

COMMITTEE UPDATE
Northampton UDA Planning Committee
1st July 2008

Agenda Item 4:

Applicant: Servite Houses: Fernbrook Builders Ltd: Darby Investments Ltd.

Application No: 07/0227/FULWNN

Address: Land and buildings at St George's Street, Northampton

Description: Residential development for 67 apartments (18x1 bed and 49x2 bed)

Additional Representations

County Councillor Dr Marie Dickie OBE:-

Objects as the County Councillor for the area as the proposal will give rise to additional pressure on parking and traffic movement in this street. Not convinced that leaving negotiation to be delegated to an official is helpful. The parking and traffic movement issues in the street could be assisted with the introduction of a moveable barrier at the end of the street to move in and out during the day time and restrict it at night and that a significant contribution be paid towards this. Remains unconvinced that that the town centre and immediately surrounding streets are getting an undue share of so called affordable housing – in the main made up of small flats. This does not address the actual need for family homes in the centre of Northampton.

Northampton County Council Sustainable Transport:-

Request that condition 13 be amended to include wording to secure the implementation of any approved scheme. It is therefore recommended that the following sentence be added to the condition.

Thereafter the approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Section 106 Heads of Terms – Additional Officer Comments

The report sets out the requests for financial contributions to be secured by S106. These are from the County Council as both Highway Authority and Education Authority and the Primary Care Trust and totals some £275,000. The Corporation would normally look to secure S106 contributions over an above this towards Strategic Infrastructure, Skills and Training Development, Community Development, Sustainability (the scheme is intended to be constructed to Code Level 3), Place Making/Public Art and Monitoring.

These other contributions would be in the region of £300k giving an overall total of around £575,000 equivalent to £8582 per unit which is below the figure of £12,000 currently envisaged for a town centre site of this size.

Therefore, a financial appraisal would need to be undertaken to assess what the viability of the scheme could afford to contribute or a pragmatic approach is taken to negotiate a lesser sum.

The Recommendation remains as set out on page 19 of the report with the amendment of the additional wording to condition 13 as set out above.

Agenda Item 5:

Application number: 08/0075/FULWNN

Applicant: St Andrew's Healthcare

Address: Cliftonville Middle School, Cliftonville Road, Northampton, NN1 5BW

Description: Erection of a part two, part three storey residential mental healthcare facility, offering medium secure accommodation for 132 residents with associated parking and servicing area, landscaping and other infrastructure works.

White Young Green Consulting

Responded to the Borough Council's objection on behalf of the applicants. The letter reiterates some points made as part of the application submission. This queries the formal status of the documents; 'Surplus School Sites Interim Policy', the 'Playing Pitch Strategy' and the 'Open Space Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit', as none of these documents were subject to public consultation.

The letter also highlights that the applicants carried out a consultation exercise before the application was submitted and received no objections, and that as part of the disposal of the site the County Council are required to use the net proceeds of the sale to fund specific projects to improve or enhance sports or educational facilities at schools. In addition they are offering monies as part of a unilateral undertaking to compensate for the loss of facilities that could be used to provide new facilities or upgrade existing ones.

Sport England

Object to application.

In accordance with PPG17 Sport England will object to the loss of any playing fields to development unless one of five exceptions is met. The exceptions are:

(i) a proven excess of provision, (ii) the use is ancillary to the playing field, (iii) the site is incapable of forming part of a pitch, (iv) equivalent or better replacement will be provided elsewhere, (v) an alternative sports use is proposed, outweighing loss.

The site is in an area that currently has a deficit of pitches and this will be increased by proposals for new development in the town. The only exception above that is relevant is for equivalent or alternative pitches to be provided elsewhere. However for Sport England to agree that this exception is met,

they need to be assured that a satisfactory replacement facility is available and can be delivered. This requires an assessment of the quantity and quality of pitches and also the relative accessibility for the local community. At present there is no such information and Sport England therefore has no alternative but to object. The objection could be withdrawn if details of an alternative site, where re-provision will definitely proceed, are provided to Sport England's satisfaction.

If the Corporation were minded to approve the application whilst Sport England maintained their statutory objection then the application must be referred to the Government Office.

Northamptonshire Sport

Northamptonshire Sport is the County Sports Partnership for Northamptonshire and works with partners such as Sport England and Northampton Borough Council to drive forward the business of the sport development in the county. Obviously, part of this concerns the provision of high quality places to play sport that are accessible and open for all sectors of the community to use.

Agree with Northampton Borough Council and Sport England that the area around Cliftonville in particular, should not lose out in terms of sporting amenity due to the development of the Cliftonville site. Would like to see all the interested parties discussing solutions on or off site.

Looking at Area 1 and its surrounds there are a number of existing facilities which could benefit from a capital injection to take forward plans for various ideas on improvements.

