

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the **Strategic Planning Committee** held in the **Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF** on **Tuesday, 7 August 2018** at **4.00 pm**.

PRESENT

Councillor CW Horncastle
(in the Chair)

MEMBERS

Castle G	Robinson M
Lang J	Stewart G
Pidcock B	Swithenbank, I C F
Reid J	Thorne, T
Renner-Thompson G	

OFFICERS

Armstrong, N	Senior Planning Officer
Feige, D	Principal Ecologist and AONB Officer
Filby, U	Solicitor
Hitching, James	Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer
Norris, K	Democratic Services Officer
Nugent, J	Planning Manager - Specialist Planning Services
Payne, M	Consultant Highways Engineer
Sinnamon E	Senior Planning Manager
Sittambalam R	Senior Planning Officer
Stanners, I	Housing Enabling Officer

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor J Foster
P Johnston, Executive Director of Place

Press 1
Public: 24

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Flux, Gibson, Gobin, Ledger, Richards and Wearmouth.

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee held on Tuesday 3 July 2018, as circulated, be agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

19. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The report requested the Committee to decide the planning application attached to the report using the powers delegated to it. Members were reminded of the principles which should govern their consideration of the applications, the procedure for handling representations, the requirement of conditions and the need for justifiable reasons for the granting of permission or refusal of planning applications. The procedure at Planning Committees was appended for information.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

20. 17/03252/FUL

Installation of 120 hardstanding bases (for 120 static caravans) with associated car parking, new internal access road, footpaths, landscaping, creation of new lakes and adventure trails and infrastructure above and below ground - Amended 08/05/18.

Land North of Haggerston Castle Holiday Park, Berwick upon Tweed, Northumberland.

Ragu Sittambalam, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application to the committee and circulated an update which provided members with a response from Building Conservation (a copy of which is attached to the signed Minutes and uploaded with the agenda papers online). He also advised members that Northumberland Coast AONB had requested a further condition relating to external lighting. He then summarised the report with the aid of a slide presentation.

Dominic Holding, agent for the applicant, addressed the Committee, speaking in support of the application and his comments included the following:

- Bourne Leisure Holdings Limited was a private company which owned a number of undertakings including Haven Holidays and Butlins, employing 10,000 full time staff and 5,000 part time staff.
- The company wanted to reinvest in Haggerston Castle Caravan Park to upgrade it and improve standards.
- This was a major investment for the area but must have the support of the Local Planning Authority.
- He referred to W27 of the Berwick Local Plan which supported expansion of the park.

- The new area would be well screened and enclosed and would involve the formation of three distinct areas around bodies of water which would attract wildlife habitats.
- Careful consideration had been given to surface water drainage and a sustainable drainage assessment had been submitted which had been subject to consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).
- No objections had been received from the Council's Highways Section and Highways England had agreed that no amendments to the scheme were required.
- No objections had been received from other statutory consultees.
- Tourism was very important to Northumberland and Bourne Leisure wanted to provide high quality family holiday accommodation.
- Approving the application would provide social, economic and environmental benefits to the area.

In response to a question the Senior Planning Officer stated that officers had not verified the figures provided in the applicant's supporting statement regarding potential additional visitors or spending to the local economy but did believe that the benefits of approving the application would outweigh any harm afforded by the development.

Councillor Thorne moved acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application, as updated by the officer, stating that it was very important for tourism, would contribute to coastal mitigation and be good for Northumberland. Councillor Reid seconded the motion.

A member commented that Haggerston Castle Caravan Park had always been a well run site and contributed to the local economy. Bourne Leisure was a well established firm and he could not see any reason to refuse the application.

Upon being put to the vote members unanimously agreed to approve the application and it was:

RESOLVED that authorisation be given to the Head of Service to GRANT planning permission subject to the:

- expiry of the statutory publicity period and providing no new planning issues are raised;
- a Legal Agreement pursuant to a s106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure the following obligations:
 - Coastal mitigation contribution of £36,000 (£300 per unit);
 - Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership contribution of £9039 and the conditions, with reasons, set out in the report.
 - a further condition relating to external lighting (wording to be agreed by officers).

21. 17/04547/REM

**Reserved matters in relation to application 15/00381/OUTES seeking consent for layout, scale, appearance and landscaping for 181 dwellings (as amended by plans and em-mail received 06/07/18 including layout of dwellings).
Land West of Milkwell Lane, Milkwell Lane, Corbridge, Northumberland.**

Neil Armstrong, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application to the committee and circulated an addendum report to update members on further comments that had been received in respect of highways safety matters and an updated list of conditions to take account of additional plans received and additional recommended conditions (a copy of which is attached to the signed Minutes and uploaded with the agenda papers online).

