, details of all external finishing materials including roads and footpaths shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory external appearance and to reserve the rights of the Local Planning Authority with regard to these matters.

08. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision and implementation of a surface water run-off limitation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved programme and details

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding.

09. The proposed development is situated within 250 metres of two areas of filled ground of unknown materials which could generate landfill gas or contaminants. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until the site is investigated to determine the nature and extent of landfill gas and other contaminants and a method of remediation has been agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. A site investigation and risk assessment report shall be carried out in accordance with Guidance on Evaluation of Development proposals on sites where methane and carbon dioxide are present [NHBC March 2007] and CIRIA document C659. Any necessary remediation to be carried out in accordance with an approved method statement to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority

Reason: To ensure the proper restoration of the site.

10. A detailed scheme for landscaping and tree and/or shrub planting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development authorised or required by this permission is commenced. Such a scheme shall specify types and species, layout contouring and surfacing of all open space areas including details of local plant provenance to improve ecological values and the creation of wildlife corridors. The scheme of landscaping shall also include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection to be used in the course of development. The scheme shall also show the treatment proposed to all ground surfaces. The works shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the date of planting die, are removed, become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory landscaping to improve the appearance of the site in the interests of visual amenity and promotion of Biodiversity

11. All means of enclosure associated with the development hereby approved shall be in accordance with a scheme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before the development commences. Such means of enclosure as agreed shall be erected before the development hereby approved is occupied.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

12. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, precise details of the configuration of the playing fields and hard surfaced areas, including details of any regrading of the land, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and implemented as approved unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason : To protect the character and appearance of the countryside.

13. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a detailed design scheme for the proposed water-balancing feature including a variety of habitats for wetland wildlife has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans and retained throughout the life of the development.

Reason: In the interests of promoting Biodiversity

14. Prior to the commencement of development details of any external lighting (including floodlighting), Beam orientation, the times of illumination to be installed and/or erected on the site and its levels of illumination shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No external lighting shall be installed other than in accordance with the approved details, or such other details first approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason : To protect the character and appearance of the countryside.

15. Prior to the commencement of development A Road Safety Audit in line with the principles contained in the latest Highways Agency HD19/03 and IHT 'Guidelines for the Safety Audit of Highways' shall be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The findings of the report will be implemented as approved prior to the use commencing.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

16. Prior to the commencement of the development, details of secure cycle storage facilities to be located within the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved details shall be implemented prior to the first use of the school.

Reason: To ensure sustainable means of transport are available to the site.

17. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, detailed plans and programmes for the provision of internal layout of roads, proposed off-street car parking/coach parking/dropping off facilities, servicing arrangements, turning facilities, emergency access and other internal highway infrastructure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of the development. The approved details shall be implemented prior to the first use of the school.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure that satisfactory parking is available to serve the development.

18. Prior to commencement of development details of pedestrian crossing facilities on the A67 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No development shall be occupied until the approved scheme has been implemented.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

19. Prior to commencement of the development details of bus lay-bys and shelters to be provided on both sides of the A67 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No development shall be occupied until the approved scheme has been implemented.

Reason: To ensure sustainable means of transport are available to the site.

20. Prior to commencement of the development details of a roundabout on the A67 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the the local planning authority. No development shall be occupied until the approved scheme has been implemented.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

21. Prior to the commencement of development, a management plan for the retention and enhancement of the ecological biodiversity of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The plan shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: To protect and enhance the Biodiversity of the site.

22. Prior to the occupation of the development a Community Use Scheme for the school's facilities (sports facilities, hall, theatre and music facilities) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-school users/non-members, management responsibilities and include a mechanism for review. The approved Scheme shall be implemented upon commencement of use of the development unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority and shall be effective during the life of the school unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To facilitate access to the school's facilities for the community of the area and to ensure the satisfactory management arrangements of the facilities.

23. A School Travel Plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. The Plan shall establish measures, mechanisms, timescales, clear targets and procedures for monitoring and review of such targets. The Plan shall be implemented as approved.

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

24. No development shall take place until the Local Planning Authority has approved a report provided by the applicant identifying how the predicted CO2 emissions of the development will be reduced by at least 10% through the use of on-site renewable energy equipment.

The carbon savings which result from this will be above and beyond what is required to comply with Part L Building Regulations.

Before the School is occupied the renewable energy equipment shall have been installed and the local planning authority shall be satisfied that their day-to-day operation will provide energy for the development for so long as the development remains in existence.”

Reason: In the interests of promoting sustainable development

25. No development shall take place within the area indicated until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has completed the implementation of a phased programme of archaeological work, including post-excavation, publication and archive deposition, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: The site is of archaeological interest.

26. No construction/building works shall be carried out except between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm on Mondays to Fridays and between 8.00am and 1.00pm on Saturdays. No Sunday working and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not prejudice the enjoyment of neighbouring occupiers of their properties.

Heads of Terms for the 106 Agreement

- 1. Financial contribution towards a crossing facility on Green Lane;**
- 2. Fund the preparation and if appropriate implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order for the effect of reducing the speed limit on A67 and to control parking on the A67, the existing lay-by and Castlevington Lane, or other order as advised by the Director of Law and Democracy, subject to the consultation requirements**
- 3. Cycle ways signage to promote Castleavington Road for usage of this route for access to the school.**

The Proposal has been considered against the policies below and it is considered that there are important material benefits arising from the high quality development and the economic benefits to the Borough and the wider area. As such it is considered they outweigh the policy objections, which would otherwise apply to the scheme.

Policies SUS1, SUS2, STRAT1, EN7, EN10, EN13, EN15 EN16, EN17, EN18, EN19, T5, T6, T25 and T27 of the Tees Valley Structure Plan, GP1, EN 4, EN11, EN13, TR5, TR6 and TR15 of the adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan,

BACKGROUND

1. The site is located on the A67 south of Yarm and east of Kirklevington (a site location plan is attached at Appendix 1). The site is currently in agricultural use and has an area of approximately 48 hectares and therefore classified as Greenfield. The site is roughly “L” shaped and widens at the southern end and slopes from its high point in the south to the north. It is bound by the A67 to the west, Kirklevington Grange Detention Centre to the north and countryside to the east and south. A steep-banked beck known as West Gill forms the eastern boundary of the site and the southwestern corner of the site runs along the settlement boundary of Kirklevington.

THE PROPOSAL

2. The development comprises school buildings with associated sports facilities and ancillary car parking and would accommodate up to 1,100 pupils.

3. The proposed site is of an undulating topography and open with little mature landscaping. The buildings and ancillary space are positioned to the northern area of the site to minimise landscape and visual impact. This is also the furthest distance from Kirklevington. For operational, and landscape reasons, the buildings will be no taller than 2 storeys in height and the majority of the site would be open in the form of playing fields and recreation areas. The recreation areas will be used for activity such as orienteering, horse riding, nature trail education and other outdoor activities.

4. The indicative design shows six individual buildings (Nursery, Reception, Early Years, Preparatory, Senior School and Sixth Form) arranged around a central courtyard.

5. All vehicular and pedestrian access will be from one new entrance into the site; a roundabout located opposite Judges Restaurant on the A67. The proposed road/pathway will take all traffic into the rear of the site. Within this area the intention is to utilise a one way system where all school related traffic is taken away from the local highway network and contained within the site including parents visitors and teachers; coaches and deliveries and services.

6. A School Travel Plan to reduce vehicular movement in the area will also be prepared prior to the premises opening.

7. The principal elements of the scheme comprise: -

- School buildings
- Outdoor playing fields including astro-turf pitch, rugby pitches and cricket oval, two junior size football pitches
- Junior school play area
- Habitat/Environmental Areas
- Hard surface games courts
- One-way access road, car parking and dropping off spaces
- Water Feature
- General recreation and education areas
- Events Area
- Horticulture – vegetable garden
- Landscaping and tree planting.

(An indicative site layout plan and design are attached at Appendix 2 and 3).

8. The indicative design comprises a modern suite of buildings featuring materials reviewed on the basis of having low environmental impact and incorporating green roofs on some buildings. The roofs extend over the buildings where required to form cloisters/colonnades. These provide both shelter from the elements and, with the addition of louvers, protection from solar gain. In addition to material specification a number of other sustainable measures are incorporated into the design of the school, including on-site storm water retention/detention; good solar orientation to provide passive heat gains during winter and there is the potential for the use of Biomass Heating (wood chips) and rainwater harvesting.

9. Accompanying the application are the following supporting documents:

- An Environmental Statement describing the Environmental Impact Assessment prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999.
- A Transport Assessment; and
- A Planning Application Supporting Statement

THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared on behalf of the applicant to accompany the outline application. The resultant Environmental Statement (ES) addresses landscape and visual assessment; archaeology and cultural heritage; soil land quality; hydrological and flood risk review; ecology and nature conservation; traffic; noise and air quality. Traffic and transportation aspects of the proposal are dealt with in the separate Transport Assessment. The findings of the ES are summarised as follows:

Landscape and Visual Impact

11. Landscape Impact: The landscape baseline concluded that the site is continually changing and evolving and has low landscape and ecological value due to intensive agriculture. Significant opportunities exist for effective landscape enhancement and management, which would improve the general landscape character of the area.

12. The application site is considered to have overall medium landscape sensitivity to the proposed development. The overall significance of residual landscape impact is therefore moderate and adverse during construction, and minor and beneficial once the development is complete.

13. Visual Impact: The visual influence has been assessed as relatively limited from viewpoints located in the medium and long distance to the proposed development. This is due in part to the undulating topography, existing screening vegetation, and the distance of the majority of receptors from the application site. However several areas have been identified as of high visual impact. Those areas include public rights of way and farmhouses to the east and south of the site and the A67 adjacent to the west of the site (providing glimpsed views for motorists and pedestrians) and residential properties on the eastern edge of the village of Kirklevington. Upon completion of the development internal planting (once mature) will assimilate the site into the adjoining landscape.

14. For many of the viewpoints, the residual visual impacts will be of no worse than minimum to moderate significance during construction. However, at a limited number of locations the residual visual impacts during construction would be of moderate (or higher) and adverse significance. However, the residual visual impacts from all of the view points (except two locations on a public right of way adjacent to the northern boundary of the site) are predicted to be beneficial once the development is complete.

15. The overall sensitivity of the surrounding area to visual impact is considered to be low to medium, although an area of higher sensitivity from public rights of way to the south-east of the site is available. The overall significance of residual visual impact is therefore minor/moderate and adverse during construction, and minor/moderate and beneficial once the development is complete.

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

16. This Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Section deals with the potential of the application site to contain areas of archaeological or cultural importance. It includes a desk-based assessment augmented by a site visit and concludes that the archaeological and cultural heritage potential of the site to be low. There is no reason to expect that significant nationally important archaeological remains will be present on site, but there is a low possibility that unknown sub-surface remains of lesser importance may survive, although this is considered unlikely.

17. During the construction phase the discovery of features of cultural heritage is considered to be low and the loss of any such features can be appropriately mitigated through a programme of

geophysical surveys prior to construction taking place with provision for subsequent archaeological excavation and recording if required. As a result no significant effects are anticipated. During the operational phase no significant effects have been identified and, similarly no significant cumulative effects on the cultural heritage resource have been identified. As no effects have been identified there is no proposed mitigation for the operational phase or cumulative effects.

Soil and Land Quality

18. The potential for affects of the development on soil and land quality have been assessed in relation to construction and operation of the proposed development and with regard to ground contamination.

19. The likely residual impacts and effects following the incorporation of mitigation measures are as follows:

Construction Phase: The areas of made ground material associated with the infilled pond at the site boundary could potentially liberate contamination during the construction phase. The main mitigation measures are associated with the assurance that current UK best practice methods are employed during the construction of the proposed development. As the made ground is outside of the proposed development area, the notionally elevated levels of contaminants identified are unlikely to warrant remedial measures to be incorporated into the construction phase to remove/reduce the potential contamination within made ground. The contractor will follow best practice on site to ensure that the potential for spillages to occur is minimised, and that any spillages which do occur are contained and cleared up promptly and safely. The contractor will also be expected to follow best practise on site to ensure that dust production is minimised.

20. Operation Stage: During the operational phase the implementation of any remedial measures within the construction phase of the development will significantly decrease the potential for human contact with contaminants during the operational phase. Following the completion of the construction phase, the proposed development would have no significant effects to the proposed future site users.

Flood Risk and Hydrology

21. The site is not considered to be at risk of flooding. However as a result of the development there is potential for incrementally modifying the flood risk within the development area and also downstream of the site, by increasing the surface water run off due to the construction of significant impermeable areas. The mitigation of the increase in surface water run off has been developed through a Drainage Impact Assessment.

22. The Hydrogeological Sensitivity has been assessed and the risks during the site establishment, building construction and building operation phases have been identified. Mitigation measures are proposed to minimise the identified risks and based on the assessment it is considered that the mitigation measures proposed, together with the protection provided by the glacial till and dilution inherent within the groundwater system, helps ensure that the risk to groundwater from the Yarm School Development is low.

Ecology and Nature Conservation

23. The scope of the ecological assessment was determined through a combination of desk study to identify existing biological data relating to the site and surrounding area and through consultation. A Phase 1 Habitat Survey was undertaken across the whole site and a field assessment for badgers, otters, water voles, bats, birds, amphibians and reptiles were also undertaken by Entec (2007).

24. The site generally comprises habitats of low nature conservation interest, such as arable farmland, and species-poor defunct hedges. Those habitats of higher ecological value, including West Gill, are to be retained during the development. Although the desk study has indicated the presence of several protected species within the wider regional area to the site, including badger and bats, no evidence of the presence of these species on the site was identified. No evidence has been found to suggest that the site supports any resident population of protected species.

25. Negative effects on habitats during the construction phase relate to the removal and disturbance of hedgerows which are species-poor and have no significant conservation interest. With the additional enhancement planting, no significant adverse effects on nature conservation or protected species are expected.

Traffic

26. Other than a requirement to prepare a Green Travel Plan, no mitigation has been identified as being required following the assessment of changes to local traffic numbers. The effects are such that no compensation or enhancement measures are proposed.

Noise

27. A noise assessment has been undertaken to determine the effects of typical construction activity noise at the nearest neighbours to the proposed development. The assessment takes into account measures included in the construction programme and the development design to minimise noise effects. The noise assessment concludes that the proposed development would have no significant effects on receptors in the area around the proposed school relocation site. Mitigation recommended relates to construction noise, and provides that good practice measures should be implemented to reduce noise at source, such as shielding of site with perimeter hoarding, restriction of operational hours, membership of the Considerate Constructors Scheme and a 'Prior Consent' Agreement.