Correction

Para 9.25 should state that there is no objection from the County Highway Authority rather than no response yet received.

Amendment to Recommendation

That following further discussions with Sport England and Northamptonshire Sport, the application be APPROVED subject to prior referral to the Secretary of State and thereafter pending the response of the Secretary of State, the Director of Planning and Development or appointed officer be given delegated authority to issue the decision notice, subject to the applicants entering into a legal agreement for a contribution towards off site playing pitch provision and also to conditions set out in the report for the following reason.

Agenda Item 6:

Applicant: Prologis Developments Ltd

Application No: 08/0132/REMWNN

Address: Zone C, Pineham North.

Land off Banbury Lane, Pineham Barns Area, Northampton

Description: Reserved matters application including: layout, scale, appearance, access and landscaping pursuant to outline planning consent N/2002/1676 (as varied by 07/0082/VOCWNN) for mixed use employment uses dated 8 March 2006. Zone C – for an industrial unit with ancillary offices, gatehouse, vehicle maintenance unit, associated access, car/HGV parking, roads and landscaping.

Amended Plans

Amended plans have been received to show revised elevation treatment fronting Nectar Way following request from officers to add further visual interest to elevation. No further consultation necessary. Amended plans improve proposal.

The reference to Vehicle Maintenance Unit has been changed to Ancillary unit to allow for greater flexibility. The unit would still need to be ancillary to the main unit.

Amendments to Suggested Conditions

Conditions 14 and 17 are duplicates. Recommend that 17 is deleted and the reason for condition 14 is amended to refer to Policy E19 of the Northampton Local Plan.

Concern has also been raised as to the legality of the Highways Agency directing that a condition regarding the submission of a travel plan be imposed. The concerns relate to referring the details to the Highway Authority and to the Secretary of State, and whether the condition can be imposed on a reserved matters application.

Agenda Item 7 :

Applicant: Darby Investments Limited

Application No: 07/0421/FULWNN

Address: Brackmills Industrial Estate, Site A, Gowerton Road, Northampton

Description: Construction of business support centre comprising 84 bed Hotel (Use class C1), Retail units (Use classes A1, A2 and A3), Office units (Use class B1), Nursery (Use class D1) and Business units (Use classes B2 and B8)

Additional Representations

Northampton Borough Council Environmental Health:-

Have advised that in response to additional information submitted by the applicant to address the information required under condition 6 of the recommendation that there is no longer a need for this condition and this can be removed from the recommendation as the information submitted satisfactorily addresses this issue. The subsequent condition numbers in the report will need to be revised accordingly.

Northampton County Council Sustainable Transport

Have requested that the design of the road layout be amended slightly to meet adoptable standards which the roads need to be designed to. Reiterate the need for a contribution towards infrastructure improvements to upgrade the pedestrian and cycleway infrastructure and traffic calming in this vicinity. The Travel Plan Officer considers the Travel Plan fulfils the standard for such documents and is acceptable. Have recommended a condition be attached to any permission requiring the road layout be constructed to an adoptable standard.

Officer Response

It is understood further negotiations have taken place with NCC Sustainable Transport and the applicant's engineering consultants and progress has been made towards agreement of the design of the road layout but final agreement has not yet been reached.

An additional condition be attached to any permission granted as follows:

The design of the internal layout of the development shall be to the adoptable standard of Northamptonshire County Council unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason. In the interests of highway safety.

Highways Agency

Do not consider that the submitted Travel Plan meets the requirements of the HA and is currently negotiating with the applicant to amend it to their satisfaction. Consequently they have issued a direction of non approval for an indefinite period of time on the grounds of insufficient information being submitted.

Applicant's Consultant Engineers

Comments have been submitted in relation to the issue of land stability set out in the report in paragraphs 8.42 to 8.46. Their submission acknowledges that further detailed work is required but considers that this matter can be adequately addressed by a planning condition as opposed to being required before any permission is actually issued.

Officers Response

Land stability on what is a relatively steeply sloping site is a key issue as set out in the report. Officers remain of the opinion, noting the advice in PPG14, that further assessment should be undertaken prior to the issuing of any planning permission.

Additional Condition

Having regard to the sloping nature of the site and the need to control the height of the development generally the following additional condition is recommended by officers.

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved details of the finished floor levels of all the buildings hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to comply with Policy E20 of the Northampton Borough Council Local Plan.

The Recommendation remains as set out in the report on page 71 with the inclusion of the two additional planning conditions referred to above.

Agenda Item 8:

Applicant: Babcock and Brown

Application No: 08/0131/FULWNN

Address: Mereway Community College, Mereway, Northampton, Northants, NN4 8BU

Description: Substitution of ten small sided (5-a-side) all weather pitches for the full sized all weather pitch as permitted under application NO/05/0276 together with New Pavilion and associated works

No Update