The Senior Planning Officer then referred to an email which had been circulated to members from Councillor Oliver in which he had raised outstanding concerns from the local community, the main issues being:

- Drainage;
- School car park/drop off area;
- Section 278 and Traffic Regulation Orders;
- Delivery of the access road to the site;
- Stagshaw Road/Priory Gardens junction;
- Pedestrian access concerns raised by Corbridge Middle School.

Reference was also made to an objection received that morning from a resident of Orchard View which highlighted concerns about highways, the safety of children, drainage and flooding.

Mr Armstrong then summarised the report with the aid of a slide presentation.

Peter Jewitt addressed the committee to raise some concerns and his comments included the following:

- He was a governor at Corbridge Middle School and oversaw health and safety.
- The school was only concerned with the safety of pupils.
- Members who had attended the site visit would have seen a quiet cul de sac but during term time that became a very busy road.
- Originally the Police had been against the application for reasons of road safety.
- It was acknowledged and appreciated that there was to be a Section 278 Order and it was expected that roads would have a 20 mph limit.
- Section 12 of the new document covered where Priory Gardens joined Stagshaw Road, it had a very narrow access and it would not be possible for a 70 seater coach to pass through. It was essential that junction improvements took place.
- One of the plans produced by Miller Homes in May 2018, filed July 2018, showed road markings indicating "a safe place to cross". The problem being that, in order to get children away from traffic, the school was opening a new

access on the eastern boundary of the school. Unfortunately the aforesaid markings were near the old main entrance to the west so it was essential that the markings be moved to the east so children would use the new entrance.

- With regard to highways safety, currently there was no protection for children from Priory Gardens walking to and from school.
- He reiterated that the only issue of concern was the safety of children.

Sandra Manson then spoke in support of the application and her comments included the following:

- She was a planning agent for WYG who were representing Bellway and Miller Homes.
- They took issues of health and safety very seriously.
- The applicant was committed to working with the school and following the correct process through a Section 278 agreement which was subject to rigorous safety audits. This was the normal process for highways improvements.
- The points made by Mr Jewitt about road markings indicating “a safe place to cross” would need to be addressed through safety audits.
- New conditions had just come through from Highways regarding access and the applicant was happy to maintain dialogue and work with the school in that regard.
- Highways Officers had no objections to the scheme.
- There would be a construction management plan setting out how the site would operate. This would need to be approved by the Local Authority and would be shown to the school.
- There would be no risk to people in the locality.
- The scheme had robust principles, outline planning permission was in place and all environmental factors had been considered.
- The density of the scheme had been lowered to 181 dwellings, it would integrate well within Corbridge, was of a high quality design and would not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- The impact on heritage assets had been considered in detail as part of the outline planning application and, with regard to the amended plans, Historic England had raised no objection on heritage grounds.
- There would be 15% affordable housing provision on the site which would incorporate six bungalows and there would be 5 affordable units as part of a community led scheme.
- She asked members to support the application.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the following information was provided:-

- With regard to how highways would be managed, the Consultant Highways Engineer referred to condition 19 in the addendum report that secured future management and maintenance of streets and paths within the site. As part of the information submitted, the applicant would need to state what would be adopted as public highway and what would be private paths in order for the

Authority to know who was maintaining what infrastructure. It would need technical approval to be adopted as highway. The Section 278 Agreement included internal layout and new roads would be designed to have a 20 mph limit. The Section 38 process for adopting roads as highway was outside the planning process, however, when roads were offered for adoption, there would be a maintenance period before it became adopted highway.

- The Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer confirmed that all of the calculations submitted by the applicant had been thoroughly checked. Matters of flood risk and drainage had previously been considered through the outline planning application and Northumbrian Water had established the amount of water which could go through their system. The attenuation basins and oversized tanks met NPPF requirements for the required attenuation needed within the development to ensure flooding did not occur on site and did not increase the risk of flooding off-site.
- Discussions were on-going with the applicant about making use of the car park area and this would need to be determined prior to construction.
- Discussions were on-going with the developer regarding construction access to the site.
- There was a landscaping proposal for substantial planting around the site, some existing trees and hedges would be protected but clearly some would be lost. The wording of the condition was standard but the plans showed what would be protected and what would be maintained.
- With regard to affordable housing, the Housing Enabling Officer confirmed that some properties would be rented and interest had been shown from a reputable Housing Association. In addition, some homes would be managed by the Parish Council.
- The application was very different to the one put forward for Goosehill School in Morpeth because that application had had been submitted by the school.
- The Architectural Liaison Officer from the Police would usually comment on the design of the proposal. The means of access had already been approved as part of the outline application and matters taken into account at reserved matters were limited.
- Policy GD5 of the Core Strategy referred to in paragraph 71 of the report was from the Tynedale Core Strategy.
- It was confirmed that conditions would be enforceable.
- Details about buses passing on Priory Gardens had been discussed as part of the outline planning permission. The proposed holding area enabled all 5 buses to be there at one time but as they made journeys at staggered times, it minimised the likelihood of them meeting at Priory Gardens, however, the new access road was more than sufficient for 2 buses to pass.
- The buses were commissioned by the Council for home to school transport but it was acknowledged that they could go on to make other journeys.

