

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Tuesday, 7 December 2021 at the Halton Stadium, Widnes

Present: Councillors S. Hill (Chair), Leck (Vice-Chair), Carlin, Hutchinson, A. Lowe, Philbin, Polhill, J. Stockton and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Abbott and J. Bradshaw

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, T. Gibbs, A. Plant, J. Eaton, G. Henry, P. Peak, L. Wilson-Lagan and A. Evans

Also in attendance: 22 Members of the public, Councillors Gilligan and Wall and one member of the press

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE

	<i>Action</i>
DEV24 MINUTES	
The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2021, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
DEV25 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE	
The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties, made the decisions described below.	
DEV26 21/00166/OUT - OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION, WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED, FOR LABORATORY AND OFFICE SPACE (USE CLASS E(G)(I) AND E(G)(II)) DEVELOPMENT WITH ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING AND LANDSCAPING AT DARESURY LABORATORY, KECKWICK LANE, DARESURY	
The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.	

Since the publication of the agenda an updated opinion was received from the Council's retained conservation advisor following the Applicant's submission of a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), this was presented in the published AB update list. It was noted that the opinion was consistent with the assessment findings of the Committee report. The comments with regards to reserved matters and heritage impacts in the update list were noted.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Winter, who spoke on behalf of the applicant. He commented *inter alia* that the proposal was an outline application on a site in an employment development area; that the landscape officer raised no objections; there would be no heritage impacts; the height of the building would be secured by conditions; and that highway improvements would be secured by a Section 106 Agreement. In conclusion, he stated that the proposal would be of significant benefit to the Borough, providing high quality jobs.

The Committee agreed that the application be approved.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following:

- a) a planning obligation and/or other appropriate agreement relating to securing matters as set out in the report;
- b) that if the Section 106 agreement or alternative arrangement was not executed within a reasonable period of time, authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Committee to refuse the application;
- c) delegated authority be given to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, to determine and agree the terms of all matters to be included in the planning obligation and/or other appropriate agreement and the conditions mentioned below; and
- d) conditions relating to the following:
 1. Outline planning permission conditions setting out time limits and reserved matters (Section 92 of the Act);

2. Condition specifying approved and amended plans (BE1);
3. Condition stipulating maximum build heights as shown on the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (Ref: 2572A dated: 23.9.21) (BE1);
4. Details requiring submission and agreement of Construction, Management and Environmental Development Plan (BE1);
5. Details regarding electric vehicle charging provision (CS19);
6. As part of a future reserved matters application, the Applicant will be required to submit details of a low carbon and renewable energy strategy (CS19);
7. Applicant to submit a scheme regarding operational lighting phase (BE1 and GE21);
8. Landscape scheme to include details of habitat and protected species mitigation (BE1 and GE21);
9. Condition ensuring no net biodiversity loss (NPPF);
10. Applicant required to undertake a site waste management plan (WM8);
11. Requirement of the applicant to undertake piling risk assessment for controlled waters and underground water resources (PR5);
12. Applicant required to submit details proposing a sustainable drainage system (NPPF);
13. Details requiring verification report demonstrating surface water drainage implemented in accordance with approved details (NPPF);
14. Condition requiring submission and agreement of site levels and finished floor levels (BE1); these shall not exceed the levels demonstrated in the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment; and
15. Applicant required to submit a scheme for the provision of cycle storage.

DEV27 21/00466/FUL - PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A SUPERCOMPUTING CENTRE PROVIDING 3,070SQM OF FLOOR SPACE (USE CLASS E1) WITH FORMATION OF NEW ACCESS, LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AT DARESBUY LABORATORY, KECKWICK LANE, DARESBUY

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Since the publication of the agenda, an ecology update had been provided as outlined in the published AB

update list. It was noted that the recommendation for an increased level of compensatory tree planting was agreed by the applicant and would be secured by a suitably worded landscape condition.

One Member wished to note the significance of this proposal for Halton in that it would be only the second one of its kind in the country and could impact on future Government investment in the area.

