

KIRKLEES METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

PLANNING SERVICES

REPORT TO PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE (HUDDERSFIELD AREA) ON THURSDAY 11TH MAY 2006 – STATUS: PUBLIC

AREA COMMITTEES/WARDS AFFECTED: Greenhead.

TITLE: PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 2005/62/95145/W2: ERECTION OF 315 NO. DWELLINGS AND APARTMENTS AT WIER VALVES, BRITANNIA WORKS, WHEATHOUSE ROAD, BIRKBY, HUDDERSFIELD. REQUEST TO RECONSIDER IMPOSING A CONDITION REQUIRING THE USE OF NATURAL STONE THROUGHOUT THE SITE.

WHY IS IT COMING HERE? / WHAT DECISION IS REQUIRED?

To either confirm or amend the condition.

IS THIS AN URGENT ACTION APPROVED BY THE CHAIR OF SCRUTINY?

No.

WHAT ARE THE KEY POINTS?

1.1 An application for a total of 315 no. dwellings and apartments was received in January of this year, on the site of the former Hopkinson's factory in Birkby. The scheme involves the demolition of the vast majority of the buildings (mainly industrial sheds) within the 6.7 ha site which would be redeveloped with housing. The site is within the Birkby Conservation Area.

1.2 The application was considered at the Planning Sub-Committee (Huddersfield Area) on 13th April 2006, following a site visit.

1.3 The Sub-Committee accepted the Officers' recommendation to approve the proposal, but added 2 extra conditions i.e.

- The formation of a level crossing on Wheathouse Road, linking the site to a proposed play area; and
- The use of natural stone throughout the entire site

(NB: the proposal included for the use of natural stone on all the frontages on the exterior of the site, and a good quality artificial stone within the site

currently occupied by the industrial sheds. There was also a condition recommended requiring the use of natural stone along the Macaulay Road frontage of the site)

1.4 The applicants, who were present at the Sub-Committee meeting, have written requesting that the condition to use natural stone be reconsidered.

In support of this request they have submitted a letter, details of costs, samples of artificial stone, etc.

In summary the request indicates that the use of natural stone throughout the site is cost prohibitive, and given the costs of developing on such a site (i.e. decontamination, remediation costs, etc), the extra cost will jeopardise the development. The letter and details submitted are appended to this report for information.

1.5 In addition they contend that the use of a good quality artificial stone within the site would not detract from the visual character of the scheme, and that the proposed mix of natural stone on the perimeter and artificial stone within the site, does contribute to a scheme which fulfils the requirements to positively contribute to and enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area.

2.0 Planning Policy and relevant issues

2.1 PPG15 "Planning and the Historic Environment" and Policy BE5 of the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan both indicate that new development within Conservation Areas should respect the architectural character of the surrounding buildings, and their construction of materials, and contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the area.

Policy BE11 indicates that new development within Conservation Areas should be constructed of natural stone a texture and colour to match that prevailing in the area.

2.2 The development on the perimeter of the site is to be constructed of natural stone to respect that which it is viewed in relation to.

The site is an extremely large area i.e. 6.7 ha, the vast majority of which is not visible from outside the site (with the exception of some long distant views from Macaulay Road)

The majority of the buildings within the site are industrial sheds constructed of either blocked render or red brick. There are substantial red brick frontages on the existing perimeter of this site particularly on Blacker Road, Macaulay Road and Birkby Lodge Road.

2.3 The buildings to be demolished, within and on the perimeter of the site, were considered to be of little merit for retention in Conservation Area terms.

2.4 The use of a mixture of natural and artificial materials, would contribute to a considerable enhancement of the site, respecting the surrounding buildings, whilst creating a new residential environment within the site.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the use of artificial stone within the site be agreed, and the use of natural stone on the perimeter confirmed.

CONSULTEES:

The three Ward Councillors have been consulted and provided with copies of the applicants' detailed submission.

To date, one response has been received from Councillor Mehboob Khan, who has indicated that whilst wanting the provision of the level crossing on Wheathouse Road, does not object to the use of artificial stone within the site, subject to it being a good quality.

CONTACT OFFICER AND RELEVANT PAPERS

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Letter from Mr. Cropper, CALA Homes dated 24th April 2006

2 Invoices

Stone summary statement

Photographs/Digital images.