

Planning Committee

A meeting of Planning Committee was held on Wednesday 4th June 2025.

Present: Cllr Mick Stoker (Chair), Cllr Michelle Bendelow (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr John Coulson (Sub for Cllr Shakeel Hussain), Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Jim Taylor, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Sally Ann Watson (Sub for Cllr Dan Fagan) and Cllr Barry Woodhouse

Officers: Stephen Donaghy (DoA&H), Simon Grundy (DoF,D&R), Martin Parker (DoCS,E&C), Julie Butcher and Sarah Whaley (DoCS)

Also in attendance: Applicants, Agents and Members of the Public

Apologies: Cllr Dan Fagan and Cllr Shakeel Hussain

P/7/25 Evacuation Procedure

The Evacuation Procedure was noted.

P/8/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

P/9/25 Minutes of the meetings which were held on 5 March and 9 April 2025

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved and signed as a correct record.

P/10/25 Planning Protocol

The Planning Protocol was noted.

P/11/25 25/0086/LA South Lodge, Preston Park, Yarm Road Demolition of existing lodge, erection of metal structure, artwork, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works.

The Chairman of the Planning Committee agreed to hear the officers report and member debate in relation to items 25/0086/LA and 25/0087/LBC, as one, as both items related to the same development.

The Planning Officer outlined planning application 25/0086/LA South Lodge, Preston Park, Yarm Road Demolition of existing lodge, erection of metal structure, artwork, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works and 25/0087/LBC South Lodge, Preston Park, Yarm Road Listed building consent for the demolition of existing lodge, erection of metal structure, artwork, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works.

The applications sought planning permission and listed building consent for the demolition of South Lodge, the erection of a metal structure artwork, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works.

The proposed development would incur the loss of a curtilage listed of South Lodge. It was considered that South Lodge was of low architectural importance and its historical significance was derived from its ties to Preston Hall. On balance, its loss was marginally outweighed by mitigation and public benefits.

It had been demonstrated that the proposed development would enhance the visitor experience of visiting for local residents and tourists from further afield and, in turn, strengthen the attraction's local distinctiveness and unique history of the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) on the Railway's bicentenary.

Revised plans had been received through the planning process following concerns around the proximity of the proposed development to extant earthworks of the S&DR Railway. The proposed development now indicated that the extent of the groundworks would be purely contained within the existing footprint of South Lodge and any undiscovered earthworks within the grounds of the Site were considered to be low in terms of their overall understanding of the S&DR. Suitable controls had been recommended via planning condition to mitigate any harm that may be presented to the extant earthworks.

Overall, it was considered that the development comprised sustainable development, when considered in the context of the NPPF when taken as a whole. Furthermore, whilst the development would result in harm to the setting of the existing Grade II listed Preston Hall, this was considered to be less than substantial, which would be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

The consultees that had been notified and the comments that had been received were detailed within the main report.

Neighbours were notified and the comments received were detailed within the main report.

The planning policies and material planning considerations that were relevant to the consideration of the application were contained within the main report.

For application 25/0086/LA, the Planning Officers report concluded, the proposed scheme was considered a very balanced case. On balance, it was considered that the public benefits arising from the scheme would marginally outweigh the harm resulting from the loss of the building, therefore the application was recommended for approval for the reasons as detailed within the main report.

For planning application 25/0087/LBC, the Planning Officers report concluded that the scheme was considered that the works were acceptable and would not adversely impact on the historic fabric of the building. The proposals were considered to conserve the character, appearance and significance of the building and would not adversely impact on it as a building of special historic interest. The application was therefore recommended for approval for the reasons as detailed within the main report

Members were presented with update reports for applications 25/0086/LA and 25/0087/LBC South Lodge, Preston Park, Yarm Road which since the Officers report

detailed further comments which had been submitted by Tees Archaeology and the Applicant's planning agent on the proposed scheme.

In terms of application 25/0086/LA the comments received did not alter the original recommendation of approval with conditions and any new issues raised were addressed within the update report. No conditions were set to be altered within the applications as they principally related to conditions set out within the counterpart listed building consent application.

In terms of application 25/0087/LBC the comments received did not alter the original recommendation of approval with conditions and any issues raised were addressed within the update report. Conditions had been altered since the original report, which had been worked on and agreed through written dialogue with the Local Planning Authority, the Applicant's planning agent, the Applicant, the Historic Buildings Officer and Tees Archaeology. Full details were contained within the update report.