Air Quality

28. The Air Quality assessment considers the potential effects of the operational traffic emissions on air quality in the area, via a quantitative assessment of the operational road traffic associated with the development. The high certainty of effectiveness of appropriate dust mitigation during the construction phases and the temporary nature of these activities means that dust generation is not likely to have significant effects on local receptors.

29. The proposed mitigation measures for the site are as follows include the inclusion of dust mitigation measures in the Construction Management Plan for construction, and the preparation of a Green Travel Plan for operation.

TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT (SUMMARY)

30. The Transport Assessment (TA) report examines the impacts that the proposed development will have on the surrounding transportation services and infrastructure. The TA outlines details of the existing and future sustainable transport provision in the area; the accessibility of the site by all means of transport in a hierarchical order; the trip generation of the proposed development; the distribution of trips from the proposed development; the physical improvement of the site access junction; and the likely impact of the development on the surrounding road network.

31. The proposed development is to be located off the A67, approximately 3km south of the existing sites at the Friarage and Grammar School Lane. Access will be via a new four arm roundabout junction off the A67 replacing the existing priority junction with The Judges Hotel.

32. Current travel to Yarm School is via various modes, which include walking, private coaches and private car. At present, it is necessary for the coaches along with public buses to stop in designated on-road bays on the main A67 carriageway.

33. Within the proposal for the new site is an integrated loop system by which all school coaches and private cars are able to drop off within the development reducing the impact on the surrounding highway network. There will be integrated parking for all vehicles wishing to access the site with 178 general use spaces for staff and students, 12 spaces for VIP's, 343 drop off/pick up bays and drop off/pick up parking for up to 13 coaches.

34. Public transport provision in the vicinity is considered to be relatively poor. As such and in order to limit the number of trips by private car, in line with their Travel Plan, Yarm School put forward a significant investment and introduced a comprehensive coach service covering routes across the region.

35. At present services operate over 11 routes, which are continually reviewed, along with coach size, to ensure the best possible service is provided. Approximately 26% of the pupils use the service on a regular basis, including approximately 50% of the senior school. In addition to this a total of 944 single journey tickets were sold across the eleven routes between September 2006 and March 2007.

36. There is an existing public right of way, which runs through the new school site. This will be retained for public use with playing fields positioned so as not to impact on the route.

37. At present a number of journeys to the existing school sites are on foot. The school wish to preserve this sustainable method of travel and as such propose to provide a gated pedestrian access to the development from the north of the site and also from Weary Bank at the eastern end of the site.

38. In order to promote pedestrian safety it is proposed that a crossing is implemented on the A67, 50m to the north of the new site access junction to assist the desire line to the town centre and the rail station.

39. Although there is currently little in the way of cycle route provision in the vicinity of the site there are extensive networks in the surrounding areas such as Ingleby Barwick. The school are promoting a pedestrian/cycle-gated access at the eastern side of the site. Cycle stands will be located at the school close to the changing rooms/shower buildings.

40. Yarm train station is located under 800m from the site. Cycle and car parking are provided at the station allowing for multi modal trips. It is the school's intention to provide transport, in the form of a minibus, to pick up/drop off pupils and staff at the rail station.

41. At present public bus access in the vicinity of the proposed development is considered to be relatively poor. The site is served directly by one public bus service with others operating in the vicinity of the site. However, in order to limit the number of trips by private car, a coach service has been introduced to deliver a wide-ranging service in the area.

42. The TA concludes that the site is accessible by sustainable transport in addition to the region wide private coach service operated by the school itself.

43. In terms of the effects of traffic generation upon the junctions located close to the site it has been demonstrated that there would be no additional operational problems attributable to the traffic generated by the new school and residential sites. The relocation of Yarm School will bring

forward an increase in the general level of service within Yarm, including a significant reduction in traffic on Yarm High Street.

PLANNING APPLICATION SUPPORTING STATEMENT

44. The statement concludes that the development would draw peak hour traffic out of the town not into it thereby easing congestion. It would moreover eliminate large numbers of intra-site journeys within the town, the junior and senior school sites and those sites and the numerous sports venues within Yarm to which large numbers of pupils are bussed every school day. There is no highway capacity or safety issue.

45. There is an established need for the Development and it offers particular benefits to which significant weight must be accorded. This has been demonstrated in the Sequential Study and other parts of the Statement.

46. Yarm School is one of the country's leading co-educational schools having a record of outstanding academic achievement. The need to preserve and enhance a high quality school is a material planning consideration to which significant weight must be accorded. It is clear that local and national policy places importance upon the need for educational development.

47. The school has an immediate need to re-locate from its existing facilities as it is constrained in terms of its future development as a modern high quality educational facility for the area.

48. The benefits to pupils, parents, and staff as against the current constrained facilities would be significant. The Development would provide further benefits to the local economy and ensure that the high quality education facility remains in the area.

49. A degree of access for local sports clubs and community groups to the sports facilities will be secured by way of planning condition.

50. Yarm School has an established need to move from its existing premises. These are inadequate both quantitatively and qualitatively. The great majority of pupils are taught at the Senior School at the Friarage site. Those buildings are subject to poor internal layout, cramped circulation space (if any), lack of adequate classroom space and staff space, poor access for disabled pupils and other constraints. There are limited playing fields serving the Senior School. What space exists is oversubscribed. Pupils are moved daily by bus and on foot to remote sports venues within the town.

51. The School is successful academically and culturally but cannot preserve or enhance its contribution to sustainable communities from its existing premises. Education uses are not preferred town centre uses for the purposes of the strategic components of the development plan. Large-scale transport movements within the town to and from sports venues are equally unsustainable in planning and educational terms. The development plan does not identify any site to which Yarm School might re-locate. Yarm School has therefore sought a new home for a combined school with its playing fields, which would both meet its own spatial and locational requirements (in particular its need to remain close to its core catchment areas) and be sustainable in planning terms.

52. The development plan has a range of strategic and general policies albeit (with the exception of favourable local plan policy) these do not engage directly with new school development. There are no development plan policies which designate the Site within any area of special landscape, green wedge (the equivalent of green belt), area of separation, or any protective policy militating against the Development. The Site is within the Tees Community Forest, an area for which tree planting is encouraged. The Development would preserve existing trees and involve extensive tree and coppice planting, in a comprehensive landscaping scheme.

53. The RSS for the North East identifies sustainability criteria (in strategic policy 2) in respect of which the Development is satisfactory (albeit that policy 1 and 2 apply to development plan preparation rather than development control).

54. The Development is satisfactory in respect of other policies in the RSS as it does no harm to any environmental or nature conservation or other interest, and insofar as Yarm School can be considered a cultural asset with a significant contribution to make to sustainable communities. It offers a particular contribution towards sports opportunities. The Development accords with the RSS.

55. The Tees Valley Structure Plan likewise identifies sustainability criteria (albeit at a strategic level for other plan making rather than direct development control) in policy SUS2. The Development is satisfactory in terms of those criteria. It does not prejudice any of the protective policies of the Structure Plan insofar as it does no harm to any landscape or habitat or environmental interest. In transport terms through its proximity to core catchment areas is important as well as the presence of a bus route and railway line, the opportunities for walking and cycling encouraged through a Travel Plan, and private bus provision. It is consistent with the Structure Plan's strategy to concentrate significant housing and employment within towns as the relocation of the School will release capacity within Yarm town centre for sustainable alternative uses, as well as maintaining and enhancing school age population within the catchment area.

56. The Development respects the planning guidance in PPS1 and would contribute to the achievement of sustainable communities. It would moreover be consistent with PPS 7 both as to key principles and in general - PPS 7 recognises that there can be sustainable development within the countryside.

57. The Development is satisfactory in terms of PPG 13. It has a safe access, is accessible by non-car modes, is accessible from the core catchment areas, is on a bus route, and would operate in accordance with a travel plan. The current operations of the school generates a large number of daily journeys which would not be required as the Site will have its own playing fields. It is acceptable in terms of impact on roads. There is ample highway capacity on the A67. The Development offers safe access and pick up/set down within the school grounds.

58. Such other material considerations as there are weigh further in favour of the Development. These include the need for and benefits of the Development (including community access to sports facilities), and the contribution it would make to the Tees Community Forest.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

59. Local residents have been individually notified of the application and it has also been advertised on site and in the local press and a summary of the responses are shown later.

60. The following Consultations were notified and any comments they made are below: -

61. North East Assembly

The development proposal for a new school will enable the pre-school facilities through to the sixth form college, to operate from a single site, rather than from multiple locations, as it is the case at present. The location of the proposed development, in the open countryside, is not consistent with the regional locational strategy, as advocated in RPG1 and RSS proposed changes policy 5. This directs the majority of development to the region's urban areas, and permits development of

an appropriate scale in the regeneration towns and rural service centres. In the rural areas, development should contribute to maintaining a diversified rural economy, whilst conserving and enhancing landscapes. It is however noted that the existing school sites are located in Yarm, and that the spatial requirements of the school have been considered and explored through a sequential test.

The sequential approach to development prioritises the use of previously developed land within urban areas, followed by other suitable sites within urban areas, sites adjoining urban areas, and sites in settlements outside urban areas. The site, which adjoins the village of Kirklevington would fall as a low priority within this search sequence. However, it is noted that the applicant has completed a sequential test in support of the application, which identifies this site as the most suitable, taking into account the school's spatial requirements, alongside matters of accessibility, environmental impact, flood risk, and the availability of other sites. This approach is consistent with RPG1 policies DP1 and DP2 and RSS proposed changes policy 3. The validity and completeness of the conclusions drawn is a matter for the local authority to consider in determining the application. The local authority should be satisfied that the conclusions drawn in the sequential test are accurate, and the approach robust, in order to justify the release of a greenfield site in the open countryside.

The location of the development raises issues in relation to the accessibility of the site. However, a transport assessment and travel plan have been completed which seek to maximise the accessibility of the site by a range of modes of travel, and in particular, encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport, through demand management measures. This approach is consistent with the objectives of regional planning policy. The local authority has indicated that there are no significant highways concerns, and that the existing multiple location arrangements which the school operates from present existing highways issues.

The environmental assessment has concluded that there will be moderate impacts on the landscape during construction, and through appropriate mitigation measures, these will be converted into positive impacts, once the development is complete. The local authority should be satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed are adequate to address any impacts on the landscape as a result of the development.

The inclusion of energy efficiency measures and the potential inclusion of biomass and rainwater harvesting techniques is supported, and consistent with the objectives of RPG1 policy EN7 and RSS proposed changes policy 39. In order to fully reflect the objectives of regional planning policy, the development proposals should have embedded within them a minimum of 10 percent of their energy supply from renewable energy sources. This could be secured through a planning condition.

62. Kirklevington and Castle Leavington Parish Council

The development contravenes national and local planning policy in issues such as the requirement to protect Strategic Gap sites, discourage large-scale development in rural areas and encourage development of brown field sites

It contravenes the Tees Valley Structure Plan

It is inconsistent with Stockton Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy which aims to improve the quality of life of local people.

It will effectively end Kirklevington's existence as a separate village community

It will threaten the ecology of the site and will destroy what remains of the Strategic Wildlife Corridor

It brings no benefit to the village

63. Urban Design

General Summary

We have assessed the EIA assessment and the Design and Access Statement prepared for this application and consider that the development in this location would not have any significant adverse landscape and visual or transportation impacts. We, therefore, have no objections to the application providing that conditions are placed on any planning approval to cover items for example, detailed design, appearance and scale of buildings, provision of necessary highway infrastructure and other natural and built environment features as detailed below:

Highways Comments

The proposed vehicular access arrangement and Transport Assessment for the new school site are acceptable in principle. However should this outline application be approved and developed into a full submission, further Highway study work will be required. The provision of this information shall be required as reserved matters or formalised by condition. The additional information required is as follows:

- Notwithstanding the submitted plans, details of the internal layout of roads and car parking and other highway infrastructure shall be approved by the LPA;
- :
- A Stage 1 Safety audit of the internal highway arrangement of the proposed site;
- It is stated in the Traffic Impact Assessment that the new roundabout would slow traffic sufficiently for the speed limit to be reduced. The assessment considers that the speed limit on the A67 north of Green Lane could be reduced to 30mph. Whilst a reduced speed limit would be welcomed a 30mph limit would not be acceptable here and 40mph is more appropriate. This 40 mph speed limit would rule out a zebra crossing at the school. The crossing type to be provided should therefore be designed in accordance with the agreed reduction in traffic road speed;
- Access roads should be a minimum of 4.8metres wide for two way traffic and 3.7metres for one way and it is required that as part of a full planning application, servicing of the school shall be demonstrated;
- Car parking provision identified within the EIA is in line with the Council's SPD parking provision for New Developments. However it is noted that there would be a requirement for on site parent parking with this development and the level shall be justified in the school travel plan. Any changes in the car parking provision to be approved by the LPA;
- Yarm School has produced a School Travel Plan for its present site. It will be necessary to revise this school travel plan and to include proposals for promoting sustainable modes of travel to the application site. The schools internal highway and car park layout will have to be designed to accommodate these travel modes including provision for a shuttle bus lay-by and cycling facilities are necessary;
- An emergency access to the site shall be provided to the satisfaction of the LPA. It has been suggested that this should link to Castleavington Lane;
- No diversions or obstructions of existing Public Rights of Way are proposed.

Contributions

It is necessary for a S278 agreement to be in place for the provision of a roundabout on A67.

S106 contributions are also required for the following highway network improvements:

- Provision of safe crossing facilities on the A67 (if not combined with S278 works);
- A 'Safe Route to School' (SRTS) currently exists along the A67 between Kirklevington and Green Lane. This is a pedestrian only route due to land and highway constraints. Due to the intensification of this pedestrian use and the requirement to encourage cycling to school additional highway improvement works will be necessary. These works will include light controlled crossing facilities on the western side of Green Lane to link with the existing SRTS pedestrian route. In addition, a light controlled crossing on the eastern side of Green Lane is required to link with Castleavington Road a 'quiet road' with the existing dedicated cycleway network within the adjacent local housing estate;
- For safety reasons upgrading and introduction of additional street lighting along the A67;
- Any minor traffic safety measures in Forest Lane, Kirklevington as informed by the recently conducted Origin and Destination Survey;
- Public bus usage is recognised in the ES as a means to transporting children and others to the school. Bus lay-bys and shelters on A67 will therefore be required;
- Traffic Regulation Orders will be required to reduce the speed limit on A67 and also to control parking on A67, the existing lay-by and Castleavington;
- Cycle ways signage to promote Castleavington Road for usage of this route for access to the school.