The Committee agreed that the application be approved.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the list of conditions below:

1. Condition setting our standard time limits (Section 92 of the Act);
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with approved plans (BE1);
3. Details regarding a construction and environmental management plan detailing the following:
 - Protection measures for the woodland areas to the east (Daresbury Firs LNR/LWS) and north-east, and any associated buffer habitats located at the eastern site boundary.
 - Protection measure for the Bridgewater Canal to the west, to include a minimum buffer along the watercourse of 5 metres.
 - Pollution control measures to prevent runoff and other potential pollutants entering the woodland area to the east or the canal to the west.
 - Avoidance measures for protected/priority species including badger and hedgehog.
 - Timing restrictions in respect of clearance of potential bird nesting habitat.
 - Invasive species control method statements (Himalayan balsam).
4. Requirement concerning a verification report demonstrating the approved surface water drainage scheme has been implemented (NPPF);
5. Details concerning external plant equipment noise protections (PR2);
6. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of bird boxes to include number, type and location on an appropriately scaled plan as well as timing of installation, has been provided for approval and implemented in accordance with those details (BE1 and GE21);
7. Details concerning the submission of a construction

- waste audit (WM8);
8. Details requiring the installation of a lighting scheme to prevent excessive light from affecting the canal corridor and Daresbury Firs (BE1 and GE21);
 9. Details for a scheme demonstrating the number and location of bat boxes (BE1 and GE21);
 10. Condition requiring the installation of any boundary treatment the Applicant shall submit details concerning measures to implement a hedgehog highway (BE1 and GE21);
 11. A Landscape and Ecology Maintenance Plan shall be submitted and agreed in writing. It shall address the following points:
 - Creation, establishment and management of wildflower areas;
 - Planting, establishment and management of hedgerows;
 - Tree management;
 - Pond Management;
 - Management of areas containing bluebell;
 - Locations of hedgehog highways in boundary fences;
 - Bat and bird box types and locations – this should be informed by the updated bat activity and breeding bird surveys completed in 2021; and
 12. Details requiring submission and agreement of site levels and finished floor levels (BE1).

DEV28 21/00471/FUL - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING 233 DWELLINGS, RECONFIGURATION OF GOLF COURSE, DEMOLITION OF EXISTING CLUB HOUSE AND ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF NEW CLUB HOUSE AND GREEN KEEPERS STORE, CREATION OF NEW VEHICULAR ACCESSES, ROADS, CAR PARKING, GREEN FOOTPATH LINK AND ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT AT WIDNES GOLF CLUB, HIGHFIELD ROAD, WIDNES, WA8 7DT

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

It was noted that this report was being presented to Committee as the applicant had appealed this second application to the Planning Inspectorate, rather than await a Council decision.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor Wall, who spoke on behalf of neighbouring residents to the Golf Course and her Highfield Ward colleagues Councillors

Nolan and Gilligan.

Councillor Wall made the following comments *inter alia*:

- The Planning Inspectorate had found the Local Plan to be sound where the Golf Course was designated as a green space;
- The second application is similar to the one refused – she presented an email from the applicant dated 10 November stating that a public inquiry would begin on 6 December for the first application and it was their intention that the second application would also be appealed, at the same time;
- This greenspace must be protected for the people of Widnes and for future generations;
- Greenspace were important for wellbeing, good physical health and mental health;
- There had been hundreds of objections against this application from the whole Town and Derek Twigg MP had offered his support in objection;
- She paid tribute to the residents of Widnes who had worked together to campaign against the proposals in these difficult times; and had fought off tactics by the developer to defeat hope amongst them;
- It was important to protect an integral part of the landscape which was the heart of the community and housed wildlife and trees that have TPO's on them;
- This development would increase traffic capacity at road junctions (she named the roads in question) and further increase demand for local school places;
- The application was contrary to Halton's planning policies; and
- The Applicant sought to profit from the development by investing in a neighbouring authority.

In conclusion Councillor Wall, also on behalf of Ward colleagues, urged the Committee to support the case for refusal and support the Council's position to defend refusal at appeal.

It was confirmed that the Applicant did have an opportunity to address the Committee today but had not responded to communication in this regard.

The Committee agreed the content of the report and supported the Council's case for refusal at appeal.

RESOLVED: That

1. the Committee agrees the content of the report;
2. the Committee supports the case for refusal; and
3. Officers make submissions on the appeal and defend the Council's position for refusal.

Meeting ended at 7.15 p.m.