



Northumberland County Council

Strategic Planning Committee 2 October 2018 ADDENDUM REPORT

Application No: 16/02432/OUT

Proposal: Outline planning permission for the construction of up to 600 new dwellings (C3 Use Class) with all matters reserved except access

Site Address: Land East of Wansbeck General Hospital, Ashington

Applicant: Persimmon Homes North East, 2 Esh Plaza, Sir Bobby Robson Way, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE13 9BA

RECOMMENDATION: THAT MEMBERS BE MINDED TO GRANT PERMISSION AND DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO OFFICERS TO DETERMINE THE APPLICATION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AND COMPLETION OF A SECTION 106 AGREEMENT.

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Strategic Planning Committee to a package of Section 106 contributions proposed by officers following discussions with the applicant and consultees which differs from that previously approved by Committee. Approval is also sought for some minor changes to the proposed planning conditions.
- 1.2 This application was previously considered by Strategic Planning Committee on the 4 April 2017. Members resolved that they were minded to grant planning permission subject to resolution of outstanding transportation matters raised by Highways England and completion of a Section 106 Agreement concerning various infrastructure matters and conditions. The officer report previously considered by Members at the April 2017 meeting is appended to this addendum report.
- 1.3 During the intervening period discussions have taken place with the applicant and consultees regarding the various above-mentioned outstanding matters. These have now been resolved to the satisfaction of officers and consultees and a draft Section 106 Agreement has been negotiated which provides for all of the contributions sought by officers and consultees. These are as follows:

- 15% Affordable Housing provision equating to 90 units (60% affordable rent (54 units) and 40% intermediate units (36 units)) – discussions with Affordable Housing officers had agreed to the provision of the 36 units on-site as Discount Market Value at 70% of Market Value and a financial contribution of £810,000 in lieu of the 54 affordable rented units on site;
- £3,060,200 education contribution;
- £414,000 healthcare contribution;
- £492,000 sports contribution to be spent in Hirst Park Ashington and/or at Newbiggin Town Football Club;
- £146,033 local highway contribution for improvement to the nearby Ashwood roundabout;
- Contribution of between £160,795 and £353,750 for mitigation works at and within the vicinity of the A19/A189 Moor Farm roundabout;
- £360,000 ecology coastal mitigation contribution;
- £240,000 bus service contribution; and
- Marketing strategy to assist delivery of Local Centre

- 1.4 The Heads of Terms for the Section 106 Agreement as previously approved by Committee remain unchanged with the exception of ecology where it is now proposed that the applicant would provide a contribution of £600 per dwelling (i.e. £360,000) to the Council's coastal mitigation service rather than providing and managing an area of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to the east of the site on the other side of the A189. This change has arisen because it has not been possible to secure agreement with the applicant regarding the geographical extent of the SANG. However, the applicant's alternative proposal to provide a financial contribution towards the Council's coastal mitigation service is acceptable to the Council's Ecologist.
- 1.5 The Moor Farm roundabout contribution of between £160,795 and £353,750 has been agreed with Highways England and they have now withdrawn their Holding Objection, subject to a Section 106 Agreement being completed. The precise amount payable within the range specified would be dependent upon what other schemes contributed towards the cost of these works.
- 1.6 The amounts secured in respect of the affordable housing, education, healthcare, sports provision, Ashwood roundabout and bus service contributions remain unchanged from April 2017 when committee previously considered this application, although it is now proposed following discussions with the Council's parks and open spaces team and the local Member that the sports contribution should be allocated for spend in either Hirst Park Ashington and/or at Newbiggin Town Football Club.
- 1.7 With regard to planning conditions, the applicant has requested that Officers consider minor changes to wording from those conditions approved by Committee in April 2017. Following review by Officers and the request from the application the changes to be considered include:
- i) Condition 8 (contamination) amended to allow for discharge on a phased basis;
 - ii) Condition 11 (validation and verification of ground gas) amended to refer to phases of development;

- iii) Conditions 14 and 15 (ecology) amended to reflect that a SANG is no longer to be provided;
- iv) Condition 31 (site investigation works) additional condition to secure verification of works prior to occupation
- v) Condition 35 (external surfaces materials) amended to refer to phases of development;

- 1.8 At this time Officers are liaising with relevant consultees on proposed changes to any conditions deemed reasonable and necessary. The proposed changes are not considered to fundamentally alter the requirements of the conditions, but would allow for more practical, reasonable and precise wording in relation to the phasing of development given its larger scale. Should Members be minded to approve the changes to the ecological mitigation and proposed obligations from the current recommendation it is requested that delegated authority is given to Officers for minor amendments to the wording of conditions deemed reasonable and necessary.
- 1.9 Amended ecology reports have been provided by the applicant following their decision to provide a contribution to the Council's coastal mitigation scheme rather than provide a SANG. These are currently being considered by the Council's ecologist and an update will be provided at committee. Officers would recommend that Members give delegated authority to Officers in order impose any amended or additional conditions as necessary in relation to ecological mitigation.
- 1.10 Overall, officers consider the proposed changes to the Section 106 Agreement and conditions as detailed above to be acceptable and it is recommended that the proposed development should continue to be supported.

4. Recommendation

That Members be minded to **GRANT** permission and delegate authority to officers to determine the application, subject to conditions as specified in the previous report to committee with amendments to wording in consultation with relevant consultees, as well as amended/additional conditions in relation to ecological mitigation, and subject to the completion of a legal agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which secures the equivalent of 15% affordable housing and the various infrastructure contributions as specified earlier in this report.

Author and Contact Details

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Report to Strategic Planning Committee dated 4 April 2017.

Background Papers: Planning application file(s) 16/04731/OUT