Landscape & Visual Comments

In terms of the landscape and visual impact, the Environmental Statement (ES) has been based upon recognised methodology ("Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" 2002 and "Landscape Character Assessment Guidance" 2002). Whilst the ES has been undertaken in accordance with the principles of the methodology we disagree with its findings.

The application states, *"the overall significance of residual visual impact is minor/moderate and adverse during construction and minor/moderate and beneficial once the development is complete"*

We agree that with careful design and the proposed location of the built development on this site the proposal would not have a significant adverse visual affect, although we would disagree with the findings of the ES that on completion the development would have a beneficial (positive) impact upon the existing landform. However we accept with the benefit of time that proposed mitigation measures would assist in the integration of this development within its landscape setting.

General Location

The indicative layout and location of the main built forms of the development are acceptable in principle. To substantiate the above comment we note the following:

- The buildings are located within the northern section of the site where the landform is gently undulating and the school buildings themselves are to be located within a depression. To ensure that the concept of the buildings being located within a depression is achieved a condition shall be placed on proposed site levels. Level changes to be referenced to the existing levels and changes in level illustrated by cross sections. The positions for cross-sections to be agreed with the LPA;

- The mature tree belt to the north of the site, associated with the adjacent prison grounds, provides a visually strong and significant backdrop to the development.
- The sports pitches are to be located within the central and southern areas of the site where the landform rises and is more prominent;
- The Tees Valley Structure Plan recognises the importance of maintaining a Strategic Gap (ENV15) between Yarm and Kirklevington. We consider this strategic gap is still maintained by the presence of the grass playing fields which represent the larger proportion of the site area;
- The Green Roof, to be a requirement of scale and appearance (reserved matters) would assist in the integration of the buildings into the landform.

In considering the proposal we have determined that there will be additional direct and indirect impacts on the landscape and how it will be viewed. These impacts are as follows:

- The Masterplan introduces a roundabout junction. This location is determined by the positioning of the buildings and car parking. However, any roundabout in this location has to be considered as a minor adverse visual impact but not unusual in this location between two built-up areas. The introduction of planting (mitigation measures) on the roundabout should assist in its integration into the landscape. The exclusive use of grass would not be acceptable in this location and a carefully considered planting scheme with possible erection of a gateway feature would be required;
- The northern section of the site falls within a Local Wildlife Corridor previously identified in the Cleveland Wildlife Strategy – 1999 (CWS)). Whilst this corridor runs from the Leven Valley it terminates in farmland and as such the wildlife corridor was only categorised in the CWS as of local importance. As the building and car parking are dispersed throughout the northern part of the application site they should not have a significant adverse impact on the wildlife corridor. In addition there is scope however to provide an extensive planting framework along the north boundary of the site which would assist in retaining the integrity of the local wildlife corridor. The widespread use of species of local provenance is confirmed within the EIA and this would assist in the continuation of the wildlife corridor;
- At various meetings with the developer and their agents including at the recent public meeting at Kirklevington it has been suggested that green roof technology would be utilised for the main buildings. The use of green roofs the main buildings is welcomed and would in our opinion greatly assist in integrating the development into the landscape. This type of roof is noted in the Design and Access Statement but not in the EIA. Our consideration of impact is based on the provision of a green roof. Confirmation of the provision of Green Roof by way of an addendum to EIA has been requested from the applicant.
- The landform of the application site has been categorised by the Countryside Agency as the Tees Lowland Landscape and as being gently undulating topography. The EIA states that excavation and construction activities will cause some adverse impact upon the existing natural characteristics of the site. However the engineering of the rolling topography to that of level playing fields must be considered as a long-term adverse landscape and visual impact as it would permanently alter the character of this area of the Tees Lowland Landscape.

Public Rights of Way (PRW)

Following development the present views of open rolling agricultural countryside that are currently afforded from PRW would change to that of largely level areas of active sports use. This issue has not been fully addressed by the EIA. However, we consider that as the views remain generally open but different in character. When we consider the overall impact including sports equipment/goal posts and lighting the changes in view must be considered minor /moderately adverse.

It is noted that with the benefit of time the adverse visual impact should reduce as the planting matures.

Floodlighting

A number of sports pitches are to be floodlit. The EIA notes that the introduction of lighting into this location could have an adverse impact and have proposed hoods for the lights to avoid light pollution. We consider that the introduction of floodlights columns would be visually intrusive during daytime and would represent a more significant adverse visual impact during hours of darkness, especially during winter months when the hours of darkness are longer. The adverse impact would with the benefit of time diminish as the tree and shrub planting proposed as part of the mitigation measures matures. It is noted that with deciduous leaf fall the mitigation benefits of tree cover will reduce which unfortunately will coincide with the longer winter operating times of the lights. A condition shall therefore be placed on the floodlighting positions, details and hours of usage.

Existing Trees and Hedges

The mature trees within the HMS prison grounds alongside the north boundary represent the more significant vegetation adjacent to the site.

The proposed road, which leads to the car park, runs adjacent to this boundary. In order to maximise the protection of the trees, the road alignment should be adjusted southwards. This would also allow a wider and more effective planting belt to be incorporated in this area. The use of species of local provenance for the planting belt would strengthen the local wildlife corridor and will increase the biodiversity values through the proposed mitigation measures.

Whilst the majority of the existing hedges are to be retained, and extensive replanting along the boundaries of the site is proposed the new school may on maturity of the new planting remain visible and prominent in views afforded from the A67 at the mid-point of the western boundary as the road in this location is slightly elevated above the site. At this location, the proposed planting should be increased in width to ensure views from the highway of the new school are minimised.

A condition shall be placed that all trees and hedges within and adjacent to the site should be protected in accordance with BS 5837 Trees in relation to Construction 2005 or as otherwise agreed in writing with the council.

Conclusion

Whilst we consider that the design and layout as having an adverse impact in landscape and visual terms, we do not consider the application as being significantly intrusive taking into account the indicative location, scale and massing of the development. The proposed planting mitigation measures would in time reduce the adverse visual impact.

Should this outline application be approved and developed into a full submission, then the following details shall be approved via reserved matters or conditions:

- Detailed design and appearance and scale of buildings;
- Hard landscaping details;
- Soft landscaping, including details of improved ecological values and creation of wildlife corridors;
- Tree survey and protection details in accordance with BS 5837 Trees in relation to Construction 2005;
- Boundary treatments;
- Section 278 agreement for planting to roundabout junctions;
- Floodlighting details and hours of usage;
- Green roof details;
- Internal arrangement of roads to avoid direct and indirect impacts on existing trees;
- Maintenance and management specifications

All to be agreed in writing by the LPA prior to commencement of operations on site

Built Environment Comments

The proposed development is acceptable in principle.

However, should this outline application be approved and developed into a full submission, the final design will need to show the interrelationship between the architecture and its surrounding space. To this end we would like to make the following points in relation to the EIA:

Layout (Hierarchy of external spaces)

Careful selection of quality and sustainable streetscape materials needs to be made to denote different spaces and their different usage whilst providing a seamless visual transition between each of them within the site. The selection of these materials in relation to the layout and levels of the spaces will be pivotal in providing successful spaces for pedestrians and vehicles equally.

Enhance the quality of internal and external environments (External spaces).

The external spaces need to be integrated successfully together with a quality palette of streetscape and be flexible with good legibility. The design proposals for the larger senior school space needs to provide comfortable spaces for people of all ages, offering opportunities to stand, stay and sit without creating age segregation.

In line with the recommendations above, should the application be approved, the applicant would need to submit at full submission stage a detailed palette of materials for the external treatment of both the buildings and surrounding spaces. This document will need to include streetscape elements for example:

- Enclosure;
- surface treatments;
- street furniture;
- public art signage, (in particular that at the entrance roundabout);
- external lighting (street and buildings).

Environmental Policy Comments

Buildings And Energy Use

Very little information is included the statement about the actual buildings. The EIA does however make comments such as:

- Materials will be reviewed for their environmental credentials;
- Promote passive ventilation;
- Maximise the use of daylight to create comfortable conditions and reduce energy consumption'
- Alternative and renewable energy sources have been investigated.

With regards to renewable energy, the only target in the EIA is that the buildings "should not preclude opportunities for future installation". The statement does, however, state that the feasibility of renewable energy will be investigated in the next stage.

The statement does not give any indication on energy use targets, nor what percentage of energy use they hope to generate from renewable sources. There is also no indication how they will

mitigate against the increasing use of technology in new schools and the increased electric consumption, which goes with it.

The report states that the buildings will be aiming for BREEAM Very Good rating, which is the minimum standard for schools currently being built by local authorities, and should, therefore be considered to be normal for this type of building.

64. Highways Agency

The relocation of the existing school, with no increase in either staff or pupil numbers, may not result in any additional impact on the trunk road network, and requested that further clarification be provided.

No further information has been provided to ourselves and in order to be proactive and to allow you to prepare your report for the planning committee we have undertaken additional studies regarding the proposed development.

It is noted that the Transport Assessment prepared by Grontmij in support of the relocated school has included some allowance for a residential re-development of the existing school sites within Yarm. However, no details regarding numbers of dwellings, person trip generation and distribution of any residual trips has been included, and we cannot therefore agree to this at this stage. We would therefore require a Transport Assessment to support any future planning application for the re-development of the existing school sites.

The school is relocating approximately 3km south from its current location and no additional staff or pupil numbers are proposed.

The trip generation for the new school has been based upon the existing trips to the school. No further detail has been provided, however we would accept the methodology adopted.

The trip distribution has been based upon the existing travel patterns to the school from staff and pupil postcode data, and, although no detailed data has been provided, we would accept the methodology adopted.

We have not undertaken a detailed review of the Travel Plan presented by Grontmij but would wish to support its adoption in order to encourage travel to the new school by alternative modes of travel to the single occupancy vehicle trip.

We have therefore revisited our previous assessments and would consider it unlikely that there would be any material alteration in either vehicle numbers or routeing on the highway network.

Therefore, whilst we would still have some comments regarding the Transport Assessment prepared by Grontmij in support of the new school site. We would accept the conclusion that the relocated school is unlikely to result in any material change in traffic considerations on the trunk road network. However, as mentioned above, we do not accept the information presented regarding the residential development of the existing school sites and would require further information to be presented.

The Highway Agency would therefore not wish to raise any objection to the relocation of the existing school within Yarm.

65. Environmental Health Unit

No objection in principle subject to appropriate conditions covering contaminated land, light intrusion and construction noise.

66. The Environment Agency

No objection in principle subject to the appropriate condition covering a scheme for the implementation of a surface water run off limitation.

67. CE Electric UK

Standard mains record shown.

68. Northern Gas Networks

No objection and standard mains record shown.

69. Natural England

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

Natural England would note that Skylarks, a Biodiversity Action Plan species, have been confirmed as nesting on the site. We would therefore advise that: vegetation should be removed from the site prior to the commencement of the bird breeding season, or work should be timed to avoid the bird breeding season. If neither options are possible, checking surveys for nests should be undertaken immediately prior to commencement of the development, and any that are found afforded suitable protection.

70. Cleveland Archaeologist Section

The Environmental Statement includes a chapter on Archaeology and Cultural Heritage. I have reviewed this chapter and have no problems with it. The chapter summarises the archaeological resource for the area and concludes that there are no known recorded sites within the proposed development. The document does however recognise that as yet undiscovered remains may exist and proposes that a phased programme of archaeological works takes place to assess this possibility. Provision would then be made for subsequent recording of any features revealed prior to the construction phase. I agree with this recommendation and request that a developer programme of archaeological works is made a condition of the planning consent.

71. The Ramblers Association

The development, if permission were to be granted, will have a marked effect upon the character of these public highways and the amenity of their many users from Kirklevington and Yarm as well as those from other localities.

If the council are minded to grant permission in this area, which is well outside the limits of development, we ask that all efforts are made to seek a planning obligation to preserve and enhance the character of the ways for all their users.

72. Government Office For The North East

The copy of the environmental statement is at present a matter for the local planning authority. However, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government reserves the right to require further information at a later date. This might be necessary, for example, in relation to any appeal against refusal of planning permission or non-determination of a planning application, or if it is decided in the circumstances of the case to call-in the planning application.

73. One North East

It is not considered that the application falls within the notification criteria which was sent out to Local Authorities in October 2005 and therefore the Agency in its role as statutory consultee, does not wish to comment upon the proposed development in this instance.

74. Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit

My comments relate to the strategic planning aspects of the proposal, in particular:

- Current national planning guidance
- Current and emerging regional planning guidance and policy
- Current sub-regional planning policy.

I have also provided some comments on the strategic transport aspects of the proposed development.

National Guidance

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) 'Delivering Sustainable Development' seeks to ensure that planning facilitates and promotes sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development. PPS1 also states that where the development plan contains relevant policies, applications for planning permission should be determined in line with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' states that new development in the open countryside away from existing settlements, or outside areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled. It also states that planning authorities should ensure that the quality and character of the wider countryside is protected and, where possible, enhanced. PPS7, together with PPS13 'Transport', both emphasise that accessibility should be a key consideration in all development decisions. Most developments that are likely to generate large numbers of trips should be located in or next to towns or other service centres that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.

Regional Planning Guidance and Policy

The currently adopted Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East (RPG1) sets out a number of principles for the location of new development, including:

- Adopting a sequential approach to site allocation to give priority to the reuse of previously developed land
- Improving the balance between people, jobs and facilities to reduce the need to travel, and
- Protecting and enhancing the environment

The priority of the locational strategy in RPG1 seeks to direct the majority of new development to the built up areas of the conurbations.

