

COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: 3 May 2012 **Ward:** Heworth
Team: Major and **Parish:** Heworth Planning Panel
 Commercial Team

Reference: 11/03269/FULM
Application at: Yearsley Bridge Adult Training Centre Huntington Road York
YO31 9BN
For: Erection of 32 dwellings, 1no retail unit and 1no veterinary surgery
following demolition of existing buildings
By: Andy Cramer and Jeremy Binnian
Application Type: Major Full Application (13 weeks)
Target Date: 24 February 2012
Recommendation: Approve

1.0 OFFICER UPDATE

1.1 Members will recall that this application was deferred at the April Committee. Members raised concerns over highway safety and asked for clarification on ownership of the land to the northeast side of the site, landscaping and site drainage. The original committee report is attached with this update.

2.0 CONSULTATIONS UPDATED

Affordable housing officers

2.1 Report that the amount of affordable housing is acceptable and compliant with the Council's brownfield target which is 25%. It is proposed 8 of the 32 homes are affordable; 5 to rent, 3 for private sale. Officers do not object to the proposed location of the affordable houses.

Landscape officers

2.2 This revised scheme does not manage to retain the existing garden setting the site contributes to Huntington Road, but it does allow scope for a band of vegetation along the road frontage, plus retention of the existing Ash trees in the north east corner and an area of public open space at the far end of the site. There remains a loss of trees along the eastern boundary, but the mature Oak could now be safely retained with care.

2.3 The housing scheme itself contains a fair degree of new street tree planting although, these would not tend to thrive as well as the existing trees, nor be of a large stature since they will be in a more restricted growing environment. Nonetheless the replacement of the existing car park with open space not only

makes a valuable addition to the existing public open space; it also provides an opportunity for permanent substantial tree planting.

2.4 With regards the landscape proposals, officers make the following points, which could be addressed through a condition.

- The fundamental elements within the new public open space (POS) are acceptable. Some additional scrub planting in the form of single, specimen, native shrubs such as Hawthorn and Rosa should be included. The wildflower areas should be more extensive. Removing the car park will provide a good basis for establishing wild flowers. Whilst an immediate kick about area should be included there is ample space within the existing adjacent POS for this. There is the potential to add more trees. The proposed tree species are acceptable and a mixed native flowering hedge along the boundary with the houses rather than just privet and laurel is expected.
- The beds between the parking bays, and within the forecourts, should be planted up rather than grassed.
- A similar native hedge should be planted alongside the street rather than around the retail car park, with a small margin for bulbs at the front and to allow for the season's growth adjacent to the footpath.

2.5 In summary: Unfortunately the loss of trees can not be entirely compensated for given the extent of development, however the additional public open space would be a valuable asset, which could also support large tree species with direct public visibility in a sustainable environment and officers consider therefore scheme is acceptable.

Countryside Officers

2.6 A bat survey of the buildings and emergence survey has been carried out. The Emergence Survey recorded a single noctule, which commuted from the southern boundary of the site in a north westerly direction and a single common pipistrelle was recorded foraging along the northern boundary of the site. No other bat activity was recorded during the survey.

2.7 No bats were seen to emerge from the buildings on the application site and there is no evidence of current or historic roosting. The report recommends that as nesting birds have been recorded in the lodge demolition should only proceed once the absence of nesting can be confirmed.

2.8 Officers recommend a condition to protect bats (which may take up residence in future) during demolition and to provide bat roost features within the new development.

Highway Network Management

2.9 The applicant has removed visitor parking and the build-out along the main access road to maintain a continuous 5.8m width access road.

2.10 The parking spaces to plot 18 (garage and driveway) which are close to the ambulance station access have been retained. Swept paths show vehicles reversing out of the space, and ambulances leaving the hub. This arrangement could still cause conflict (ambulances are likely to leave from the centre of the access, rather than straddle the left hand side of the road as shown on the applicant's swept paths). However, considering the frequency that vehicles will be reversing out of plot 18 and ambulances leaving the hub simultaneously, this arrangement would not warrant further amendment or refusal of the application.

Property Services

2.11 Officers have confirmed that the strip of land between plots 9 and 26 and 55/57 Kirkham Avenue is council owned. Property Services have discussed with the applicants the option of including the land in the sale to them but need to check confirm it is not needed by Housing. If not then it can be included in the sale.

Environment Agency

2.12 The EA raised no objections but asked to be consulted further if Yorkshire Water do not allow the foul water to be connected to the main sewer. (N.B. - Yorkshire Water have confirmed that foul water could be connected to the main sewer)

Planning Panel

2.13 No response to date.

3.0 APPRAISAL

3.1 Key issues

- Design and the amenity of future and surrounding occupants
- Highway network management

DESIGN AND THE AMENITY OF FUTURE AND SURROUNDING OCCUPANTS

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that to boost significantly the supply of housing Local Planning Authority's (LPA) should have an evidence base to ensure that housing need is delivered and identify sites to meet demand.

3.3 The NPPF advises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. This means development which:-

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area
- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places
- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;
- create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

3.4 Local Plan policy NE1 requires that when trees are to be removed, appropriate replacement planting should be proposed to mitigate any loss.

