

Planning Committee

A meeting of Planning Committee was held on Friday, 9th October, 2009.

Present: Cllr Roy Rix (Chairman), Cllr Hilary Aggio, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr Jean Kirby, Cllr Miss Tina Large, Cllr Alan Lewis (vice-Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg), Cllr Ken Lupton (vice-Cllr Phillip Broughton), Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Fred Salt, Cllr Steve Walmsley

Officers: K. Campbell, P. Dobson, S. Grundy, B. Jackson, R. McGuckin, C. Straughan, B. Trewick (DNS) J. Butcher, M. Jones (LD)

Also in attendance: Applicants, members of the public and Ward Councillor

Apologies: Cllr Phillip Broughton, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Bill Noble, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg

P Declarations of Interest

82/09

There were no declarations of interest.

P 09/1517/AAC

83/09

**Land At Wynyard Park, Billingham,
Consultation by adjacent planning authority (Hartlepool Borough Council):
Outline application for hospital development with associated access and
ancillary uses including on-site car parking and energy centre.**

Expiry Date 13 July 2009

Consideration was given to a report regarding an outline planning application for the construction of a new hospital on a site within the Wynyard Business Park that was to be determined by Hartlepool Borough Council Planning Committee. Stockton on Tees Borough Council, as the adjacent authority, had been consulted on the application.

The new hospital would replace the existing hospitals at North Tees and Hartlepool. All matters of detail were reserved for future approval apart from the means of access. The identified 19 hectare site had been subject to significant public consultation as part of a larger health scheme called 'Momentum: Pathways to Healthcare', The site formed part of the Wynyard Business Park site located to the north of the A689 at Wynyard which straddled the administrative boundaries of both Stockton and Hartlepool. Approval for this business use was granted first in 1988 and again in 1997. Development of the Business Park had commenced and various units had been constructed. Access to the site was via Hanzard Drive off the A689. An indicative design with the application indicated the building would be 5 stories high set in landscaped grounds and have 1500 car parking spaces.

The development had been subject to Environmental Impact assessment and accompanied by an Environmental Statement and other documents including a Design and Access Statement, Planning Support Statement, Transport Assessment and a Statement of Community Involvement.

The statutory Consultations and publicity on this application were carried out by Hartlepool Borough Council; however, internal consultations had been carried

out with a number of Ward Councillors and Council departments. An objection had been raised by the Ward Councillor on a number of grounds. Three objections from local residents had also been received as well as an objection from Grindon Parish Council. Concerns related to the traffic impact, conflict with planning policy, visual impact, lack of public transport and means of access other than by car, noise and whether there was a need for the development. The technical consultations raised a number of issues, which needed to be addressed.

In light of the comments received and planning policy, there were a number of material considerations that needed to be assessed in terms of hospital's likely impact on issues of concern to Stockton on Tees Borough Council.

The development would impact on the local and trunk road network and there were concerns that the site would create further congestion which may have an adverse impact in emergency situations. However, the impact could be mitigated through a variety of ways including off-site highway works, the provision of public transport and an effective travel plan. With the mitigation measures the hospital development should not have a greater adverse impact in terms of traffic than the existing consented B1, B2 and B8 development for the site. However, such mitigation works would only allow the hospital to go ahead plus 2% of the Business Park before serious congestion starts on both the trunk road and local roads. The provision of public transport, in particular development of direct bus routes and single charging via 'through ticketing', were highlighted as areas that needed to be secured by legal agreement.

Car parking capacity was highlighted, as the plans were lower than the combined capacity of the two existing sites. However, under Momentum: Pathways to Healthcare, many services would be relocated into community settings with only 60% of services remaining at the acute hospital. Therefore the number of spaces needed at the new site would be lower than current combined capacity.

In terms of visual impact, the hospital was a large building but given its position set back from the A689 and the provision of new planting and other mitigation measures, the adverse impact was not considered to be significant.

Swart Hole Plantation was a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. Some of this plantation must inevitably be lost to new development (the approved extension of Hazard Way) and as such overall the development would have a slightly adverse effect on the ecological interest of the site. However, it should also be recognised that whilst this site was currently uncultivated grassland, it has permission for redevelopment for Business purposes.

