

**DELEGATED**

**AGENDA NO 7  
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**UPDATE REPORT**

**DATE 26<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

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

**08/2713/FUL**

**Former Rocket Building, Railway Terrace, Thornaby  
Erection of student accommodation unit with 197 bedrooms and bar  
(demolition of existing buildings)**

**Expiry Date 4 December 2008**

#### **SUMMARY**

Since the publication of the original report various consultee comments have been received along with further letters in relation to the application from neighbouring occupiers.

It is considered that the issues raised in relation to the application do not raise any new material planning considerations and the recommendation for refusal remains as set out in the original report.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Planning application 08/2713/FUL to be refused for the following reason**

***01. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the applicant has failed to satisfactorily demonstrate how they will meet a proven need for the development; contrary to the Council's adopted interim student accommodation policy guidance document.***

#### **CONSULTATIONS**

1. The following Consultations responses have been received in relation to the revised details are detailed below:-

##### **English Heritage**

We do not consider that it is necessary for this application to be notified to English Heritage.

##### **Urban Design Engineers**

I refer to your memo dated: 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008

Reference drawing no:       204 Rev B  
  205 Rev B

### General Summary

Urban Design has no objection to this application as per the comments below.

### Highways Comments

Highway comments are as per my previous memo as the access and layout are unchanged in the revised drawings.

### Built Environment Comments

Following the submission of the above revised drawings I have the following comments to make:

In relation to scale and massing, by applying appropriate architectural detailing and a reduction in the footprint on site, the western block has been visually split - creating the appearance of two separate buildings. Although it is preferred that the western block be completely separated into two self contained units the urban design team understands the applicants requirements in servicing the western block given the site constraints.

This has therefore enabled the western block to include a feature glass stairwell overlooking a small internal courtyard to connect the visually split buildings further enhancing the visual appearance of the development.

Following discussions with the applicant the revisions also demonstrate a reduction in the overall scale of the block adjacent to the listed town hall maintaining the same roof heights and appropriate scale.

In relation to the provision of amenity space/public realm, the applicant is required to enter into an s278 agreement towards public realm improvements on Railway Terrace. It is envisaged that these public realm works will integrate the proposed development with the Station footbridge and improve the setting of the listed town hall enhancing the site as a gateway to Thornaby.

In light of the above comments and revised drawings, I have no objection to the proposed application in relation to the built environment.

### Landscape & Visual Comments

In light of the revisions made to the proposed application I have no objection and should the application be approved the following conditions as previously recommended should be applied:

- Landscaping Softworks: plans and specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA;
- Landscaping Hardworks: plans and specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA;
- Enclosure & street furniture and specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA;
- Scheme for illumination and specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA;

### **Environmental Health Unit**

Environmental Health has no further comments in regards to this planning application.

### **University of Durham**

The University has publicly stated that following the opening of the Mandale development on Bridge Street that there is now a gross oversupply of student accommodation in Stockton. This situation is already affecting the existing student accommodation in the private sector and further student accommodation on the site of the former Rocket Building will only exacerbate matters.

Student numbers are expected to increase at Queen's Campus in the medium to long term and the amount of student accommodation now available in Stockton will be more than ample to meet their needs.

### **The Environment Agency**

I can confirm that these changes do not alter our position outlined in our previous letter.

### **Northumbrian Water**

Thank you for consulting Northumbrian Water on the above proposed development. We have the following comments to make:

There is an existing public sewer within the application site. This development may affect the sewer. Northumbrian Water will not permit a building close to or over its apparatus. The developer should contact Northumbrian Water Ltd if it is proposed to sink boreholes or excavate foundations within 4.5 M of the sewer. No tree planting or alteration of the land within at least 3m of the sewer will be allowed without the permission of Northumbrian Water. This sewer could be diverted or accommodated in the site layout. The developer should contact Maurice Dunn at this office (tel 0191 419 6577) to discuss the matter further.

### **NEDL**

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

### **Northern Gas Networks**

Awaited

### **Private Sector Housing**

Although the private sector Housing Division does not have any objections to the application in principle we would however refer to previous discussions with regards to student developments and the oversupply of such developments within the borough. The figures for future student numbers does not align with the proposed provision and we feel this will have a negative impact on existing dwellings already developed and adapted for student use.

### **PUBLICITY**

2. A total of number of 23 objections have been received in relation to the application the comments are detailed below (in summary);

An additional 5 letters have been received in relation to the proposed development, the letter received raise concerns on the issues as detailed below;

- There is no justification at for further student accommodation
- Concerns over the proposed bar in the premises

- Issues with parking and traffic congestion
- Noise and disturbance generated by the students
- Neighbouring industrial uses and residential use are not compatible
- Loss of daylight and privacy

### **CONCLUSION**

5. As the comments recently received from both Statutory Consultees and the public do not raise any material considerations that have not been addressed within the previous report to members.
  
6. In light of this the recommendation remains for refusal on the grounds that the need has not been satisfactorily addressed to demonstrate that there is a proven need as outlined in the Interim Student Accommodation policy guidance document

**Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services  
Contact Officer Mr Simon Grundy Telephone No 01642 528550**

### **WARD AND WARD COUNCILLORS**

**Ward Mandale and Victoria  
Ward Councillors Mrs A Trainer, S F Walmsley and T Large**