

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CRAMLINGTON, BEDLINGTON & SEATON VALLEY LOCAL AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

At the meeting of the **Cramlington, Bedlington & Seaton Valley Local Area Planning Committee** held at Council Chamber - County Hall on Wednesday, 29 November 2023 at 5:00 pm.

PRESENT

R Wilczek (Planning Vice Chair) in the Chair

MEMBERS

L Bowman
S Lee
M Swinburn

B Flux
M Robinson

OFFICERS

H Bowers
T Crowe
M Patrick
Whittaker

Democratic Services Officer
Solicitor
Highways Development Manager
Planning Officer

Public: 2
Press: 1

1 PROCEDURE AT PLANNING MEETINGS

The Chair advised those present of the procedure to be followed at the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chicken, Daley, Dunbar, Ezhilchelvan, Ferguson and Taylor.

3 DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Flux declared an interest as a local resident and local member and would be speaking in objection to the planning application 23/01737/FUL.

4 DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The report requested the Committee to decide the planning applications 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

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applications.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

5 23/01737/FUL

New temporary access to site, land south of Beacon Farm, Beacon Lane, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE23 8AZ.

Richard Whittaker, Planning Officer introduced the report with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

Councillor Barry Flux spoke in objection and addressed the Committee:

- There had been 32 objections to the application.
- The residents of Beacon Hill had consistently argued to against the temporary access, and he had met with residents as Ward Councillor.
- Residents had raised concerns about the proposed temporary access as the footpath and cycle lane were used by children, pedestrians and cyclists.
- The Council would have no control when the access would be stopped up following completion of the link road.
- The access was close to a busy path and school pedestrians.
- He urged members to explore the highways danger and find good planning reasons to refuse.
- Objectors had never objected to planning applications on their doorstep and urged officers to find another access.

Amy Ward, Planning Manager was in attendance on behalf of the applicant and responded as follows:-

- Temporary planning permission was being sought for a secondary access into the development site at the Cramlington West Sector.
- The central route would provide access to the parcel of development. However, it currently ran through the construction site of the parcel of development.
- The temporary access would enable new residents to access their homes via the secondary access for a period of 2 years, until the central road no longer ran through the construction site. If the construction along the central spine road was completed earlier, the use of the temporary access would cease.
- Planning permission was received in 2017 for the erection of 715 houses to the south west of Cramlington. The permission also included the provision of playing fields, a pavilion, 3 play areas and a multi-use games area.
- The site had commenced last year following an extensive programme of remediation and the purchase of the site from the Council.
- The development was progressing well and between Barratt and Keepmoat, currently 182 houses had been built and over £800k paid to the Council in accordance with the S106 agreement.
- The overall housing site was designed to deliver 715 houses from a new

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access created off Beacon Lane, which then formed a primary road through the development. The houses were always envisaged to be delivered from this route. However, because Barratt were building out under two brands, they were delivering slightly faster than Keepmoat.

- The parcel of land where the 90 houses lay was a Barratt parcel, further to the east of the main road and east of a Keepmoat parcel of the site. They were looking to bring the parcel forward ahead of Keepmoat's parcel and ahead of the construction of the full extent of the link road.
- It would be unsafe to bring residents through an element of the site that would be a construction site to gain access to their homes, hence why they were proposing a temporary access from Langdale Drive. The temporary access would be for up to two years, but it was envisaged that it would only be in use until the completion of the construction lining the primary road.
- It was recognised that there were a couple of issues to consider, and they had sought to satisfactorily address those in partnership with the Council.
- The impact on the Public Right of Way – pedestrian safety was of paramount importance, and they had set out a number of measures to ensure pedestrians could safely use the public right of way and continue to use this popular route to the primary school. Those measures would be secured through condition 9.
- Damage to the existing highway – a pre-condition survey would be undertaken prior to the route being used and were committed to repairing any damage to the local highway network caused by the temporary access.
- Ecology – the creation of the temporary access involved the removal of a small element of hedge. This was minor and temporary in nature. To minimise the impact on the hedge they would install a clearly defined corridor prior to construction.
- Following completion of construction, the road would be removed, and the areas of ground disturbed would be reseeded. A new Hawthorn hedge would be replanted to fill the gap and provide additional hedgerow compensation.
- Impact on residents – she understood that there was some concern regarding the impact on existing residents of Langdale Drive and the adjacent areas and the committee report had touched upon the consultation with public protection who had assessed impacts from noise, air pollution, dust and vibrations and considered the proposed works to be acceptable.
- If permission was granted, it would be temporary for 2 years, which included time for construction of the road and removal so there would be a period of time within the 2 year period where the road was not operational. Furthermore, the use of the temporary access was restricted only to private cars and therefore, no construction traffic would be using the temporary road at any time.
- The number of cars would be low, as the access was only for private cars for those residents who lived in the parcel of the 90 houses which would not be build out until the end of the two year period.
- The access would mean that the triggers for the S106 contributions would be hit earlier, benefitting everyone. It would also bring forward first occupation expenditure to the value of £495,000. Council Tax revenue of £137,700 and New Homes Bonus of £826,200.

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- She hoped members would support the officer recommendation in approving the temporary access for two years.

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

- The access on the original application had been from the A1068. The blue line on the plan showed the original access to the site but the issue was that the Barratt site would be completed earlier than the sites on the west. which would cause a health and safety issue. As a consequence of this, the Keepmoat site was very much still under construction and was not safe for the potential buyers/new residents of the site.
- The hedgerows to be removed Michael Patrick confirmed the hedgerows were not being removed they were being cut down to as low as possible to allow for visibility would be reinstated following completion of the works.
- The width of the road would be 4.8 metres to access 90 properties.
- Highways officers had used the industry wide database and assessed accidents over the last 5 years. The data had been checked and was found to be correct.
- The national database had been used to calculate the trip rate.
- The Highways Officer was not aware of the 20-mph speed limit through Langdale Drive as he had not carried out the assessment.
- The access road would only be used for domestic vehicles, secured by conditions. The expectation was that Keepmoat would not complete construction of houses before Barratt. When the link road was fully complete, the temporary access would be stopped up and returned to its previous use.
- The south-west sector was a mixed site with many developers. The original outline permission had been for the whole of the site, but since then many developers had come on to the site.
- Officers were unable to say what would happen at the end of 2 years if the road was not complete, the onus was on the developer to ensure new residents would not be in a position where they could not access their properties.
- A transport assessment had taken into consideration the impact of Beaconhill Primary School.
- The count of traffic from the development was 47 two way trips in the morning peak, and 45 two way trips in the afternoon peak.
- Condition 8 referred to the works to the hedgerow in accordance with the Environmental Impact Report and Condition 7 referred to hedgerow compensation.
- Pedestrians and cyclists would retain right of way over the access road.

Councillor Robinson had concerns over the application and felt that there was inconsistency with the planning application but could not find any planning reason to refuse.

Councillor Robinson then proposed a site visit to gather more information, this was seconded by Councillor Swinburn and unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the application be deferred for a site visit to gather more

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information.

6 **PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE**

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

7 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next planning meeting would take place on Wednesday, 20 December.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

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