RPG1 is currently being reviewed and a revised Regional Spatial Strategy is expected to be approved early in 2008, having recently been subject to consultation on proposed changes. The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) contains a number of policies and principles that are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Concentrating the majority of new development in the Tees Valley (and Tyne & Wear) conurbations – particularly within the core areas – and the main settlements
- Reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car, by focussing development in urban areas that have good access to public transport, and for cyclists and pedestrians
- Promoting development that is sympathetic to its surroundings

- Identifying strategic gaps to maintain the separate identity of settlements in the Tees Valley by preventing them from coalescing and by preventing urban sprawl – specifically a strategic gap should be identified between the Tees Valley conurbation (Marske/Redcar/Eston/Middlesbrough/Thornaby/Stockton/Yarm/Billingham) and surrounding towns and villages

Sub-regional Planning Policy

The adopted Tees Valley Structure Plan (February 2004) outlines a spatial strategy that seeks to locate new development within the urban areas, with preference given to previously developed sites. Structure Plan policies relevant to consideration of this application are:

- Policy SUS1 which requires new development proposals to make a positive contribution to sustainable development
- Policy SUS2 which, through development control decisions:
 - gives preference to the development of brownfield sites and prevent the unnecessary use of greenfield sites
 - seeks to make the best use of existing infrastructure, services and amenities
 - encourages development in locations which minimise the need for travel and can be well served by public transport
 - seeks to provide accessible opportunities for recreation, education, employment and public services
 - protects and enhances the quality and character of the built and natural environment
- Policy STRAT1 which provides for the majority of future development to be located in urban areas
- Policy ENV13 which seeks to strictly control new development beyond limits to development identified in local plans
- Policy ENV15 which states that outside the main built-up areas strategic gaps will be maintained between individual settlements to retain their physical identity. Specifically policy ENV15 identifies a strategic gap between Yarm and Kirklevington
- Policy ENV19 which seeks to improve and enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the countryside by locating new development within the existing physical framework of towns and villages wherever possible
- Policy T25 which states that new development will be located and designed to give priority to walking, cycling and public transport access

Strategic Transport Comments

Although the Transport Assessment(TA) covers all the aspects that would be expected in this type of assessment, there are a number of issues that the Borough Council may wish to take into account:

Drop off/pick up bays – the TA suggests that 178 general use car parking spaces should be provided for staff and students, in line with the guidelines set by the Borough Council. The Assessment proposes a further 343-drop off/pick up bays. Using the approximate numbers of staff and pupils in the school and the modal splits shown in tables 10.1 and 10.2 of the TA, this would suggest over 1 space for every 2 staff/pupils currently dropped off/picked up at the school. Given that all trips would not be made at exactly the same time and that vehicles would be continually exiting the car park as well as entering, this figure seems to over-estimate the number of these spaces needed. It may also be worth considering the number of vehicles that would contain 2 or more pupils travelling together. The amount of car parking proposed may encourage additional car trips, as people who currently avoid driving because of the existing situation may switch modes.

Public transport/school coach services – table 7.1 in the Travel Plan Framework lists inception measures for modal shift but shows no measures to encourage the use of the coach services. The report also suggests that a shuttle bus may be appropriate to connect Yarm rail station with the school if demand is high enough – it may also be worth considering a similar service to link with the

regular bus services on Yarm High Street. Such a service may also reduce the economic impact of the school relocation on the High Street shops.

Walking and cycling – the relocation of the school is likely to have a marked impact on the ability of pupils, and staff, to walk to school. The new school entrance will be some 3km from the current entrance, adding considerably to most walking journeys. The modal split tables suggest that 3% of pupils (approx. 30) and 9% of staff (approx. 19) currently walk, and the relocation may mean a modal shift for many of these people and possibly increased car use. The footpaths along the A67 are not of a high quality and may need to be improved, and a crossing point may need to be considered at the A67/Green Lane roundabout. A cycle path may also need to be considered, as the A67 is not ideal as a cycle route, especially for younger people.

Traffic conditions and impact on surrounding roads and junctions - Table 13.1 predicts that the relocation would reduce traffic on Yarm High Street, The Spital, and Green Lane whilst increasing traffic on the A67 in both directions between 08:00 – 09:00 and 15:30 – 16:30. This suggests that traffic that now travels along Green lane would switch to the A67, but in reality this may not happen. The relocation is unlikely to alter the route of Ingleby Barwick residents, and it is unlikely that any residents from further away, such as Acklam, would change their current route as the A67 is already a viable option. The figures in table 13.1 also predict that traffic will reduce by 13% and 14% on the High Street but only by 2% and 4% on The Spital. However the reasons for these differences are not fully explained, particularly since these roads join together and run in the direction of the new school. The table also predicts that the PM peak will see increased traffic on all roads, but there is no explanation why the PM peak is so different to the AM peak.

Tables 13.4 to 13.6 estimate queue length on arms of the A67/Green Lane junction. These appear to be overestimates, but given that they look to be overestimated for future conditions as well, a relative comparison can still be made.

Strategic Planning Considerations

From a strategic planning perspective I have a number of concerns. The proposed development is outside the limit to development as defined in the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan and, significantly, is within the strategic gap between Yarm and Kirklevington as identified by Tees Valley Structure Plan policy ENV15. The concept of strategic gaps in the Tees Valley was strongly supported in the Report of the Panel following the Examination in Public into the revised Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, and has been included in the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the RSS issued for consultation in May 2007.

Where possible new development should be located within main built-up areas so that development on greenfield land is minimised and proposals are able to make maximum use of existing infrastructure and services. Although a sequential study has been submitted with the planning application, the majority of alternative sites examined were greenfield sites outside the existing limit to development. The sequential study does not appear to have rigorously followed the priority order outlined in national and regional planning policy:

- Suitable previously developed sites within urban areas, particularly around public transport nodes;
- Other suitable locations within urban areas not identified as land to be protected for conservation or recreational purposes;
- Suitable sites in locations adjoining urban areas, particularly those involving the use of previously developed land, and
- Suitable sites in settlements outside urban areas, particularly those that involve the use of previously developed land

The site is not in an area currently well served by public transport, although it is accepted that additional bus services could be provided. The site is also not well related to existing residential areas of Yarm, making access on foot less convenient.

Development outside the existing limit to development in this location could set a precedent for further developments, and the current proposal would have a significant detrimental impact on the strategic gap between Yarm and Kirklevington. It is noted that none of the supporting statements submitted with the planning application appear to refer to the current strategic gap policy.

It is acknowledged however, that Yarm School is a prestige and nationally renowned educational establishment that does make, and will continue to make, a contribution to the regeneration of the Tees Valley sub-region.

In conclusion, the Borough Council should be satisfied that:

- i) there are no suitable alternative sites available to accommodate the proposed development, in accordance with the sequential approach to new development as set out in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy;
- ii) the proposed development will not have a adverse impact on the strategic gap between Yarm and Kirklevington;
- iii) the site is capable of being well served by public transport as an alternative to the private car;
- iv) the development will not set a precedent for further developments beyond the limit to development and within the strategic gap, and
- v) the number of pick up/drop off bays proposed is not excessive and will not encourage more car trips.

75. Hambleton District Council

Whilst the Council do not wish to make a specific objection, concerns are held that the overall strategy to relocate Yarm School from its present town centre location to a greenfield site is not entirely compatible with Central Government's sustainability agenda. A better approach would be to improve the school's facilities at its current location and develop additional housing on brownfield land in locations that do not suffer from chronic traffic problems.

76. Sport England

The Stockton Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) defines Yarm as being Eaglescliffe/Yarm/Ingleby Barwick sub area and identifies Yarm School as having 6 senior football pitches of Category C availability (that is available to sections of the public as a matter of policy or practice)

The Stockton PPS goes on to conclude for this sub-area that there is an over reliance on playing pitches whose availability is not guaranteed. This application presents an opportunity to 'move' Yarm School's proposed playing pitches into a secured community use category, and this guaranteed availability would be of major benefit to the continued development of pitch based sports in the sub area.

In light of the above we would ask that an appropriate condition is imposed.

77. Police Wildlife Crime Officer – Dave Sanders

It seems that the presence of the wildlife corridor is a major concern of the local residents and in particular the appearance that its existence has not been considered at any stage during the planning application.

I would re iterate that a full environmental impact assessment needs to be carried out at this stage prior to any planning being approved.

This should be species specific giving equal weighting not only to the presence of resident species but also the ongoing effects on transient species caused by the removal of this wildlife corridor.

Neighbours consulted

78. Local residents and occupiers have been individually notified of the application. The application has also been advertised on site and in the local press. A number of representations have been received. These include 110 letters/emails objecting to the proposals and 43 letters/emails in general support of the scheme. The letters of support include letters from the following the NECC, Judges Hotel, and John Holmes (Director of Regeneration and Tourism ONE). Dari Taylor MP has indicated she accepts the reasons for the relocation.

79. The objections and concerns received can be summarised as follows:

Highway and traffic concerns

- Increased traffic including cars, buses and delivery vans to the proposed site will have an adverse effect on the overall access to the Kirklevington village.
- Proposing a new roundabout (at the entrance of Judges Hotel) closer to the A19 will mean the existing tail backs at the roundabout at the top of The Spital are more likely to reach the exit to Kirklevington Village and will impede exit/entry to the village.
- Access issues for emergency vehicles to Kirklevington especially during school starting and ending hours.
- Health and safety issues of individuals using the footpath between Kirklevington and Yarm and particularly for the children from the village who attend Conyers having to cross the proposed roundabout.
- Stockton Council upgraded the footpath past Judged a few years ago to enable the children in Kirklevington to walk to Conyers and if this development goes ahead the suitability of this footpath will degenerate in terms of safety (those children who do walk will then be taken by car which will add to the traffic problems)
- Traffic calming measures been introduced into Kirklevington to protect the village primary school and the increase in traffic on Forest Lane will increase the hazard to the village school and questions should be asked what measures Yarm School will implement to mitigate this hazard. Increased traffic on Forest Lane/Back Lane will increase the danger to pedestrians and horse riders along these roads.
- Additional traffic signs will be required within the village and this will only add to the problems faced by drivers as they approach the difficult bend on the A67 near Kirklevington village.
- The increased traffic on Forest Lane would not be confined to daytime school times but as with any major school social, cultural and sporting activities are held regularly on evenings and weekends.
- The predicted traffic increase from the Richmond/Darlington direction along the B1264 towards the Conyers side of the roundabout will try to avoid this traffic congestion by cutting

through Forest Lane from the West. Similarly, traffic leaving the new school site heading west would cut through Forest Lane as a quicker route.

- A situation may arise whereby the eastbound traffic arriving at Green Lane roundabout tails so far back that it blocks access to and from Conyers that will then cause a westbound tail back towards the roundabout.
- Existing regular queuing traffic at the Green Lane roundabout with 40-50 queuing cars coming from Ingleby Barwick with 15-25 queuing cars from A67 Kirklevington side adding to this the fact that Leven Bank is often closed 3-4 times a year with traffic then having to use the A67/A19 diversion route.
- Access down Forest Lane is restricted in busy periods with parents dropping their children off at Kirklevington School. Many of the driveways on Forest Lane have poor visibility to pull out onto Forest Lane.
- Increased traffic problems and commuting time may cause parents not to send children to the Kirklevington Primary School which would adversely effect the village school which is the heart of the community in Kirklevington. Especially as the current catchment area for the school includes Ingleby Barwick. The forecast reduction in traffic along The Spital may mean parents from Ingleby Barwick decide to send their children to Levendale or Yarm Junior School via Glaisdale Road and Valley Drive causing Kirklevington Primary School to no longer be sustainable.
- Provision should be made for street lighting from Judges to Kirklevington, as this is an existing hazard for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Traffic lights should be placed on the new roundabout at peak times in the morning and evening.
- No mention made in the 'Yarm School Relocation Transport Assessment' by Grontmij of the public right of way to the north west of the site from A67 opposite Judges running towards HM Prison and then along the Prison land to the road from Green Lane to Castleavington. Public right of way goes across the proposed site that should be maintained otherwise increase in anti-social behavior.
- Traffic currently on The Spital will be transferred to the A67 that will be a disadvantage to residents of Kirklevington.
- Commuter traffic on the A67 from Green Lane to the A19 is already heavy and this would be increased therefore consideration should be given to make this section a dual carriageway to handle the increased traffic.
- The proposal would be detrimental to the residents of Kirklevington due to the inadequacy of the existing highway system / speed controls which would be unable to cope with the increased traffic which would ensue from the proposal.
- Current government policy is to promote healthy kids and encourage cycling/walking. Conyers Secondary School is within 3 miles from Kirklevington Village but the increased traffic at Yarm School will mean this will not be possible and there is no LEA school bus provision to Conyers.
- Forest Lane will become a 'rat run' for traffic from Northallerton, Great Smeaton and Darlington taking short cuts to and from Thirsk Road to by-pass Green Lane. Traffic already

intolerable level along Forest Lane and if the application is approved it shows people's safety requirements are being overrun by business interests.

- Forest Lane is the same width now as it was in 1963 when the housing started and the population was only 300. Forest Lane is now not adequate which is demonstrated by the multiplicity of road signs, humps and stripes on the railway bridge denoting it as a single track width. There are places along the lane where there are only one footpath on either side.
- Many accidents already at the junction of Forest Lane at the Crown Hotel to put more traffic through this junction will escalate the problem and cause long queues on Forest Lane and will lead to drivers taking chances to get out of Forest Lane resulting in an increase in accidents
- Drivers will try to beat the traffic by turning into Pump Lane, at the Village Hall and will travel down the one way system behind the Church which is already a congested area and is a narrow road unsuitable and dangerous for extra traffic to use and any arrangements made by Yarm School will not prevent people 'doing their own thing'
- Traffic surveys showing traffic flow at Conyers and Yarm School do not coincide and should be examined as not enough information
- The Traffic Assessment seems little more than a paper exercise as it states that there is insufficient data at this time to give a figure for any increased traffic because of the probable double effect on the A67 caused by the relocation of the school within a mile of the same stretch of road.
- New roundabout coming off a sharp bend will not be seen and the addition of a pedestrian crossing between the crossroads roundabout and the proposed new roundabout will be dangerous
- Thirsk Road is a two way derestricted road habitually used by long vehicles and is subject to a 60 mph limit at the proposed site a 40mph limit should be considered with all parking being off site and strictly controlled.
- The bends and banks before the proposed roundabout will restrict the views of the traffic coming from Yarm. With the current 60mph speed limit traffic will probably be inside planning braking distance before the roundabout but buses and heavy goods vehicles will be a hazard. Any alternative access point further south on the A67 would be unsafe due to the dip in the land and bends at Kirklevington.
- The council has recently installed speed warning signs on the A67 presumably as traffic travels too quickly along the A67 and therefore increasing this traffic is creating the potential for a disaster.
- Likelihood of additional stationary traffic backing up from the A67/Green Lane roundabout which currently occurs.
- Traffic problems with the traffic for Conyers School in Green Lane from Layfield Estate over the narrow railway bridge at Yarm Station and the 'bused' children from Ingleby Barwick going over the A1044 Leven Bank Bridge
- Impact of three developments being Tall Trees, the proposed housing development at the Friarage site and the proposed school site should be viewed together on the traffic impact

at the A67/A1044/B1264 junction in terms of delays and need for further infrastructure investment.