There were no Applicants, Agents or Members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions / make comments. These could be summarised as follows: -

- It was felt that the officer's report contained many contradictions, such as highlighting that the demolition of South Lodge would lead to substantial harm but then recommending that the site be demolished.
- Discussion was had around page 57 within the agenda pack which stated "Less than substantial harm would be caused to the significance and setting of Preston Hall" which was in accordance within paragraph 215 of the NPPF and then page 68 which went on to highlight the significance of South Lodge and its listing, which Members felt was contradictory.
- It was stated within the officer's report that 'Where there was evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision'; however it appeared this heritage asset had been deliberately neglected by the Local Authority, so how could South Lodge be recommended for demolition?
- The public benefits should South Lodge be demolished were low and not substantial as stated within the officers' report, therefore the application should be refused.
- There was no evidence contained within the officer's report to say that the Council had explored the preservation of South Lodge for future use and whether the costs associated with the demolition could be used for restoration.
- What were the implications regards future access for neighbours residing in North Lodge as well as access during the construction phase should the scheme be approved?
- A request was made that should the scheme gain approval access for North Lodge be signposted to highlight to visitors of Preston Hall / Park be aware that the occupiers of North Lodge had access rights.

- Clarity was sought as to whether South Lodge was listed solely because it was within the curtilage of Preston Hall?
- Heritage assets needed to be developed and conserved. South Lodge was developed when the Ropner Family still had Preston Hall. South Lodge should be kept at all costs.
- Concerns were raised regards the proposed hardstanding encroaching on parkland.
- Suggestions were made that if South Lodge was brought back into use community groups could use it such as the Model Railway Group who were currently looking for new premises.
- There was no structural report, and if there were structural issues then Members should have been provided with evidence.

Officers were given the opportunity to respond to comments/issues raised. Their responses could be summarised as follows:

- Officers acknowledged that there was a fine balance between the harm and benefits of the scheme, however when looking at the overall balance, the impact was of low significance. The Applicant had taken into account the associated impact and had revised plans in accordance with paragraph 75 of the NPPF to protect earthworks which would be within the footprint of South Lodge. Suitable controls had been recommended via planning condition to mitigate any harm that may be presented to the extant earthworks. Officers were therefore in favour to demolish South Lodge as on balance the harm would be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.
- The cost of restoration was significant; however, this had not been considered.
- There would still be access for North Lodge. In terms of access rights to North Lodge during construction, if documents were available to say they had protected right of access, then this should be maintained, or alternative access would be provided.
- Officers explained that signage to indicate occupiers of North Lodge had right of access was not a planning consideration however officers' would ask the relevant team to investigate possibilities.
- The building itself had no architectural value and was purely listed due to its association with Preston Hall.
- Officers recognised the fine balance between the harm and overall benefits and did not take these decisions lightly, however the benefits on balance outweighed the harm, and the proposed artwork would enhance the visitor experience.
- Preston Hall and its grounds had changed over the years, it was a home now it was a municipal building,
- In terms of hardstanding, this would not encroach on parkland.
- It was confirmed that there was a structural report within the application.

A vote took place and the application was refused.

RESOLVED that 25/0086/LA South Lodge, Preston Park, Yarm Road Demolition of existing lodge, erection of metal structure, artwork, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works be refused for the following reasons:

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposed development would adversely impact on the curtilage listed heritage asset and subsequently the character and significance of the grade II listed Preston Hall. No clear and convincing justification has been provided to justify the loss of the heritage asset nor is the resulting harm outweighed by the associated public benefits, as required by paragraph 214 of the NPPF. It is considered that the proposed works would therefore cause harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset and would therefore fail to conserve the asset in a manner appropriate to its significance and conflict with Policies SD5 (1J & 3), HE2(4) and HE3 of the adopted Local Plan and paragraph 214 of the NPPF.

P/12/25 25/0087/LBC South Lodge, Preston Park, Yarm Road Listed building consent for the demolition of existing lodge, erection of metal structure, artwork, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works.

For the discussion of this item please see above.

A vote took place and the application was refused.