Councillor Thorne moved acceptance of the officer recommendation to grant permission in accordance with the addendum report circulated. He was impressed with the work the Planning Department had done on the reserved matters application, issues had been addressed and school safety would be improved. Councillor Pidcock seconded the motion.

A member made a plea to officers to put crossing points where children were likely to cross to get to the new access, otherwise he supported the application which he said had been well researched. Another member disagreed and queried how a decision could be made when it was not known who would adopt the car park, exact details of affordable housing had not been confirmed and the consultation with adjacent residents on layout was not complete. In response the Senior Planning Manager stated that officers were satisfied with the impact on neighbouring properties and, as the consultation process was almost at an end, the application had been brought to committee before the consultation period expired next month.

The member said he would have liked to have seen the complete consultation and would therefore abstain from the vote.

In summary the Chair said all applications had good points and bad points but on balance he felt these proposals were acceptable. The Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer and Highways Engineer had given assurances about concerns raised and he was happy to see two developers working together which would reduce the time taken to complete the site.

Upon being put to the vote 9 members were in favour of the motion and 1 member abstained. It was therefore:

RESOLVED that members were minded to GRANT permission subject to the expiry of the further re-consultation with adjacent residents on layout and no new material planning issues being raised; and the resolution of outstanding matters with Highways Development Management and additional conditions/informatives within the addendum report.

22. 18/0205/VARCCM

Variation of Condition 1 (approved plans) and 3 (operational times) pursuant to planning permission 12/02414/VARCCM to allow a second weighbridge to be introduced on the site and for operations to run 24 hour within the buildings and an area immediately adjacent to improve the efficiency of the site and extract more from the waste materials to reduce the residual waste. JBT Waste Services, Longridge Way, Barrington Industrial Estate, NE22 7DL

Joe Nugent, Specialist Planning Manager, introduced the application to the Committee with the aid of a slide presentation.

Derek Birch addressed the committee and his comments included the following:

- He quoted from the introduction to the new County Plan about development in the county:
 - Would residents' quality of life be adversely affected?
 - Would it help to reduce pollution (noise, emissions, light)?
 - Would it decrease the amount of traffic using the road system?
 - Would it reduce adverse impacts of transportation on communities and the environment?
 - Would it maintain and improve air quality?

- He said he would like to add some questions of his own about the latest planning application:
 - What was implied by “an area immediately adjacent to the buildings”?
 - What would be the nature of the external night time working?
 - How much extra external lighting would be envisaged?
 - Was it certain that Remondis JBT Ltd were completely open and transparent in the application?
- When he met with Remondis management on 24 May he asked about food waste. They had stated that only a small percentage of the waste they collected was food waste which was processed in enclosed sheds, within 48 hours, and in accordance with their environmental permit issued by the Environment Agency.
- Information received from Northumberland County Council (NCC) affirmed that Remondis did not have permission to deal with food waste on that site.
- The current planning application stated that 24 hour working inside the buildings would improve efficiencies, the recycling process could be slowed down and the volume of residual waste reduced, however, the company had not given any figures. If they looked at other technological and logistic solutions that should already be possible within current conditions given that truck movements had been reduced to the permitted levels.
- The noise and dust of 24 hour working would be inescapable.
- The major concern of Councillors last time was traffic movement and that had not been addressed.
- Vehicles left the Spancast site at 5:00 am, concerns expressed at the last meeting about disturbance to the community and road safety were still being ignored. The company seemed to consider arrivals and departures of heavy vehicles at all hours to be completely acceptable even though they were 44 tonne trucks.
- It had been argued that since Barrington Road, the main highway access to the site, lay outside the remit of the application then the traffic problems should be ignored. In paragraph 4.11 of the supporting letter it stated “Remondis JBT Ltd shared residents’ concerns and frustrations about Barrington Road but were advised that NCC, as highways authority, owned the road and were responsible for it. Remondis recognised that when two HGV’s met on certain stretches of the road there was not enough room to pass”.
- If NCC and Remondis JBT Ltd were in agreement about the importance of supporting the development, the highways problems must be solved.
- On the Facebook page of a County Councillor, who was a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, it stated “the original application was turned down but the applicant had been asked to work with the planners on a new proposal which we might all find we can work with because we are not that far away” .
- A Remondis executive made a presentation to County Councillors before the Strategic Planning meeting on 5 June which was not an agenda item and was not minuted. Was that how local democracy worked?