- This proposal should not be considered until the impact on the A67 of the 250 dwellings approved at the Tall Trees site has been assessed, as the A67 is the only road to connect the A19 and the Tall Tree site.
- 178 car parking spaces will be insufficient for 'approximately 1000 pupils and 194 staff' mentioned in the 'Yarm School Relocation Transport Assessment' produced by Gronmij as 82% of staff travel to school in private vehicles as driver (table 10.1) and 4 % of pupils travel in 'private vehicles as driver' (table 10.2) so if these figure remain unchanged the spaces required will be 199 and any shortage will result in parking alongside A67.
- Parking issues as even though sufficient parking is provided and the A67 is double yellow lined some parents will still park on the road 'for a quick getaway' with every school in the borough having the same problem
- Proposal affects the road infrastructure of a wider community than Kirklevington since the proposed access is to be situated on a main highway serving Yarm and Eaglescliffe so proposal should not be considered without registering views of a wider community.
- Lack of capacity at the junction of the A67 and A19 northbound as no right turn lane which is extremely busy at rush hour and the additional traffic from parents will cause queues on the A67 towards the A19
- This highway is used as a diversion route when there is maintenance or an accident on the A19 and is unsuitable for a school entrance.
- Vehicles currently having spent time on a long, clear, fast A19 fail to adapt to the A67 road conditions despite the warning signs.
- Inconclusive from plans as to whether any intended or proposed cycle/pedestrian entry/exit route is planned for the rear boundary of the proposed site where bordering Castle Levington Lane. Any exit/entry on this section would be hazardous and lead to a dropping off area where 'slow markings' are already in place.
- Castle Levington Lane could also be used for parking by the general public understand the facilities within the site are available to the public.
- Reason for the proposed relocation is the volume of traffic at the current location yet it is understood that the funding for the proposal is via the erection of 120 dwellings on the current Friarage site which means the reduction in traffic is not maximized.
- Parents will avoid traffic congestion at Yarm Roundabout by dropping children off on the Back Lane (to Weary Bank) and not at the official entrance.
- Parking problem at the school seems to be the main reason for the move that surely can be relieved by developing the existing facilities within the boundaries of the existing site.
- The inevitable increase in pupil numbers following relocation will generate substantial additional traffic on the A67/A1064.
- If the Friarage site is to be developed for residential development there will be extra traffic on Yarm Road and within Yarm as there would be one car per household. It will also

increase the existing traffic queues traveling through Yarm where they have no alternative route e.g. to travel to Durham Tees Valley Airport.

- Inevitable development of playing fields at Green Lane will increase burden on the road infrastructure
- Planning Policy Guidance 13 –Transport supports the objections throughout and too many areas to quote yet the site is rated as PYAL 1 – i.e. Poor for public transport. Massively increase traffic on surrounding networks and this is exacerbated further by the fact the school is independent and has no local catchment area and unless the traffic is tackled head on will significantly increase the Borough's carbon footprint.
- Ample parking proposed on site but traffic will need to access and leave the site via the new proposed roundabout which will lead to hold ups on the A67.
- Traffic calming measures which are currently being put in place do not allay any fears as these measures were needed regardless of any future development.
- Kirklevington Village is poorly served by public transport whereas Yarm is well served by public transport.
- Congestion in Yarm will not be resolved it will just be moved to a dangerous area on minor/unnamed roads which have tractors/horses and pedestrians.
- Developers traffic statement begins with a vision statement as follows but cannot see how moving the private school two miles from current location can achieve the aims stated ' The North East will be a region where present and future generations have a high quality of life. It will be vibrant, self reliant, ambitious and outward looking region featuring a dynamic economy, a healthy environment and a distinctive culture. Everyone will have the opportunity to reach their full potential'
- Stockton on Tees Borough Council Second Local Transport Plan (2006-2011) states 'We (the Council) recognise that the two-way influences between transport and health, education, community and employment agendas need to be recognized now and in the future' Will the proposed school in this location improve education for children in Stockton Borough and what sort of employment terms and conditions does Yarm School offer.
- Developer states various junctions in their desktop study yet omitted the junction at Kirklevington between Forest Lane and the A67, which even by the developers' criteria must be classified as a receptor. It is estimated receptors will increase the traffic by 10%.
- Reference to a previous Planning Inspector appeal by McLean Homes (application S1664/88) which was refused on the grounds of the A67/Forest Lane junction had at the time of the enquiry had 8 accidents, 2 fatalities in the last three years and it was accepted that the minimum safe visibility to the right towards the bends would be 160 metres at 4.5 metres back and the actual distance was 125 metres at 4.5 metres. This visibility has not been improved and the chevrons/advisory speed limits have not prevented traffic going 60 mph on the bends. Since the appeal decision a further 62 houses have been built within the village envelope resulting in a one way system being introduced so all traffic to the village has to enter via the A67 junction making it more dangerous. Inspector mentioned in technical terms there was no problem with capacity at the junction but considered inherent dangers due to sub standard visibility. Since the decision the visibility splay has been reduced to approximately 115metre at 4.5 metres by additional developments adjacent to

the Crown Hotel. Inspector also felt the footpath provision along Forest Lane was such that increase in traffic would prejudice road safety.

- Consider developers figures of traffic increase on A67/Thirsk Road of between 11 –270 vehicles with no HGV vehicle increase when development finished in 2010 flawed and have made no attempts to determine the increased traffic along Forest Lane which on conservative estimates would expect it to be 20 traffic movements between 8-9am and 15.30 and 16.30. McLean’s appeal estimated traffic flow at 300 cars per hour used A67/Forest Lane junction with the additional housing, proposed cattery and proposed school goes ahead this will create an additional 362 vehicles which equates to a further 52 vehicles movements or 17% which seems unacceptable bearing in mind the inspectors comments on the junction.
- School offering riding lessons, as part of curriculum which presume will be in connection with the Riding School situated on the lane opposite the A67/Forest Lane junction. This will mean increased activity at the riding school and mean increased traffic near the A67/Forest lane junction. The Lane utilized by the Riding School is also used by heavy farm vehicles e.g. tractors.
- Developer considers the likelihood of the area being an accident and safety risk to be of no significance. There have been at least two fatalities on the A67/Forest Lane junction in past 15 years and modern car improvements only reason there have not been more fatalities.
- More traffic, more bottlenecks, more danger, more irate drivers battling to get to and from Yarm so until there is a bypass surely this proposal is madness.
- Forest Lane used to be a quiet lane but now the traffic drives faster and has become more dangerous to walk and cycle. The nature of the road from the bridge to the end of Picton/Darlington junction is just farms.
- Currently have problems getting out of the drives onto Forest lane due to the speed of the cars traveling under the bridge towards the A67, as they do not adhere to the speed limits on the road.

Loss of countryside and visual Impact

- Commercial development on Greenfield site some 48 hectares outside the village is entirely out of keeping with surrounding area and sets precedent for further commercial units. The intention of Greenfield land being to provide separation between Yarm and Kirklevington.
- Development on the green belt is contrary to the policies of a Unitary Development Plan and inappropriate in light of Local policy and Guidance on National Planning Policy Guidance PPG – Green Belts
- Proposal to build on Greenfield site of good quality agricultural land in an inaccessible location is contrary to both national guidance and the policies contained within the local plan e.g. Paragraph 13(ii) of PPS1 – Delivering sustainable Development states: -

‘Local Planning Authorities should ensure that development plans contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change – through policies which reduce energy use, reduce emissions ‘for example, by encouraging patterns of development which reduce the need to travel by private car, or reduce the impact of moving freight) promote the development of renewable energy resources, and take climate change impacts into account in the location and design of development.’

Therefore to comply with this guidance and address the issue of climate change caused by the additional traffic generated by this development it should be re-sited to a more sustainable location where pupils can access the site other than by car or private coach.

- Development on Greenfield site is contrary to EN13 – Development outside the limits to development may be permitted where: -
 - It is necessary for farming or forestry operation
 - It falls within policies EN20 (reuse of buildings) or TOUR 4 (Hotel conversions) or In all other cases and providing that it does not harm the character or appearance of the countryside where: -
 - It contributes to the diversification of the rural economy or
 - It is for sport or recreation or
 - It is a small scale facility for tourism
- The proposed development is within a conservation area where there is much protected wildlife.
- Site is a significant part of the Wildlife corridor between North Yorkshire and Cleveland with North Yorkshire having spent considerable effort to safeguard their area so shouldn't Stockton do the same? School has made token attempts to maintain the corridor but the activity during building and once built will mean many larger mammals will leave the corridor before the site is complete.
- The application cannot demonstrate special circumstances that would justify 'appropriate development' and would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and would set a precedent for more development of the Green Belt. Limited Green Belt Land exists within the Yarm permitted development boundary and this will diminish it further.
- Central government policy is for Brownfield sites to be preferably utilized as development land and Greenfield sites to be preserved.
- Kirklevington is a village not a conurbation and this development is typical of one development merging into another transforming rural landscape into urban sprawl and would destroy the character of the village. Strategic gap between Yarm and Kirklevington is defined in ENV15 IV of the local plans. It will effectively end Kirklevington's existence as a separate village community.
- Development will infill an open space area including a Wildlife corridor between Kirklevington Grange and Kirklevington Village which has existed for over 100 years and is essential to Kirklevington Parish and is not a green wedge as defined in Stockton's planning policy ENV8. The open space area is shown within the structure plan to clearly maintain the character of Kirklevington Village as separate and distinct from Yarm so how can the proposal be justified under Stockton's present policy for the protection of villages within the Borough.
- Attractive feature and characteristic of the North East is the discrete nature of the towns and villages with defined boundaries and this should be preserved
- Wildlife link between the River Tees and the River Leven and far beyond will be permanently broken and so far no buildings block the Wild Life corridor between the River Tees and the River Leven
- Hambleton relies on this wildlife corridor

- Visually the area has a geological landscape with unique features created by decaying glaciers producing features of deep glacial overflow channels with sluggish streams across the countryside.
- The wildlife corridor is of ancient origin hence Forest Lands, High Forest and Low Forest and is part of a larger route for flora and fauna
- If the wildlife corridor is blocked large mammals will be forced south of the village and towards the busy A19. Large mammals follow the route recorded in the 2004 Strategic Wildlife corridor Tees Valley Structure Plan.
- Kirklevington residents formed a working party that agreed the village envelope defining the extent of building land found acceptable in the village and several applications outside the area have been turned down over the years based on this.
- Alteration of arable land to an unproductive use with extra traffic. Introduction of Biofuels means this seems inappropriate approach to town and country planning
- There is land within the Borough of Stockton and surrounding area designated for commercial development so Yarm School should be required to develop within these areas that usually have appropriate road links.
- Agricultural land at proposed site is highest quality that has never flooded and has never been 'set aside' land in the 37 years
- Three public rights of way in the area and two confirmed sighting of Deer reported within Kirklevington area and Canada Geese feed on the field in late September. There have also been Sky Larks and Owls both rare and protected seen on the footpaths.
- Cleveland County Council document (Cleveland Environment 1993) stated most of country's wildlife occupied only 23% of the total Cleveland area and since then this figure has been reduced further.
- Proposed building and car park are on the local wildlife corridor as defined in The Cleveland Wildlife Strategy. At least 5 sites of Nature Conservation Importance and further 8 sites of Biological Interest are within the local area. This wildlife corridor is working due to sensitive farming methods. If permission is granted and a Wildlife corridor is to be established it would need to be moved 500m to the south to establish a viable corridor as shown on the Cleveland Plan that would cause an even greater impact on Kirklevington.
- Will the development provide provision for horse riders and dog walkers who use the existing public rights of way in the form of sanded tracks or will these paths be closed at a later date.
- Importance of linear wildlife corridors from one habitat to another has been mapped since 1987 and within 2 kilometre radius of the site there are known to be bats, kestrels, badgers, otters, roe deer, hares, foxes, toads, and newts even if they are not on the site it will affect their natural commuting and biodiversity, including species protected by law.
- A full Environmental Impact Assessment will be required to ensure that any 'Red data Species/Wildlife of specific importance are accounted for and protected.

- Relocation from an existing prestigious school site with unparalleled access to River Tees, listed building and mature landscaped grounds so a full cost/benefit survey/report required to access the benefits in terms of educational advantage/potential costs in terms of children's safety/quality of life and protection of wildlife.
- What assessments have been completed for the local wildlife during each season with the local volunteers in Kirklevington who conserve the wild life?
- The development cuts into the approach to Yarm and continues the encirclement of the village with Ingleby Barwick and such unchecked developments will destroy the charm and character of the village which brings in considerable income and employment to the area.
- Negative environmental impact in terms of destruction of wildlife habitats and the carbon footprint created by a commercial premises. Destruction of an area of natural beauty that cannot be recovered.
- Since 1993 there has historically been losses to the wildlife corridor with the loss of two wildlife corridors to the south of the River Tees as documented in the 1993 Cleveland County Council Wildlife Strategy.
- Development of a pond at The Kirk was prevented due to a colony of crested newts and this pond is located across the A67 and metres from the proposed site. An independent councilor stated 'The retention of an established habitat is always preferable to the creation of new or replacement features. Corridors can be damaged or rendered unviable by reduction in their width or any severance'
- Planning in Yarm and Leven Bridge has already harmed the wildlife corridor making the corridor in Kirklevington crucial as a means of feeding wildlife along the Tees Valley. e.g. Deer on the Friarage site.
- School and parking would be sited on the most ecologically sensitive part of the site.
- Land will be taken out of farming forever and will make the farm less viable as an agricultural business, and make the whole area around the site vulnerable to untidy straggling development out of keeping with the ancient mounded site.
- Planning process stopped immediately due to a total disregard by the developers of the accepted Tees Valley Structure Plan and its bio diversity protection policies. The corridor north of Kirklevington village envelope was the only continuous wildlife corridor from the west along the Tees into Hambleton along the Leven renamed the strategic wild life corridor on the major map within the Tees Valley Structure Plan 2004. The severing of the Wildlife corridor is equivalent of knocking down a Grade 1 listed building. The dates when the environmental assessment and submission of plans should be noted as it will show the bio diversity of the area was not factored into the planning at any stage hence failure to protect the wild life, biodiversity of the region and to work within the guidelines set by Stockton, The Tees Valley, The Government and the EEC concerning biodiversity.

Other concerns

- Excessive size of the site which appears to be substantially larger than is required. The proposed site is larger than Kirklevington village. Proposed school is not planning any increased numbers of pupils or staff and yet four times the size of Conyers and a profligate waste of land. Plans show nine sports pitches alone (which is double the pitches the school currently holds) with a further seven sports pitches and running track with presumably a further pitch to be within the running track as at the Allans West site.