RESOLVED that 25/0087/LBC South Lodge, Preston Park, Yarm Road Listed building consent for the demolition of existing lodge, erection of metal structure, artwork, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works be refused for the following reasons:

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposed development through the loss of a curtilage listed building would adversely impact on the heritage asset and subsequently fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance the grade II listed Preston Hall. No clear and convincing justification has been provided to justify the loss of the heritage asset as required by paragraph 214 of the NPPF. It is therefore considered that the proposed works would cause harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset and would fail to conserve the asset in a manner appropriate to its significance, character and appearance, in conflict with Policies SD5 (1J & 3), HE2(4) and HE3 of the adopted Local Plan; paragraph 214 of the NPPF; and, Section 16 (2) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act (1990).

P/13/25 25/0842/FUL Installation of PV panels to roof. The Forum Theatre, Town Centre, Billingham, TS23 2LJ

The Chairman of the Planning Committee agreed to hear the officers report and member debate in relation to items 25/0842/FUL and 25/0667/LBC, as one, as both items related to the same development.

The Planning Officer outlined planning application 25/0842/FUL Installation of PV panels to roof. The Forum Theatre, Town Centre, Billingham, TS23 2LJ and 25/0667/LBC The Forum Theatre, Town Centre, Billingham Listed Building Consent for the installation of PV panels to roof.

Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent was sought for the installation of 954no PV panels to the roof of The Forum Theatre, Billingham

The application was brought before members as the proposed development exceeded “minor” development which was classed as buildings up to and including 500m², of floorspace, Advertisements, CCTV systems, and any structures required to be erected to enable the Council to fulfil its responsibility and function of Community Safety. Each panel was 2.31m² and the total coverage of the roof would be 2203m².

In terms of character considerations and the heritage asset, the Forum, although listed, was a modern in appearance building. The siting of the PV panels would be positioned away from the roof edge and would be further screened by the parapet walls to The Forum’s roof edge. It was not considered that the PV panels would be visible from street level.

In terms of amenity, high-rise buildings were nearby (Kennedy Gardens). The applicant had sought to address potential implications arising from glint and glare by using anti-glare/anti-reflective coatings on the PV panels. Subject to the recommended controlling conditions it was not considered that those residents would be impacted by the installation of the PV panels to the roof of The Forum.

The consultees that had been notified and the comments that had been received were detailed within the main report.

Neighbours were notified and the comments received were detailed within the main report.

The planning policies and material planning considerations that were relevant to the consideration of the application were contained within the main report.

The Planning Officers report concluded that the application be Approved with Conditions for the reasons as specified within the main report.

There were no Applicants, Agents or Members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions / make comments. These could be summarised as follows: -

- There had been some initial concerns of the impact of the panels on the residents of Kennedy Gardens however these had now been alleviated due to the panels being antiglare.

- The application was welcomed; the panels would be good for the environment and residents that had been consulted were supportive of the scheme.

A vote took place and the application was approved.

RESOLVED that planning application 25/0842/FUL be approved subject to the following conditions and informatives;

01 Time Limit

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

02 Approved Plans

The development hereby approved shall be in accordance with the following approved plan(s);

Plan Reference Number	Date Received
25068-HL-XX-ZZ-DR-A-1000-S3-P01	25 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-RF-DR-A-2004-S3-P01	25 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-RF-DR-A-2005-S3-P01	25 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-XX-DR-A-1200-S3-P01	25 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-XX-DR-A-1201-S3-P01	25 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-XX-DR-A-2100-S3-P02	25 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-XX-DR-A-2101-S3-P02	25 April 2025

03 Solar PV restrictions

- (a) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment must, so far as practicable, be sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area; and
- (b) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment is removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed.
- (c) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment shall be covered the with anti-reflective coatings.
- (d) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment shall be angled in such a way as to prevent reflection towards sensitive receptors.

INFORMATIVE OF REASON FOR PLANNING APPROVAL

Informative: Working Practices

The Local Planning Authority found the submitted details satisfactory subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions and has worked in a positive and proactive manner in dealing with the planning application.

P/14/25

25/0667/LBC The Forum Theatre , Town Centre, Billingham Listed Building Consent for the installation of PV panels to roof.

For the discussion of this item please see above.

A vote took place and the application was approved.

RESOLVED that planning application 25/0667/LBC be approved subject to the following conditions and informatives;

01 Time Limit

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

02 Approved Plans

The development hereby approved shall be in accordance with the following approved plan(s);

Plan Reference Number	Date Received
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25068-HL-XX-XX-DR-A-1200-S3-P01	1 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-XX-DR-A-1201-S3-P01	1 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-XX-DR-A-2100-S3-P01	1 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-XX-DR-A-2101-S3-P01	1 April 2025
25068-HL-XX-RF-DR-A-2004-S3-P01	26 March 2025
25068-HL-XX-RF-DR-A-2005-S3-P01	26 March 2025
SBC0001	26 March 2025

INFORMATIVE OF REASON FOR PLANNING APPROVAL

Informative: Working Practices

The Local Planning Authority found the submitted details satisfactory subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions and has worked in a positive and proactive manner in dealing with the planning application.

