



South Tyneside Council

Taylor Wimpey North East &
Barratt/David Wilson Homes North East,
FAO: Mr Neil Brooks
c/o North House,
Wessington Way
Sunderland
SR5 3RL.

Date: 14 August 2015
Our ref: ST/0461/15/RES
Your ref:

This matter is being dealt with by:
Helen Lynch on 0191 4247408
e-mail address:
planningapplications@southtyneside.gov.uk

Dear Mr. Brooks,

Screening Opinion of the Local Planning Authority

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (As Amended 2015)

- Proposal:** Application for the approval of reserved matters for the residential development of the site comprising 291 No. dwellings and associated works. Details of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping submitted for consideration (outline consent with all matters reserved except access under reference ST/0947/12/FUL)
- Description:** Land either side of
Monkton Lane / Lukes Lane
(Known locally as Monkton Fell)
Hebburn
NE31 2HB

I refer to the submitted reserved matters application (ref: ST/0461/15/RES) and hereby notify you of the Council's screening opinion as to whether the development requires an Environmental Impact Assessment to be carried under the above regulations and the submission of an Environmental Statement.

The consideration of whether a particular development requires an Environmental Impact Assessment depends upon whether it is classed as Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development, as defined by the regulations. I am satisfied that the development is not a development that falls within Schedule 1 and as such would not automatically require the submission of an Environmental Statement.

With respect to Schedule 2 development the Council, as Local Planning Authority, is duty bound to consider whether any part of the development falls within a 'sensitive area', as defined by the regulations, or whether any applicable threshold or criterion in the corresponding part of Column 2 of Schedule 2 is exceeded, or met, in relation to the development proposed.

The proposed development falls within Category 10b of Schedule 2 of the regulations and exceeds the 150 no. dwelling threshold and the 5 hectare threshold in column 2. The proposed development does not lie within a sensitive area, as defined by the regulations.

Therefore, the Council must adopt a screening opinion and consider whether there would be any significant effects on the environment, be they positive or negative and Schedule 3 of the regulations outlines the three criteria that must be taken into account in making this decision.

1. The characteristics of the development

A hybrid planning application (ref: ST/0947/12/FUL) was granted consent on 16 October 2013 for (1) detailed proposals to build 157 houses on arable land north of Monkton Lane with associated vehicle access from Monkton Lane, new landscaping, widening/resurfacing of existing bridleways, and a new footpath link to Bowes Railway Path, and (2) An outline proposal with all matters reserved except for access to build a further 308 houses with drainage pond on 12.2 ha of arable land south of Monkton Lane/east of Lukes Lane with new roundabout, vehicle access and road widening scheme to Monkton Lane. The Local Planning Authority adopted a screening Opinion (ref: ST/0091/12/EIA) for the overall development and concluded that whilst being a Schedule 2 development, the proposed development would not have any significant environmental impacts for it to require the carrying out of an Environmental Impact Assessment and the submission of an Environmental Statement.

The current reserved matters application is for the residential development of the site (phase 2) comprising 291 No. dwellings and associated works. Details of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping have been submitted for consideration.

The application site known locally as 'Monkton Fell' has parkland and residential areas to the north east and north west of the site, parkland and sports fields to the east, parkland and semi-improved grassland to the south, and Monkton Business Park to the west, which is the site of the former Monkton Coke Works. Development has commenced and is progressing for the approved detailed proposals for phase 1. A significant number of dwellings have been completed and are occupied.

Circular 02/99 points out that 'development proposed for sites which have not previously been intensively developed are more likely to require EIA if the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings)'.

Although the proposal is defined as a 'major development' due to the size of the site (12.2 hectares) and due to the number of dwellings the development is not considered to be significant when considered against the Council's LDF Core Strategy which aims to provide 5,500 new dwellings within the Borough before the year 2021.

In terms of location, whilst the site is undeveloped agricultural land at present, outline planning consent has been granted for the residential development of the site. Furthermore phase 1 of the development has commenced to the north of the site and overall the development lies within an urban area close to large housing estates, and it lies a short distance to the east of Monkton Business Park. The immediate area of the application site is well served by good road and public transport links.

It is considered that the proposal would not therefore have a significant environmental effect beyond the local area.

2. The location of the development

In support of the hybrid application the applicant provided the following documents: Air Quality Assessment, Arboricultural Constraints Report, Breeding Bird Survey, Cultural Heritage Assessment, Drainage Strategy, Extended Phase 1 and Protected Species Survey, Flood Risk Assessment, Geophysical Survey, Geoenvironmental Appraisal, Landscape and Visual Appraisal, Noise Impact Assessment, Noise Impact Assessment for proposed Metro Station, Transport Assessment, and a Vibration Impact Assessment. All of these supporting documents concluded that there would be no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed development.