- Brutalistic design that occupies a prominent position on rising ground and will be highly visible.
- Plans show an 'Outdoor education' area and as there is no definition as to what this will be utilized as there are concerns this could be being set aside for future development and housing.
- If there are to be no increase in student size then concerned that the sites marked as pitches will be used by the school for future expansion and no relevant to existing pupil numbers.
- Traffic and noise will lead to devaluation of Yarm as a town and devaluation of house prices in Kirklevington and Castle Levington with no benefit in terms of access to the amenities.
- The development will affect the natural drainage of the area and cause flooding on Thirsk Road with the dip opposite the lay by being recently flooded. How will the extra surface water be directed to the River Leven?
- The S bends on the A67 flood now after prolonged showers so where will the drainage from all the site roads and buildings end up? The loss of a significant part of the fields to tarmac and buildings must reduce the soak-away capacity of that area.
- Kirklevington has a sewage problem presently at Forest Lane and the junction of The Green and opposite the Village Hall which will be increased with this development
- Risk to service users as proposed school on an insecure site adjacent to an open prison and potential risk to the children.
- Former Yarm Grammar School site will be developed when already car parking spaces in Yarm are at a premium so need no additional traffic. Could be an additional 200 cars at peak times coming in from both sides of Yarm and would be for 52 weeks of the year and 24 hours a day rather than the current situation of between 8-9 am and 3-5 pm for approximately 36 weeks of the year.
- Disingenuous to seek permission for this site without details of the Friarage site as if these two sites are linked financially it should be disclosed.
- Cobetts application say 'the remote playing fields create an unsatisfactory and unsuitable position' yet the school will, presumably want to retain access to the river and boat storage at the Friarage site for rowing and canoeing and this facility will then be a remote site to the new school and therefore the remoteness of the playing fields is not a sufficient reason to despoil the Greenfield site.
- Yarm School is a commercial enterprise and majority of pupils come from outside the area with there being no provision of community services/new jobs to the local community and therefore no 'planning gain for the inhabitants of Kirklevington and the surrounding area. Facilities which are only open by invitation outside school hours and to a select few at a cost will not be a benefit to the larger community. In contrast the detriments of this proposal will be felt by local people whatever their income.
- Understand there is a precedent for schools to be developed on green belt - is this applicable to a business venture providing service for a small minority of the local community?

- Will there be a constraint placed on any future expansion of the site as this proposal will 'open the door' for other commercial developments on the other side of the A67 or between the school and Castlevington Road.
- Other sites should be considered such as the old brick factory on Durham Lane and vacant Saltersgill School on Worsall Road, Former MOD site in Eaglescliffe which have infrastructure in place
- Concerns that residential housing will also be included at the new school site that will increase the traffic
- Pedestrian access should be improved for those children walking from Kirklevington as a narrow footpath and a crossing point should be considered.
- There is adequate provision for school facilities currently at the Friarage site with prediction of declining school numbers so this development is purely commercial rather than a social need undertaking.
- Problem with air pollution levels in Yarm High Street would be increased with the additional traffic
- Violates the structure plan for the area
- Public rights of way across the land at Towns End Farm create a security problem for the proposed education facility, so site is unsuitable for the proposed purpose.
- Difficult to park in Yarm now for any length of time as the town desperately needs a car park so do not need additional traffic if the Friarage Site is developed for apartments/dwellings
- Outlaying beauty for people driving into the Yarm area from outside. The site currently forms a valuable asset to Kirklevington and despite all the 'greening' offered by the school the project significantly reduces the quality of that amenity and the footpaths across it.
- Concerns over the intended future use of the schools playing fields off Green Lane, Yarm (B1264) Understand the school needs to keep these playing fields for two years but what is the future plans?
- Destruction of one building of character and protected trees at the Friarage Site
- All weather pitches mentioned in the application which will mean intrusive lighting for evening uses
- Why have the local residents not been informed in writing of the application as it will dramatically effect the local residents
- If the application was for a manufacturing business then the application would not be considered
- The existing playing fields on Green Lane that Yarm School currently use as sport fields will these be sold for redevelopment if the new school is approved.
- Little consideration given for the occupants of nearby homes with the location of the main car park and floodlit sports with their attendant light and noise are being adjacent to homes

on Castle Leavington Lane. There should be a wide landscaped and wooded buffer zone to act as a visual and noise barrier.

- Concerns over the relocation of the school next to an open prison as checks can never keep a check on everyone's whereabouts or their conviction history.
- Yarm has won acclaim as a gem retaining its diverse village character and is not a mere residential suburb. The proposal will devalue that character with housing and evening entertainment having an over-large profile with this application increasing that dominance. Any housing on the Friarage site will mean replacing individuals who use the limited services during daytime in the week with a large number of residents who use them all the time. Children who come by bus will be replaced by adults using private vehicles that have caused the well documented pollution in Yarm High Street.
- The problems at the Healaugh Park Shops with pupils from Conyers School would be aggravated by the close proximity of another school.
- The council should take responsibility for gradual destruction of Yarm and its environment and to take steps to preserve this once charming market town from over-development.
- Developers campaign to procure the site is unprofessional and unbecoming of an educational establishment that prides itself on fair play and lack of bullying. Concerns about descriptions, publicity material and press releases that appear to be misleading
 - e.g. Location 'outskirts of Yarm' rather than Kirklevington.
 - Misleading in that south eastern section missed off Yarm School sketch plan on Shepherd publicity leaflet
 - Pre-emptive as the press releases and web sites stated when they have moved to the site not if subject to planning
 - Limited time to comment on the application
- General ignorance over the boundary between Yarm and Kirklevington that is causing confusion with Councillors, developers and Yarm School. The boundary between Yarm and Kirklevington is along Green Lane. Tees Valley Structure Plan fails to name villages on its representation map.
- Yarm is urban sprawl up to the Green lane boundary line
- Yarm relies on the footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes within Kirklevington for recreation and two footpaths cross this land.
- Historically the area surrounding Kirklevington is farmland with scattered houses along Green Lane and the A67 and the Tall Trees being a country house and Grove Farm still farming the land circulating Kirklevington Hall. Should Yarm School relocate the former playing fields on Green lane should be returned to farmland.
- Few children from Kirklevington will be able to attend Yarm School.
- Unsustainable and contrary to the Stockton on Tees Local Plan both in letter and spirit and counter to National Planning Guidance including PPS1, PPS7, PPS9, PPG13, PPG16, PPS22 and PPG25.
- The supporting documentation states the necessity for the school to remain in Yarm and this is supported by the sequential test that checked for alternative sites. This argument is flawed as the school is independent and varies from a state school in that there is no geographical catchment area and the supporting documentation states that only 25 % of

the pupils are from Yarm / Ingleby Barwick/ Eaglescliffe and the Kirklevington area. The main reason appears to be financial benefits to the school highlighted by the following comment from the Planning Statement

' Therefore there is no sustainable basis for considering the re-location of Yarm School into any other substantial settlement many of which have or would be within the catchment area of other competitor independent schools.

- Yarm School has no historic links to Yarm as both the preparatory and senior school was founded less than 30 years ago.
- If the development does proceed agree with Sports England on imposing conditions requiring wider community access to the school sports facilities and there should also be conditions regarding the submission of a construction management plan (including hours and routes of delivery) and school travel plan (including the appointment of a school travel co-ordinator)
- If granted the proposed development would exasperate the sprawling development of Yarm that has already outgrown its natural boundaries and the services and amenities which it provides.
- Area performs a green buffer between Yarm and Kirklevington village and once it has been built then a precedent will be set for future development which the council may refuse but and planning inspector may not have the same view.
- If the school no longer sees being situated in Yarm as being significant then surely sites to the north of Yarm would provide better access to the A66/A19 and improve the traffic flows through Yarm and on the A67/A1044 and B1264.
- Surely the essence of Yarm School is the historic site it currently occupies? The suggested incorporation of Polam Hall into Yarm School is very concerning particularly in terms of the related traffic issues or the number of buildings that will be required. Is this the reason for a new site – a joint school? Any monies from the sale of Polam School would be useful for the development of Yarm School.
- Proposed new Golf facilities proposed for the golf range will result in increased traffic.
- Rumours that Tall Trees is planning a golf course which will have far reaching consequences on the west side of Kirklevington as access would likely be from Kirklevington.
- Residents objected to the size of the development at the Kirk Country Club site, particularly the houses in the car park area that are unsightly but objecting then was fruitless, is it pointless yet again.
- Proposal will have an adverse effect on traffic, parking, local primary school, Conyers Secondary School and the walkers and bikers and the quality of life of residents in Kirklevington will be adversely affected by the noise and light pollution.
- At the 2005 inspection relocation or improvement to the Friarage site was discussed but a problem was the music room that required sound proofing. The soundproofing can be achieved at the existing Friarage site and is hardly reason to build on a green field site and ride a horse and coaches through planning legislation.

- Tees Valley Structure Plan EMP6 identifies 540 hectares of land for prestige employment development within the region without using a protected green field site.
- Only people seeking employment in the immediate area are those at the prisoners next door to the site and they will be subject to criminal disclosure and would not be allowed to work in a state school (perhaps independent schools have different rules)
- Relocation not inward investment so would not create employment.
- At least five private schools have closed leaving brown field sites.
- A redundant site already exists within the boundaries of Kirklevington, Saltersgill School.
- Architects for the scheme are from Birmingham; construction firms bring their own workforce and therefore will not create employment for locals but make it difficult for the lower paid workers to travel to.
- Conference facilities are not required in a village that already has two hotels, Judges and Tall Trees
- Stockton Council have published and profited from two books researched and written by Kirklevington residents concerning the town and borough. Kirklevington has historical importance locally, nationally and internationally with examples of recorded history and historical research still to be discovered.
- Cultural and heritage research for the developers is incomplete as further material is to be published by The Research Group and there are four books written specifically about Kirklevington which are not named in the bibliography with several other books referring to the village in terms of it's Anglo/Saxon and Viking importance.
- Tees Valley must recognise and protect sensitive areas and thus helps farmers to keep farming and conserving our wildlife for future generations.
- The publicity material has listed orienteering and horse riding being something akin to a PGL holiday camp that will fill and already full curriculum which has only space for one Latin lesson for year 9 a week.
- Moving to Kirklevington and the additional extra curriculum facilities may mean an escalation in fees and make Yarm School unviable for some parents.
- Affluent children who wish to ride horses usually have access to them as an out of school facility, with the added costs incurred for the required riding equipment.
- Many children who took the old selection tests failed to take the Grammar School places due to school and PE kit costs.
- Preston Park has laid out an orienteering course open to all.
- Chose to live in Kirklevington village, as it was a quiet, safe place with a quiet country lane and a small school where we could have the pleasure of walking through the footpaths to enjoy the lovely vista as we approached the village. Gradually the village envelope has been encroached and not long before the land on the Judges side will be sold and developed and it would seem we are always having to fight for our 'Green and Pleasant land'

- The provision of a competing infant/junior school in the close vicinity of Kirklevington School will reduce its viability and sustainability.
- Meeting in Kirklevington Village Hall mentioned shorter state school terms but if all the events that are alluded to take place then the school will be busy all year and there will be constant traffic.

80. The letters/emails in support are summarised below:

- Support the relocation of the school if there was a guarantee that the speed limit of 30 mph was imposed from the roundabout at HMP Kirklevington Grange to Kirklevington Village
- An exciting project for Kirklevington and Yarm
- This prestigious school will benefit the area in educational matters and from a practical point ease the traffic situation in Yarm and the proposed new roundabout will reduce the speed of passing traffic. The environmental design will enhance the area.
- Prefer no development however as it is low density with plenty of screening it is better than having a residential estate there. There looks to be adequate parking provided and it should reduce the congestion near Goosepastures in Yarm.
- As outlined in the plans support the development however would like the highways department to consider the need for a new slip road onto the A19 northbound as there is already regular queuing traffic to turn right out of Kirklevington onto the existing slip road.
- Fully support the proposed Yarm School Development
- Stockton and Yarm in particular require the type of investment the school is proposing to undertake. In an environment of increasing competition for inward investment from business, it is essential that the appropriate infrastructure be in place locally. The area desperately needs quality development such as this proposal. The school already provides good facilities yet in times when standards are continually being moved higher it must invest to maintain these improved standards and exceed them. The school's proposals meet this need and will assist with the area having the necessary facilities.
- School's proposed on site parking is ample and envisage no detrimental impact on our business (Judges). The proposed access is welcomed, as it will improve the entrance to Judges and aid controlling speed on the A67. The concerns raised regarding turning from Forest Lane onto the A67 have been mitigate by via the improvements to Pump Lane.
- The outline proposals for the design of the school show a lot of sympathy for the site and its location and are welcomed.
- School's reputation is such that it is not envisaged that there will be any nuisance from anti-social behaviour, noise or litter.
- The development is suitable for the site, Kirklevington Village, Yarm town and the greater Stockton area and as such support the plan.
- If the headmaster can raise additional funds for a swimming pool this will provide an additional facility for local residents.

- Delighted to support the plans on behalf of the NECC as the plans for the new school offer an environmental sustainable site that is very sympathetic to the geographical surroundings. NECC members have been involved in several consultation events over the last 12 months regarding the regeneration projects and also aspects of the Tees Valley City Region development plan. The proposed plans will only add to the overall offer and already identified development plans.
- Accept the reason for relocation as the school year on year deliver examination success, increasing demand for spaces, a positive involvement with the community, developing relationship with other local secondary schools. Believe the school does require additional space especially with reference to the increasing demand for sporting activities.
- Real asset to the area, when completed in 2010
- Proposed development at Yarm could provide a great opportunity for the school and the community were the planned assembly hall to be designed with facilities and acoustic properties to encourage its use as a concert hall with the existing concert halls in the area being Stockton parish Church, Stockton Baptist Tabernacle and Middlesbrough Town hall all having their drawbacks in terms of small size, poor facilities and mediocre acoustics. If the hall was available to music societies it could be a popular venue for classical music concerts, furthering strengthening ties between the school and the local community.
- The move will ease the traffic problems in Yarm and provide better facilities for the school.
- Do not feel it will have a great visual impact on the people of Kirklevington, nor do I think that their traffic problems will increase substantially.
- The relocation will provide excellent facilities, space and a setting for the school to blossom and flourish in the coming decades. The present two sites of Yarm School in Yarm are too cramped for the size of the school and for it to develop and provide a first class 21st century facility so it therefore needs to relocate to a larger site.
- The Friarage site will provide much needed housing and opportunities to the local community and the new site will provide local employment and commerce to the area, as it is one of the largest employers in the area.
- Support the relocation and the plans have sited the school sensitively in a location within minimal visual impact or interference to the village of Kirklevington. Major benefits to the wider community both in terms of allowing speed restrictions to be introduced on the road between Kirklevington and Yarm but also in reducing traffic congestion in Yarm itself.
- The facilities and amenities the school wishes to develop will provide many opportunities for local people and other community groups to benefit from their use.
- Support the relocation of Yarm School to Kirklevington, as a larger site will mean the school is able to provide our young people with outstanding educational facilities and a number of these will be available to the residents of Kirklevington.
- Viewed the proposed outline plans and very impressed with the 'green' ethos that the school has adopted and do not believe the buildings will have a negative aesthetic impact on the local area. Such innovative design is far more likely to raise the profile of our region.
- The traffic congestion in Yarm will benefit greatly from the relocation and the suggested new access and parking facilities will have a negligible effect on the traffic on the A67.