The hospital development would bring jobs and potentially encourage new related industrial development to the surrounding business park. However, there was also a potential that ultimately local jobs would be lost with the closure of the existing hospitals. It was important that local labour was used and opportunities for training given, secured by a legal agreement. Consideration should also be given to the infrastructure in place for low paid employees, in particular transportation to the site and taking into account the variation of shift pattern. Procurement of local supplies and services should also be secured by a legal agreement, furthering the support for the local economy.

There would be additional traffic noise impacting on the amenities of the area but apart from potential occasional noise from ambulance sirens and medical helicopters, this impact would be no greater than that arising from the existing Business use of the site when fully developed.

A concern about the need for the hospital was not a material consideration. Questions about the design and layout of the site could be more fully assessed at the detailed stage. Other residual concerns about archaeology, air quality, flood risk, had been examined and raise no significant concerns. Neighbour concerns had been assessed but were primarily a matter for Hartlepool Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority.

Members noted that ultimately it was up to Hartlepool Borough Council to determine whether or not planning permission was granted for the new hospital but considered that both the benefits and disbenefits of the proposal highlighted should be referred to Hartlepool with a request that it took these matters in account in the determination of the planning application. Any approval for the development should be subject to a Section 106 agreement. Further, any approval should also be subject to appropriate planning conditions to ensure the development was appropriately carried out and the off-site highway works implemented at an appropriate time.

RESOLVED that Hartlepool Borough Council be advised of the following comments of Stockton on Tees Borough Council as the adjacent authority:

- The development was a technical departure from the approved development plan, which allocates the site for Business purposes and identifies for prestige development.
- It was not considered that the proposal would prejudice the successful implementation of the adopted planning policy for the site and the approved Masterplan and should not therefore detrimentally affect the economic and environmental aspirations for the site as a whole.
- It would be beneficial to secure a new state of the art hospital to serve the needs of the residents of the northern part of the Borough, though its siting would have some adverse impacts on residents living in the immediate vicinity.
- It would help to secure necessary highway improvements and public transport penetration into the site that may not otherwise be provided.
- The agreed highway mitigation measure would only allow for the hospital and just 2% of the Wynyard Business Park development. The long term implications of this therefore needed to be addressed including the implications for the access to the Hospital.
- A mechanism for funding the subsidy for public transport to the site after 10 years needed to be put in place.
- There was a need to improve both the pedestrian and cycle networks in the vicinity of the hospital with improvements to aid the crossing of the A689 being especially important.
- The proposal had the potential for generating a significant number of jobs but that had to be balanced against the loss of jobs from the closure of the existing hospitals.
- The proposed hospital buildings would be visually prominent but given its location set back from the main road and the potential for a high quality design, this impact was not considered to be detrimental.

It be further advised that any planning approval for the new hospital should be subject to:

1. A Section 106 agreement which secured:

- The existing hospitals not closing until the new Integrated Health Centres were operational
- The Trust to meet the cost of the provision of necessary highway and traffic mitigation measures
- Provision of financing for public transport into the site
- A financial contribution towards the provision of cycleways
- Financial contribution towards the provision of the Billingham Interchange
- Travel plan details
- Provision of employment opportunities for local labour and training agreements

2. Appropriate planning conditions to ensure the development was satisfactorily carried out and the off-site highway works implemented at an appropriate time. The conditions to include approval of details of the reserved matters; off-site highway works, travel plan, hard and soft landscaping; landscape management; the provision of any necessary advance planting; protection of landscape feature during construction; development to conform with the general principles of the previously agreed Masterplan/Design Guide; construction methodology; water features; archaeology; drainage, materials and implementation of all mitigation measures,

3. Members also requested consideration be given to the following:-

The Section 106 Agreement obligation to ensure Local recruitment and Training opportunities to include the procurement of Local supplies and services. Also to specifically address the need for specialised training or re-skilling for the low paid and low skilled workers in the existing Hospitals.

A Single Through Ticketing scheme on Public transport throughout the Boroughs of Stockton and Hartlepool to be introduced before the Hospital is brought into use.

Consideration be given to the accommodation needs of the existing low paid/low-skilled workers specifically brought to the North Tees Hospital.

An Alternative diversion access route to the Hospital be identified, tested and publicised in the event the A19 is closed to the through traffic.