The content of the above documents remains valid for the reserved matters application. However the following additional documents have been submitted in support of the reserved matters application: Archaeology trenching evaluation report, Additional Geotechnical and Contamination Testing and *Arboricultural Impact Assessment*.

The application site has been designated for residential development in the Council's Local Development Framework and by definition it is not within, or adjacent to, a 'sensitive location' i.e. such as a site of Special Scientific Interest, or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Between the Metro railway line and the application site immediately to the south of the site is a large pond (19.3 ha) which has been designated by the Council as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS). Beyond the Metro line to the south of the application site is an area of land that has been designated by the Council as a new employment site whilst also being recognised for its carbonaceous shale.

The large pond to the south of the application site has reduced value as a wildlife area due to it being man made, accessible by visiting members of the public, and due to its hydrology being managed as part of a surface water run-off drainage system from the nearby Monkton Business Park.

Whilst bats and birds forage within the application site, the applicants' supporting documents conclude that there would be no significant effects of the proposal on any protected species or protected habitat, and indeed the supporting documents conclude that mitigation measures such as the planting of new trees and hedges and the creation and management of the proposed domestic gardens as part of the development may increase foraging and breeding opportunities for the local wildlife.

The applicant considers that the suggested mitigation measures would in the medium to long terms result in a net increase of ecological provision within the development area and surrounding habitat.

The proposed development will require the removal of three trees and two hedges. Of these removals none of the trees or hedges have been assessed within the accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment as being of high retention value. The development includes for landscaping across the site, including the planting of trees and replacement hedges. The landscaping proposals and hedge/tree removal are matters that will be dealt with through the assessment of the current reserved matters application.

In terms of the potential for any ground contamination, whilst the application site lies to the east of the former Monkton Coke Works (now developed in part as Monkton Business Park) the applicants' Geoenvironmental Appraisal survey and additional testing report concluded that ground conditions were

found to comprise cultivated topsoil overlying firm and stiff glacial clays (Pelaw Clay and Glacial Till) and that there is no significant sources of ground contamination. As such there is no significant risk to the end users of the site. However the survey submitted with the hybrid application did indicate a low risk of ground gas arising from a historic refuse tip located to the north of the application site and further survey work was sought. Conditions to the grant of permission required the submission of an investigation and risk assessment to assess the full nature and extent of any contaminants on site, a detailed remediation strategy for proposed remedial works associated with any contamination found on site and a verification report demonstrating the effectiveness of the remediation carried out.

In terms of archaeology, there are no known archaeological remains recorded within the site, apart from a World War Two aircraft obstruction pit and some post medieval ridge and furrow earthworks. However the application site has remained undeveloped and as such there is a possibility that archaeological remains could survive on site. As such planning conditions requiring a programme of archaeological fieldwork (including evaluation and where appropriate mitigation excavation) were attached to the granted of permission to the hybrid application.

Transport, Noise, Vibration, Flooding, Air Quality and Drainage issues are all matters that have been careful consideration by the applicant in terms of both the impact of the development on the local area and in terms of the impact of the existing area upon the amenities of the future occupiers of the development. No significant issues have been raised, and mitigation measures such as new storm water drainage, SUD's and the management of site construction traffic etc are matters that have been dealt with through the hybrid application and where appropriate will be dealt with at the current reserved matters application stage.

As such it is considered that the proposal would have no significant environmental effect on any sensitive location, existing land use, natural resource, or natural environment.

3. Characteristics of the potential impact

The application site is open arable land enclosed behind established hedgerows. Phase 1 of the development has commenced to the north of the site. Whilst the site would lose its existing rural character the proposal is to build phase 2 of a suburban residential development that would integrate the existing hedgerows and provide green spaces which with additional native planting would enhance the biodiversity of the site and soften its visual impact within the local area. As such it is considered that the detailed proposals for phase 2 of the development would not have any significant impact upon the area or the existing population.

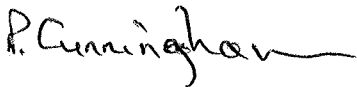
Conclusion

It is the Council's opinion that the proposed development, whilst being a Schedule 2 development under the above regulations, would not, on the basis of all the information provided, have any significant environmental impacts for it to require the carrying out of an Environmental Impact Assessment and the submission of an Environmental Statement.

You should be aware that the comments made regarding the likely environmental impacts of the proposed development relate only to the Council's need to issue a screening opinion under the above regulations. They do not represent the Council's views as to the planning merits of any planning application, or its conformity with development plan policies within the Local Development Framework.

A copy of this Screening Opinion has been placed on the planning register.

Yours sincerely



Peter Cunningham
Principal Planning Officer

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