- Great benefit to Yarm and the surrounding area to allow the school to relocate. It is very difficult for the school to make any further improvements on its current sites, especially the Prep school site and parking is extremely difficult, as is access to the site at peak times. Access would be much easier at Town End Farm.
- This is a valuable project for the area. It will help ease traffic flows into Yarm and parking there, while slowing down a dangerous road through Kirklevington. Yarm shops would benefit from the development of housing on the existing site. The plans show a care to try and minimise any environmental impact and avoid disruption to Kirklevington. The school would be a big asset for this area.
- Yarm school is an intrinsic part of Yarm and has put Yarm on the map and has been involved in educating the future captains of industry. No town should turn down the opportunity to allow an institution to flourish and progress, as the children who attend could be the name that people remember in the future. Yarm School has achieved much in its thirty years and moving to Kirklevington will improve traffic access, allow school to expand its playing fields and remove the traffic problems from Yarm town centre.
- Moving to the new location In Kirklevington will allow more use of the railway which is a much under-utilised mode of transport.
- The whole country is embarking on a programme called Building Schools for the Future and are delighted that children from the region will have the opportunity to benefit from an environment purposely designed for education in the 21st Century.
- Do not live in Kirklevington but have checked the plans and satisfied that every effort been made to sit the school sympathetically into the site which is echoed by the positive comments from one nearby resident, who would be able to see the proposed development from her property.
- Opportunity to invest in the future.
- Development and relocation important as Yarm School provides parents in Teesside and surrounding areas with a very attractive option on where to educate their children, in fact the demand exceeds the number of places available.
- Yarm School attracts pupils from across the social strata with children of policemen, shopkeepers, doctors, civil servants who attend the school.
- Yarm School has done well in the national Charts being listed in the Top 50 Independent Mixed Schools as on the whole the North East does not do well and the North-South divide is apparent. We need to improve on this by providing better facilities, attracting and retaining high quality teachers and by making the school more attractive to parents contemplating a move into our part of England.
- There will be no cost to tax payers for the relocation as the project is being privately funded.
- Plans for the development are futuristic and environment friendly and although they do add to the costs of building and maintenance the Governors are keen to go ahead with them.
- This relocation is essential for Teesside's premier educational institution for its modernisation and expansion.

- Yarm School is a prestigious Independent School which has great achievements in education and port despite having split sites for education and sport. The school deserves to have purpose built facilities so that it can exist as an entity. Stockton and Yarm should be proud of the school and it's achievements.
- Good proposal which will remove congestion in Yarm and encourage long term residence of the town rather than it becoming no more than a group of restaurants.
- Brings the school out of an urban environment into an attractive and peaceful area of the countryside that will improve the safety aspects for pupils, given the busy traffic on the Spital with families crossing between the site to collect or drop off children and with children crossing for buses.
- By way of protecting this peaceful, rural environment the exhibition showed the new building will occupy a relatively small section of the whole site and will be shielded from the road by planting and be further camouflaged by the incorporation of green roofs. The aims to limit the adverse impact on drainage, water abstraction, biodiversity, accessible green space and local climate conditions and increasing the awareness of our young people should be lauded. The incorporation of an area of parkland and water feature should provide opportunities for promoting wildlife in the area and give pupils a valuable opportunity to benefit accordingly. Located between the school and the road, minimising the impact of the corner of the site with buildings.
- The existing area of open space at the relocation site is not open to the public and the proposals still provide areas of open space with habitats for wildlife.
- Traffic has been considered with the siting of the school parking to cause least impact on the view and the new roundabout which will ensure smooth continued flow of traffic to Yarm or the A19. It could also serve as a traffic calming device for Kirklevington as at present turning in or out of the village is not easy.
- Proposed development of the current Friarage site will not increase the traffic as the plans show the number of inhabitants as less than the volume of parents, staff and pupils presently driving on and off the site. The proposed plans appear to show a sensitive site maintaining areas of existing parkland and lawn while making use of the unique building.
- School has outgrown its current position and there have been complaints from the local residents so the planning application should be supported.
- Expansion at the new site will be of greater benefit to the local/economy area as consider Yarm School does contribute to the local community.
- The School is economically beneficial to Yarm bringing employment and customers into the town (possibly having an effect on the buoyancy of house prices)
- Designs for the school show how the relocation will alleviate the complaints on traffic and resolve some of the car parking issues
- Cannot see how the development will increase anti-social behaviour or crime and the school is very careful to police littering.
- Property prices would not be devalued as parents often like to live near a day school.

- The schools removal to the new site will provide greater privacy to the neighbours at the Friarage site who may currently be bothered by it's proximity.
- Proposed relocation is a welcome investment in the area and will benefit the reputation of the Borough as a whole. The site will predominately be playing fields and so will surely not have any significant impact on the neighbours or the environment.
- The early morning and late afternoon traffic congestion in Yarm is intolerable and as the large percentage is travelling to and from Yarm school the relocation will benefit all those who need to access Yarm on a daily basis.
- Yarm used to be a pleasant place to shop yet over the last two years I have avoided Yarm due to the length of time it takes to get in and out of Yarm and through to Stockton. Hopefully moving Yarm School will ease the situation and encourage shoppers back to Yarm.
- Yarm School has played a part in the development and progress of the town that had vacant and for sale signs in the shops during the 1980's and now has niche market businesses. Yarm School has played a part in this being the largest private employer in the town and with the parents and pupils' contribution to the local economy which is why the relocation should be supported.
- Support the application from a philosophical perspective and don't feel the correct outcome to the application will arise by simply tallying comments.
- Traffic access to the school will be excellent as buses and parents cars will be able to park, pick up on site leaving traffic to flow along the main road.
- Independent schools like Yarm are to be increasingly obliged to make their facilities available to local communities if they are to justify their charitable status and therefore the residents of Kirklevington stand to gain more than anyone from this strong likelihood.
- Not an industrial complex so no likelihood of heavy freight traffic making a nuisance or of an ugly unsympathetic building being forced on reluctant local residents.
- School traffic is localised to two parts of the day in term time and with the proposed one way system around the site will not have a detrimental effect near Kirklevington.
- Will provide the local community with excellent sports and social facilities.
- Visual impact of a school site with excellent maintained buildings and sports fields will enhance the local vista. Certainly preferable to housing and other such developments.
- School has excellent reputation in UK and around the world for sport men and women as well as a record of success in Engineering and Science competitions and has recently been placed in the Top 50 in the Times table. The relocation plans will only strengthen these achievements and will add to raising the profile of the area.
- Allowing the construction of a cutting-edge, first class independent school can only enhance the economic, educational and community prospects of all concerned.
- An improved Yarm School may make the area more attractive to businesses, so the overall effect on the area could be positive.

- Yarm School is part of the Yarm Community and increasing links are being made with a range of children and community members who are not pupils but who make use of the facilities. The additional facilities proposed will enhance these links in our area where there are presently minimal sport and leisure facilities

81. As part of the Statement of Community Involvement a public consultation event was held, combining the proposed development and proposals to redevelop the existing school site, which took place over 3 days in Yarm. The applicant states that it is estimated that around 600 people viewed the exhibition and some 261 written responses were received during the consultation. Of these 235 were in favour, five were not in favour and 21 had no clear preference.

PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy

82. National Planning policies are set out in Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and the newer Planning Policy Statements (PPS). Relevant to this application are:

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1): “Delivering Sustainable Development” which seeks to ensure that planning facilitates and promotes sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development. PPS1 also states that where the development plan contains relevant policies, applications for planning permission should be determined in line with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS 7): “Sustainable Development in Rural Areas” states that new development in the open countryside away from existing settlements, or outside areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled. It also states that planning authorities should ensure that the quality and character of the wider countryside is protected and, where possible, enhanced.

Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG13): “Transport” seeks to integrate planning and transport by reducing the reliance on the motor car, encouraging the use of more sustainable transport choices, reduce the need to travel, and promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, cycling and walking.

83. Regard also has to be given to Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East (RPG1) which sets out a number of principles for the location of new development, including, adopting a sequential approach to site allocation to give priority to the reuse of previously developed land; improving the balance between people, jobs and facilities to reduce the need to travel, and protecting and enhancing the environment.

84. Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East (RSS), which is at the consultation, stage and will ultimately replace RPG1. Policies in RSS1 provide a regional spatial strategy within which local authority development plans and local transport plans can be prepared. It sets out a number of policies and principles including: concentrating the majority of new development in the Tees Valley conurbation – particularly within the core areas- and the main settlements; reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car, by focussing development in urban areas that have good access to public transport, and for cyclists and pedestrians; promoting development that is sympathetic to its surroundings; identifying strategic gaps to maintain the separate identity of settlements in the Tees Valley by preventing them from coalescing and by preventing urban sprawl – specifically a strategic gap should be identified between the Tees Valley conurbation(Marske/Redcar/Eston/Middlesbrough/Thornaby/Stockton/Yarm/Billingham)and surrounding towns and villages.

85. 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 Tees Valley Structure Plan (TVSP) and the Stockton on Tees Local Plan (STLP).

Tees Valley Structure Plan

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

- ENV13 (Control of Urban Development) development outside limits to development will be strictly controlled.
- EN15 (Strategic Gaps)
- 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.
- ENV7 (protected species)
- ENV10 (protection of archaeological sites)
- ENV16 (protection of trees and hedgerows)
- ENV17 (protect and enhance landscape environment)
- ENV18 (Environment of the urban fringe to be improved)
- ENV19 (character, appearance and amenity of the countryside to be improved and enhanced by locating new development within the existing physical framework of towns and villages where possible)
- SUS1 (Sustainable Development Policy) states new development must make a positive contribution to all three strands of sustainable development, namely enhancing environmental quality, social well-being and economic prosperity
- 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: encourage physical and social regeneration in urban and rural areas, 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; provide accessible opportunities for recreation, education, employment and public services, protect and enhance the quality and character of the built and natural environment, conserve the use of natural resources and encourage the generation of power from renewable energy sources, minimise pollution to land, air and water; and reduce the amount of waste produced and encourage reuse and recycling.
- T5, T6 and T25 (Transport Requirements for New Developments) promote the location of new development to give priority to walking, cycling and public transport access.
- T27 Transport Assessment and Travel Plan)

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 EN4

Development which is likely to have an adverse effect upon sites of nature conservation importance will only be permitted if: -

- (i) There is no alternative available site or practicable approach; and
- (ii) Any impact on the sites nature conservation value is kept to a minimum.

Where development is permitted the council will consider the use of conditions and/or planning obligations or provide appropriate compensatory measures.

POLICY EN11

The planting of trees, of locally appropriate species, will be encouraged within the area indicated on the proposals map as community forest. In considering applications for planning permission in the community forest area, the Local Planning Authority will give weight to the degree to which the applicant has demonstrated that full account has been taken of existing trees on site, together with an appraisal of the possibilities of creating new woodland or undertaking additional tree planting. In the light of the appraisal the Local Planning Authority will require a landscaping scheme to be agreed which makes a contribution to the community forest.

Policy EN13

Development outside the limits to development may be permitted where:

- (i) It is necessary for a farming or forestry operation; or
- (ii) It falls within policies EN20 (reuse of buildings) or Tour 4 (Hotel conversions); or

In all the remaining cases and provided that it does not harm the character or appearance of the countryside; where:

- (iii) It contributes to the diversification of the rural economy; or
- (iv) It is for sport or recreation; or
- (v) It is a small scale facility for tourism.

Policy TR6

Development likely to attract significant numbers of people, whether as visitors or employees, will be required to provide on site secure and convenient cycle parking provision, the level of such provision to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Other policies in the local relevant to the proposal are highways and traffic related i.e. TR5 and TR15

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

86. The main considerations of this application relate to the need for the development and whether it satisfies the requirements of National and Regional Guidance and Local Plan Policies.

Traffic impact, Landscape and Visual Impact, Ecology and Nature Conservation, Impact of the proposed development on the locality in terms of residential amenity, Environmental impact; vehicular access and highway safety.

87. The application site is an unallocated site in the adopted local plan and is located outside the limits of development defined in the adopted local plan. Development is strictly controlled within the countryside beyond these limits and is restricted to limited activities necessary for the continuation of farming and forestry, contribute to rural diversification or cater for tourism, sport or recreation provided it does not harm the appearance of the countryside. The proposal does not fall

within these categories and a judgement is required whether considerations in support of the proposed school are sufficient to outweigh rural restraint policies.

89. In terms of locational policy, limits to development have been identified around the main urban core and the villages. Where possible, limits have been drawn where there is a clear break between urban and rural uses and landscapes. Policy ENV15 of the Tees Valley Structure Plan seeks to maintain strategic gaps between individual settlements including between Yarm and Kirklevington to retain their physical identity.

90. The Government's objectives set out in Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (PPS7) are that the countryside should be protected for the benefit of all, that urban sprawl should be prevented and that new building development outside areas allocated for development in development plans should be strictly controlled, to protect the countryside for its own sake.

91. Regional and the Structure Plan both encourage a sequential approach towards the location of development to give priority to the reuse of previously developed land within urban areas.

Need for the development

92. Yarm School caters for junior, middle and upper school pupils with some infant education for pre-junior school age children and a sixth form. Since its foundation in 1978 it has grown to its current roll of 1,000 pupils.

93. The staff comprises 119 full time and 49 part time staff engaged in teaching, administrative, care taking and maintenance. In addition there are approximately 13 visiting music teachers and 22 catering contract staff.

94. Whilst the School has a locationally dispersed catchment area, the core catchment is based around Yarm with over 25% of pupils living in Ingleby Barwick, Kirklevington, Eaglescliffe and Yarm.

95. The School operates in multiple locations around Yarm and the applicant puts forward a case that these sites cannot sustain the School's future development. The sites include the Friarage (the senior school), the preparatory School Site and the White House. The school's main playing fields are on two separate sites at Aislaby with larger playing fields at Green Lane. At the Preparatory School there is a playing field, netball courts and gymnasium. At the Senior School, there is an all weather playing surface, netball and basketball courts including a sports hall.