3.5 The Poplar trees would not be compatible with the housing proposed on the site and therefore removal of around two thirds of the trees are proposed, otherwise the site could not be viably developed. Although vegetation would be lost from the site, an area of public open space, which will replace an area of hard-standing, would introduce a variety of species, including substantial trees. This space would not only provide amenity space for future residents but could be accessed by, and would improve the setting of, the existing homes to the southeast and southwest, providing an attractive vista for homes which face the application site.

3.6 The landscaping proposed throughout the development in general (in particular the Oak which will be retained that would form a focal point at the end of the first residential street within the site) would create an attractive environment, as required by the NPPF.

3.7 The loss of the house and garden in exchange for a retail unit and car park would be a consequence of the development, however this stretch of Huntington Road is generally intensely developed and the proposed buildings maintain the building line of the houses to the northern side of the retail unit and the building to the immediate south of the vets and a considerable amount of planting is proposed to green the setting.

3.8 Whilst ideally the development would be set back further from the main road and the Poplars would all be retained, the loss of this landscaping needs to be balanced against the benefits development of the density proposed would deliver; i.e. much needed family housing and affordable housing. There would also be a significant enhancement of the open space at the south end of the site. Given these gains, and as there is a reasonable amount planting proposed throughout the development, the scheme is deemed to reasonably comply with the thrust of the NPPF which seeks to deliver housing which is attractive and in accordance with established need.

HIGHWAY NETWORK MANAGEMENT

Servicing

3.9 Plans have been provided that demonstrate the commercial and residential aspects of the site can be adequately serviced. Waste collection from the veterinary store would occur from the access road and highways officers do not object to this proposal. Other deliveries/collection vehicles will be of a size that will allow them to use the designated parking within the car park.

Road layout

3.10 The applicants have removed visitor parking and the build-out along the main access road to maintain a continuous 5.8m width access road. National guidance (manual for streets) advises 5.5m width is adequate for two-way traffic. The tree and visitor parking by the ambulance station has been omitted, replaced by a footpath, so there is a pedestrian route to the ambulance station and visibility for ambulance drivers leaving the 'hub' will not be impaired.

3.11 The parking to plot 18 on the opposite side of the road to the Ambulance Hub access has been retained. Advice from Highway Network Management officers is that this arrangement would not lead to undue harm to highway safety, and officers do not consider they could defend an appeal if permission were refused due to this arrangement. The frequency that vehicles from plot 18 and the hub would be accessing the highway simultaneously would be limited. In addition both parties would be aware of this arrangement and would act with due caution.

3.12 There are 2 visitor parking spaces within the revised layout. National policy and the local plan seek to reduce private car use, through delivering housing in locations where the need to travel by private car is minimised. The application site is within walking distance of facilities offering everyday goods and the nearest primary school on Haxby Road. Huntington Road is on a bus route to the city centre, and therefore there are alternatives to private car use. Parking standards in the local plan are the maximum and they require no more than 1 car parking space for 2-bed houses and no more than 2 per 3 or more bedroom sized house. 11 of the 13 houses that have more than 2 bedrooms have 2 parking spaces and overall the

level of car parking is deemed to be acceptable. To accommodate more spaces would be at the expense of landscaping which, given the density of the scheme, is considered to be imperative to delivering an environment which is visually acceptable and not dominated by hard-standing and cars.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 Some amendments to the landscaping scheme are required; however these can, and typically are, agreed through condition which advises on the specific species which are planted within the site. Otherwise officers maintain that the scheme is acceptable in terms of design and highway safety. Changes to the conditions originally proposed are set out in section 6.

4.2 The associated legal agreement will secure:

- The affordable housing
- Council management of the open space
- Open space contribution
- Relocation of the bus stop on Huntington road
- Required traffic regulation orders
- Travel pass/money towards a cycle for future occupants

5.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve Subject to S106 Agreement

5.1 Alterations to conditions originally suggested:-

2 approved plans – site plan 1286/06/01 revised – revision Q - and plans list to be updated accordingly

14 The hours of delivery to and dispatch from each commercial premises shall be confined to the following times, unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority:

Monday - Friday	07:00 - 18:00 (altered from 8am)
Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays	09:00 - 18:00

REASON: To protect the amenities of adjacent residents

8 Detailed landscaping scheme: to add informative covering suggested improvements -

- In the public open space there should be additional scrub planting in the form of single, specimen, native shrubs such as Hawthorn and Rosa should be included,

- the wildflower areas should be more extensive and there should be more trees.
- The hedge around the houses at the south end of the site should be a mixed native flowering hedge rather than just privet and laurel.
 - The entire beds between the parking bays, and within the forecourts, should be planted up rather than grassed.
 - A similar native hedge should be planted alongside the street rather than around the retail car park, with a small margin for bulbs at the front and to allow for the season's growth adjacent to the footpath.

Additional condition covering bat mitigation

No development shall take place until full details of what measures for bat mitigation and conservation are proposed and have been submitted to and approved by the Council.

The measures shall include:

- a) A plan of how demolition work is to be carried out to accommodate the possibility of bats being present.
- b) Details of what provision is to be made within the new buildings to replace the features lost through the demolition of the original structures. Features suitable for incorporation for bats include the use of special tiles, bricks, soffit boards, bat boxes and bat lofts and should at least replace or substitute for what exists.
- c) The timing of all operations.

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timing unless otherwise approved in writing by the Council.

Reason: To take account of and enhance habitat for a protected species in accordance with Local Plan policies NE1, NE6 and NE7.

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