Councillor Julie Foster, the Ward Member, then addressed the committee speaking against the application. Her comments included the following:

- Many residents had wanted to attend the meeting but as it was a 4:00 pm start they were still at work and, with it being August, some were on holiday.
- Residents had stated that they were supportive of the jobs created but not when it affected residents' homes. Dust was coming into their houses, cars and gardens.
- Window cleaners were required to clean their windows every week which was proving expensive.
- 24 hour working would create more dust; health risks for asthmatics and noise around the clock; Some drivers continuously revved engines and that noise would carry.
- How would waste be sorted? Where would it go?
- There would be more skips and that would result in more noise.
- Shift workers played music through the night and that would also carry.
- Standing in the rear garden of one of the objector's properties, looking over to the Remondis site, the land dipped which meant that sound travelled at eye level and there was no protection from trees or bushes.
- Choppington Parish Council had written to Remondis to request a public meeting as residents found one to one meetings to be intimidating and they were unable to get their points across comfortably.
- Approving the application would have an adverse effect on residents and she asked members to consider the loss of residential amenity.

Steve Patterson, the applicant, then spoke in support of the application and his comments included the following:

- He was a director of the company who had submitted the planning application.
- Remondis had acquired the site in September 2016, they were a family owned company who wanted to be a good neighbour and they operated to very high standards.
- They were also committed to delivering first class environmental standards.
- The current application had been improved from the one submitted 12 months ago.
- Crushing of aggregates would not be permitted at weekends.
- All mobile plant machinery had been fitted with white noise reversing beepers to eliminate excessive noise.
- They had agreed to replace all safety alarms with white noise alarms.
- With regard to traffic impact, the numbers of vehicles permitted to enter and leave the site during the approved hours or the approved hours relating to traffic movements had not been amended. Vehicles could be tracked and had cctv installed.
- In terms of the application, external areas and work times were clearly defined and lighting would be no different to what it was at present.
- He could not guarantee that there was no food waste but the only food waste was mixed with waste in skips and community waste.
- Extensive noise monitoring was carried out and dust omissions were also monitored.

- £13.5 million had been invested into the site and since Remondis had taken over, further investments had been made.
- Their customers demanded that waste did not go to landfill and was recycled. This was time consuming - residual waste left behind was shipped to energy plants in Europe.

In response to questions from members of the committee the following information was provided:-

- Monitoring of noise and dust was reactive rather than proactive. A noise and dust action plan would be put in place and if a complaint was received it would be assessed to ensure that conditions were being complied with.
- It had been indicated that, before the previous application was submitted, one complaint per year had been received regarding noise/dust for this particular site. After the application was submitted there had been a flurry of complaints, each of which was investigated and officers were satisfied that the site was operating within conditions.
- With regard to noise standards for night time working, the Specialist Planning Manager referred to British Standards 41 and 42 stating there were ambient noise levels throughout the day and there would be much less background noise through the night. A noise assessment had been submitted with the application and formed part of the conditions.
- The Specialist Planning Manager clarified the meaning of paragraph 2.5 of the report. There was a sieving process in order to separate each of the waste products and if that was slowed down over a longer period there would be a better fall out rate.
- Remondis had bought the site and was looking to improve facilities. Planning law required them to submit a planning application, it was part of an on-going evolution of the site. They had submitted plans in line with planning law to make the site more efficient.
- It was not relevant how long the site had been in operation, members must look at the application before them. It was confirmed that it was an historical industrial site.
- The nearest property to the site was approximately 100 metres or further.
- Site notices had been erected and a notice put in the press so that the public were aware of the proposals.

Councillor Thorne moved acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application as detailed in the report stating that it was an established business and it was up to the Council to monitor and deal with complaints. It was an industrial site and there were not many residences close to the plant, however, noise and dust monitoring were essential and the authority must be rigorous to ensure that conditions were complied with to keep residences as noise and dust free as possible. Councillor Castle seconded the motion stating that he understood residents' concerns but as a planning committee, members could only deal with evidence before them. If night noise had been assessed as acceptable, there were no planning reasons to refuse the application but he asked for the situation to be monitored.

Members commented as follows:

- The environment must be maintained for future generations and the planet had to be protected long term.
- The applicants had addressed the issues brought up when the last application was refused. This was a valid application. Existing noise levels for day time working were already known and members must behold officers who said that issues of noise and dust would be monitored.
- The main reason the application was refused last time was not extended hours, there was no increase in traffic, this was an industrial estate and the applicant was trying to maximise investment.
- There were 25 conditions, including several about dust and noise, so the issues were well addressed.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was unanimously agreed and it was therefore:

RESOLVED that permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions, with reasons, set out in the report.

23. PLANNING APPEALS

Information was provided on the progress of planning appeals.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____