96. Several of the classrooms on the Preparatory School Site are in portakabins with only temporary consent. The applicant states that the Preparatory School buildings have a poor configuration with several classrooms unable to accommodate the target of 20 pupils. There is a severe shortage of space including playing space compounded by the erection of 4 detached houses in the field behind the Preparatory School, which had previously been in use for sports, and games provision. The site also suffers restricted access via Grammar School Lane and inadequate parking and circulation space.

97. Other limitations of the existing arrangements cited by the applicant include multiple site operations engender additional traffic movements; logistical difficulties in ensuring that all pupils are adequately supervised travelling to the playing fields and during practice. It also effectively rules out club practice at lunchtime due to lack of time.

98. There are significant congestion issues with the current school sites as there is a severe lack of on site parking and development constraints preventing the creation of future provision. This results in coaches and private cars being forced to drop off on the main carriageway.

99. The applicant puts forward the case that a single site solution would meet the needs of pupils in line with DfES (Schools for the Future: Designs for Learning Communities Building Bulletin 95) which states that, " a school of the future may have more generous provision to encourage greater participation in sport at all ages and to cater for increased out of hours and community use".

100. In addition to satisfying educational expectations and requirements, the applicant states that a new site would also accommodate through moderate and natural growth over a period of years up to approximately 1100 pupils. Yarm School also wishes to retain its strong links with Yarm and the proposed site location would remain accessible to the current catchment population.

101. The partial relocation of the school has also been explored. This has involved the possibility of the relocation of the Preparatory School to alternative sites, such as the existing playing fields at Green Lane. The applicant states that such a move could resolve some of the current difficulties but the strategy would not be consistent with the wish to integrate the preparatory School and Senior School operation.

102. However, accepting that there is a need for a single site re-location, which is an issue primarily for the school itself, this does not necessarily mean the development is in the best location to satisfy that need. National and regional planning guidance advocates a sequential approach to the identification of sites for development, recognising the need to make the best use of land and optimise the development of previously developed land and buildings in sustainable locations. The applicant has produced an assessment of alternative sites for the proposed development in support of the application. The methodology for assessing the most appropriate site assumes a set of criteria against which the potential suitability of the site needs to be assessed. The criteria are: -

- Sustainability – ensuring development is focused in accessible locations;
- Environment – The implications of any development on important considerations such as ecology, landscape, built and natural heritage;
- Transport – Accessibility of sites by car, coach/bus, bicycle and on foot;
- Impact on surrounding uses/residents – The effect of the development on surrounding land uses; and
- Flood Risk – Discounting of sites if affected by flooding via an assessment of the Environment Agencies Flood Plain Maps.

103. The applicant has identified the basic spatial requirements on a single site and has undertaken an assessment of the catchment areas of the school. This approach is consistent with RPG1 and emerging RSS policies.

104. The sequential search area therefore focussed in the main on sites within the Yarm, Eaglescliffe and Kirklevington areas. A total of 14 sites have been identified (see Appendix 4 – Site Study). Of these 2 are at Eaglescliffe, 7 are at Yarm with 2 at the town centre, 3 sites have been identified in Kirklevington and 2 sites in Stockton on Tees. The sites range from brownfield sites within the built environment that are closely related to the urban centre. There are also sites identified within the limits to development but on the edge of settlements. Finally sites outside of limits to development have been examined.

105. The study concluded that the two sites identified within close proximity of Yarm Town centre and based purely on this locational factor would be considered the most favourable sites. Both of these sites were environmentally constrained in particular by landscape impacts but also by flooding and problems of inaccessibility.

106. Three further sites were discounted south of the town centre. Two of these were considered too small despite good public transport access. In the case of the site adjacent to the Tall Trees Hotel, there were concerns over the ecological impact that the development may have and also the ease of development given the number of electricity pylons and also the Site of Nature Conservation Importance within the sites curtilage.

107. Two sites were discounted at Eaglescliffe, in the case of both sites it was identified that they were situated within a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) consultation zone, which was considered a major constraint to development due to a potentially unsuitable environment for school children.

108. Two sites were discounted that lie to the north and to the south of Kirklevington due to their proximity and potential adverse effects on residents of Kirklevington.

109. Finally the sites at Stockton have been discounted due to the risk from flooding and constrained by their size. There are also capacity issues with regards to the road network at the sites and the site is located away from Yarm, where the school has been traditionally established.

110. The three remaining sites were considered further examining their suitability, availability, environmental impact and transport constraints. The study concluded that the development of Yarm School would best be accommodated on the application site.

111. In terms of the scoring against the criteria set out above the application site had the overall highest score using a traffic light system showing green (no significant constraint) against:

- Impact on Ecology
- Impact on Built Heritage
- Road Capacity/Accessibility
- Impact on the surrounding uses/residents
- Flood Risk; and
- Site Size

112. In terms of the spatial strategy which encourages a sequential approach towards the location of development, the guidance also acknowledges that it will not always be possible to always find sites within the urban area and that other suitable sites may need to be found elsewhere which satisfy sustainability criteria.

113. In the absence of a suitable and available site within the urban area on land both previously developed and on undeveloped land then the applicant has examined options outside the limits of development.

114. It is considered that there is no other site apart from the application site that could meet the identified need and therefore on this basis the sequential test has been met. However there is a need to consider the proposed development against a number of other policy criteria including the accessibility of the site, landscape and visual impact and environmental impact.

Traffic Impact

115. In order for approval to be granted the Council as the Local Planning Authority needs also to be satisfied that the development will not give rise to an unacceptable highway impact. This is a major concern of the objectors to the development.

116. Submitted with the planning application and summarised in the ES, Consultants on behalf of the applicant have prepared a Transport Assessment (TA) and a Travel Plan Framework which

seek to maximise the accessibility of the site by a range of modes of transport, this approach is consistent with the objectives of regional planning policy.

117. The TA considered the accessibility of the site, existing transport provision and the impact of the proposed development on the surrounding route network. The TA also outlined the existing pedestrian, cycle and public transport access to the site.

118. The Head of Technical Services has examined the proposal in terms of how it functions and highway safety implications as well as general parking provision and is satisfied with the proposal and concluded that the proposed vehicular access arrangement and Transport Assessment for the new school site are acceptable in principle. A number of conditions have been attached to ensure appropriate improvements/mitigation measures are implemented. Issues such as Safe Routes to School, crossing facilities, reduced speed limit, internal layout of roads, car parking and other infrastructure requirements has been fully considered in determining the application.

Landscape and Visual Impact

119. The ES has provided a detailed assessment of the visual impact of the built form, concluding that the visual impact of the development is relatively limited and there are significant opportunities for effective landscape enhancement and management which would improve the area and contribute to the Tees Community Forest, an area for which tree planting is encouraged.

120. It must be recognised that the proposed school is different in nature from the existing site in terms of its character and appearance but it is considered that the proposed layout takes account of the topography and existing landscape features in attempt to assimilate the development into the landscape and further mitigation could be achieved by a robust landscape strategy. Nighttime illumination will be evident but mitigated to some degree by appropriate landscape treatment and form of illumination adopted.

121. It is accepted that the buildings would be seen from some vantage points but the overall impact would not be significant. However PPS7 sets out a number of guiding principles including sustainable development principles; the importance of good quality, carefully sited development; accessibility; priority to the use of previously developed land; and well designed inclusive development. PPS7 also highlights protecting the countryside for its own sake and in this respect the proposal would not comply with this aspect of the guidance. It is also recognised that Policy ENV15 of the Tees Valley Structure Plan seeks to maintain a strategic gap between individual settlements including Yarm and Kirklevington. The aim is to protect settlements outside the main urban areas and prevent coalescence and to retain their physical identity. It is considered that whilst the majority of the site will retain its current openness due to large areas proposed for playing fields and thereby preserve to some degree the open character and appearance of the countryside, buildings will be visible and replace current open land and therefore there will be a degree of impact and coalescence but it is considered not to a significant degree. The policy is not intended to prevent appropriate development on the edge of a particular settlement, but to ensure that a sufficient gap is always maintained between settlements so that they can still be perceived as being separate. It is considered that a sufficiently significant undeveloped separation area will be maintained between the settlements.

122. Furthermore it is considered that the proposal is a unique form of development utilising a relatively small percentage of the site area for built form and by its very nature low density built development with large areas of open and landscaped treatment. As such it is not considered that this form of development would set a precedent for further development in the strategic gap.

Ecology and Nature Conservation

123. The Environmental Statement submitted with the Planning application has assessed the impact of the scheme on nature conservation and includes mitigation measures to address unacceptable impacts.

124. The Phase 1 Habitat Survey and the protected species assessments consider that without the implementation of any mitigation measures the main potential constraints to the completion of the Development are low. The boundary habitats around the perimeter of the site are not considered to be of any particular botanical annual interest. However within the context of the site they provide a local level of habitat interest and will be where possible protected and retained within the scheme design.

125. Concern has been expressed in respect of the impact on local wildlife. A Local Wildlife Corridor has been previously identified in the Cleveland Wildlife Strategy – 1999 (CWS). Whilst this corridor runs from the Leven Valley it terminates in farmland and as such the wildlife corridor was only categorised in the CWS as of local importance. As the building and car parking are dispersed throughout the northern part of the application site they should not have a significant adverse impact on the wildlife corridor. In addition there is scope however to provide an extensive planting framework along the north boundary of the site which would assist in retaining the integrity of the local wildlife corridor. The widespread use of species of local provenance is confirmed within the EIA and this would assist in the continuation of the wildlife corridor.

126. Natural England has considered the proposal and concluded that the proposal is unlikely to have an adverse affect in respect of species especially protected by law.

Other Issues

127. In respect of archaeology the ES identifies no areas of archaeological significance and a planning condition will be attached to address any archaeological matters that may arise during the construction process.

128. In terms of flood risk, the site is identified by the Environment Agency Flood Zone Maps as being located outside the extent of an extreme flood from watercourse in the area and thus not likely to be affected by a major flood, with up to 1 in 1000 chance of occurring each year. The flood risks associated with external influences on the site are not expected to increase with the development.

129. The applicant proposed that a sustainable drainage system (SUDS) would be incorporated into the development to provide attenuation to the increased surface water run-off. The Environment Agency has considered the proposal and raises no objection in principle subject to an appropriate condition covering a scheme for the implementation of a surface water run off limitation.

130. The current site is in agricultural use on land which is classified as grade 3 (c) and therefore the development does not involve the loss of any best quality agricultural land. Furthermore in terms of built form this has been kept to a minimum to reduce the impact.

131. The accompanying design and access statement sets out a number of options to reduce energy consumption for both the construction phase and the operation of the school including a number of energy efficiency measures and the potential inclusion of biomass and rainwater harvesting. In order to fully reflect the objectives of regional planning policy, the development proposals should have embedded within them a minimum of 10 percent of their energy from renewable energy sources. It is proposed to secure this through a planning condition.

132. In relation to the existing public right of way that intersects the new school site, the applicant has confirmed that it is not the School's intention to close the footpath nor restrict access to it. The school intends to maintain the right of way across the site and believes that the development will enhance the environment for the users of the footpath benefiting from landscaping and grass pitches as opposed to ploughed or cropped fields.

CONCLUSION

133. Development plan policies emphasise the need to protect the countryside and encourage a sequential approach towards the location of development, recognising the need to make the best use of land and optimise the development of previously developed land and buildings in sustainable locations. Whilst it is recognised that the majority of new development should be directed to these areas, it is also accepted that it will not always be possible to find suitable sites in the preferred areas.

134. The school has identified its own spatial requirements and undertaken a sequential test taking into account matters of accessibility, environmental impact, flood risk and the availability of other sites, which concludes that the application site is most suitable to accommodate the proposed development.

135. Accessibility of the site is an important consideration and it is noted that the application site is related to the school's core catchment area with over 25% of pupils living in Ingleby Barwick, Kirklevington, Eaglescliffe and Yarm. Furthermore a TA and Travel Plans Framework have been completed which seek to maximise the accessibility of the site by a range of modes of travel. It is considered that the proposed development will improve the highway situation in Yarm, by removing school related traffic from the town centre during peak commuting times. Whilst it is recognised that there would be an increase of traffic on the A67 as a result of the proposed development, the Head of Technical Services has considered the transport implications and is satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable in highway safety terms and impact on the Highway network subject to the highway improvements identified.

136. The importance of meeting educational needs is a recognised material planning consideration and regional guidance is supportive of the growth and increasing role of colleges in the region. The proposals to provide new accommodation for the school and sixth-form college would therefore be consistent with the objective of this policy.

137. The applicant makes a strong case that the development will result in significant benefit to the regions economy by providing a high quality educational campus in the Borough, which will provide jobs, and educational opportunities in the region. The school also acts as an attractor to businesses and people looking to relocate to the Stockton area with their families. This provides opportunities for increased investment to the region. The applicant also states that the development will also provide extensive sports facilities, hall, theatre and music facilities which will be made available to the wider community. It is proposed to secure this through a condition.

138. In summary it is recognised that the establishment of a large educational facility in a countryside location will fall short of fully achieving the objective of sustainable development, although a strong case has been made for the new school. The scope for expansion on the existing sites is extremely restricted and therefore not a viable option. A sequential approach to identifying a new site has been adopted and a number of sites have been examined to consider the most appropriate location for the new school.

139. The proposal would provide an educational facility accessible to a significant number of the school's likely catchment population and a travel plan proposed to develop partnerships with a number of public transport providers; establish awareness-raising campaigns; and offer incentives

to encourage walking and cycling. The current operations of the school generates a large number of daily journeys which would not be required as the Site will have its own playing fields. There are also significant congestion issues with the current school sites as there is a lack of on site parking resulting in coaches and private cars being forced to drop off on the main carriageway.

140. The accompanying design and access statement takes into account the need to assimilate the proposed facility into the countryside location to minimise the impact on the character and appearance of the countryside. It is considered that with good landscape design and the sensitive siting of the buildings designed to integrate with the landscape, together with sympathetic building materials the visual impact is acceptable.

141. It is therefore considered that notwithstanding that the development is an unallocated site located outside the established urban limits and such development would normally be resisted unless material considerations indicated otherwise, that there are important material benefits arising from the high quality development and the economic benefits to the Borough and the wider area. As such it is considered they outweigh the policy objections, which would otherwise apply to the scheme.

142. On balance it is considered that, the exceptional nature of the development can be supported and the application is therefore recommended for approval subject to going through departure procedure.

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Financial Implications – As report

Environmental Implications – As report

Community Safety Implications – As report

Background Papers – Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, Stockton on Tees Local Plan (June 1997), Adopted Tees Valley Structure Plan (February 2004), Draft Regional Spatial Strategy, Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport.

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

Ward Yarm

Ward Councillors Councillor J Earl, Councillor Mrs J. Beaumont, Councillor A B L Sherris