P/15/25

20/1244/COU Change of Use from Retail to Drinking Establishment (sui generis), with outdoor beer garden and smoking shelter to front at 2 High Newham Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 8RQ

Consideration was given to planning application 20/1244/COU Change of Use from Retail to Drinking Establishment (sui generis), with outdoor beer garden and smoking shelter to front at 2 High Newham Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 8RQ.

Planning permission was sought for the change of Use from Retail to Drinking Establishment (sui generis), with outdoor beer garden and smoking shelter to front at 2 High Newham Road, Stockton-on-Tees.

The application remained outstanding as a noise report was to be submitted. This had never been received and therefore it needed to be considered whether to refuse the application and take enforcement action or approve the application based on the information we had.

The application had been reviewed and following discussions with Environmental Health no noise complaints had been received post the pandemic and equally no further complaints had been received following the original consultation exercise.

Given these circumstances, it was considered that conditions could be applied to successfully control the development to ensure that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties.

The consultees that had been notified and the comments that had been received were detailed within the main report.

Neighbours were notified and the comments received were detailed within the main report.

The planning policies and material planning considerations that were relevant to the consideration of the application were contained within the main report.

The Planning Officers report concluded that the application be Approved with Conditions for the reasons as detailed within the report.

There were no Applicants, Agents or Members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions / make comments. These could be summarised as follows: -

- Since the original issues at the premises the Licensing Service had worked hard with the premises to establish licensing conditions. There had been a change of landlord with no further concerns. It was a small establishment and enjoyed by local residents.
- Clarity was sought that if the application site was ever to be extended then would another application need to be made?
- Concerns were raised in terms of the willingness of the current landlord to engage with local residents should there be any further concerns raised.

Officers were given the opportunity to respond to comments/issues raised. Their responses could be summarised as follows:

- An application would need to be submitted to the Council should the landlord request to extend the premises.
- There were a number of conditions to ensure there would be no adverse impact on neighbours. The Licensing Authority had also agreed to a licence with conditions.

A vote took place and the application was approved.

RESOLVED that planning application 20/1244/COU be approved subject to the following conditions and informatives:

01 Approved Plans

The development hereby approved shall be in accordance with the following approved plan(s);

Plan Reference Number	Date Received
SBC0001 A	20 November 2020
SBC0002	20 November 2020

02 Opening hours

The drinking establishment (Sui-Generis Use Class) hereby permitted shall not be open for business outside the hours of 11:00 to 23:00, 7 days a week, all staff shall vacate the premises by 23:30

03 Outside Seating Area

The associated outside seating area as shown on plan ref SBC002 as received by the Local Planning Authority 20 November 2020 shall be vacated by patrons by 20:00

04 Noise

There shall be no amplified sound or live music on the premises at any time and noise levels shall not exceed background levels. There shall be no music played outside.

05 Fixed Plant

The rating level of sound emitted from [any fixed plant and/or machinery associated with the development] [industrial activities at the use hereby approved] shall not exceed background sound levels by more than 5dB (A) between the hours of 0700-

2300 (taken as a 1 hour LA90 at the nearest sound sensitive premises) and shall not exceed the background sound level between 2300-0700 (taken as a 15 minute LA90 at the nearest sound sensitive premises). All measurements shall be made in accordance with the methodology of BS4142: 2014 (Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound) and/or its subsequent amendments.

Where access to the nearest sound sensitive property is not possible, measurements shall be undertaken at an appropriate location and corrected to establish the noise levels at the nearest sound sensitive property.

Any deviations from the LA90 time interval stipulated above shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

06 Smoking Shelter

Notwithstanding the submitted plans, prior to installation of any smoking shelter, full details should be submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and the amenity of occupants of residential properties in the locality.

INFORMATIVE OF REASON FOR PLANNING APPROVAL

Informative: Working Practices

The Local Planning Authority has worked in a positive and proactive manner and sought solutions to problems arising in dealing with the planning application by gaining additional information required to assess the scheme and by the identification and imposition of appropriate planning conditions.