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graham@wharfesideplanning.co.uk
graham.connellhome@btopenworld.com

F.A.O ELAINE WARD
SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER (INNER TEAM)
PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL
BARNSELY COUNCIL
P.O.BOX 634
BARNSELY
S70 2DR

LETTER SENT BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Elaine

2021/0479 DEARNE VALLEY PARKWAY: RESPONSES TO CONSULTEE COMMENTS

I believe that it is right for me to conclude that the following are the key still unresolved issues. They do of course overlap but in my response below I have done my best to make clear where this occurs.

- 1.Highways development control. The strategic and general access/generation matters have been resolved but your colleagues have raised on site matters. These have implications for scheme layout.
2. Building design and scheme layout.
- 3.Ecological and landscaping matters, also with direct implications for scheme layout.

I will deal with these in turn below and hopefully the format will allow you to cut and forward to colleagues as appropriate.

I also attach today revised landscape plans with visuals later in the day (due to size): other documents reflecting the comments below, including the Ecology documents, were attached to emails sent on 13th April.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION.

I must confirm at the outset that the applicant does not intend that any of the internal roads, accesses or parking areas will be offered up for adoption. Clearly some officer concerns were expressed on the possible understanding that adoption would be sought.

- The main footpath entering the site along the main access is now located on the northern side of the carriageway at 3 metres which will allow cyclists to enter the highway on the northern side of the carriageway rather than needing to cross it.

- Visibility splay of 2.4m x 38.28m shown on the access to Unit 1. It should be noted that the road is higher than the car park which ameliorates the manoeuvring situation in practice. Drivers entering the car park for unit 1 are likely to be travelling at low speed looking for available spaces to park, drivers leaving parking spaces will also be driving slowly making suitable observations to ensure that their manoeuvre does not result in a collision. This parking arrangement is not uncommon.
- The revised plans show how HGV turns will operate.
- We see no reason given overall site layout and size and number of units why there would be any impact on the public highway.
- Junction spacing is not suggested as a concern given the roads are not to be adopted. For information the distances, measured along centre line, are:
Unit 1 to 2 – 39.7m
Unit 1 to 3 – 21.0m
Unit 3 to 2 - 18.7m
- The kerb line to Unit 3 access road has been modified to allow two HGV's to pass.
- A two metres wide footpath has been added to the side of unit 1 car park to assist pedestrian access to it.
- A parking bay (6m x 3.6m) has been added to the substation to meet operator requirements.
- Motorcycle parking has been added to all units.
- The Unit 1 carpark and retaining wall have been adjusted to accommodate the proposed hedge to site boundary to assist in screening the car park and service areas from the existing roundabout. (see section shown on Harris plan ref: 118)
- There is scope for an upgraded cycle / pedestrian route along the southern boundary of the site and along the drainage easement running alongside the northern boundary of the site to accommodate to meet officer comments (it is envisaged that this would be provided as compacted crushed stone).
- The concern regarding turning heads is misplaced as each unit has its own service yard. Moreover, the access to Unit 3 is designed to act, if required, as the turning head for the site and this has 27 metres from the centre line to the end of the road.
- Comment has also been made regarding HGV's passing along the access road but in this case the access road is not up for adoption. The now proposed carriageway width of 7.55m is sufficient to allow two HGV's to pass safely. Indeed normally an industrial Estate Road would be 7.3 metres wide.

- The Barnsley Parking SPD includes recommended parking numbers per sqm for both B2 and B8 land uses. The recommended parking provision based on the Parking SPD at the proposed development could range between a higher value for B2 use (across the development) of 263 parking spaces or a lower level of 94 spaces (across the development) for B8 use. Given the likely mix of occupiers at the site, the proposed allocation of 166 spaces (1 space per 81m²) is considered appropriate. Motorcycle parking is now shown.
- The attached Transport Assessment and Travel Plan have been updated to include provision of additional cycle spaces and electric charging infrastructure.
- The proposed footpaths shown provide adequate links with the existing and proposed rights of way. Apart from access to the Units themselves there is no apparent need for new rights of way into or across the site.

BUILDING DESIGN AND LAYOUT

The preceding comments include elements which relate to layout and are shown on the amended site plans 111M / 112J/114E/115E and 116A.

Also attached (previously, now or later today) are drawings:

117 showing the cross section through the Dearne Valley Parkway picking up unit 1 and the existing public house (elevation taken from planning approved drawing on the portal. (This drawing was requested by Nick King)

118 showing the section through Unit 1 car park and the existing roundabout for information / classification.

A photomontage along the Dearne Valley Parkway. This shows the proposed hedge at a growth of some 15 years which we consider to be appropriate in the particular circumstances of an application for strategic employment development. Clearly tree planting would provide a fuller screen but this is not possible as the required land is subject to a drainage easement relating to drainage system as approved by the local planning authority.

An updated landscape plan also accompanies this letter.

The general context for the developer and landowner is significant. The aim is to bring forward a development of the type and form which the market and investors are looking for and consequently a planning balance is required and the extent to which there are perceived conflicts must finally be assessed. The use allocated for the site, the overall imperatives of economic development and specific user requirements all need to be taken into account in accordance with the Framework providing there are no significant harms caused to particular interests. This response overall aims to demonstrate the compromises being made by the applicant Company.

Relationship to the northwest edge- the Dearne Valley Parkway

Screening the development with trees along the northern boundary is simply not feasible. The drainage solution for the development to the west approved by the Council runs along the side of the Parkway and the required easement precludes planting and changes to levels. The easement allows for the hedge planting which will screen the lower elements of the proposed development.

The proposed development is set further back from the Parkway than the existing development to the north.

The Shortwood scheme is set approx. 6m lower than the Dearne Valley Parkway – screening is generated by the level change with only a very narrow bank of trees which are located on Highways land. (please see visual attached)

With the Shortwood development also siting lower than the Dearne Valley Parkway then its mass is naturally reduced and is not a comparable situation to the proposed development.

Relationship with the southwest edge (facing the roundabout and the long vista view from Sheffield Road).

The car park for Unit 1 is approximately 1m to 1.5m lower than the existing roundabout and consequently any retaining structure will be facing into the site and therefore not visible from the highway.

The Highways boundary fence is now to be retained along the entire length of the site and is shown as such with the layout amended showing retained highways boundary fence and retaining wall adjusted to a native hedge which will be planted to form a where necessary. Once again, please see the section on Drawing ref. 118.

Height of buildings

The accompanying CGI shows the height of the buildings in their immediate context and with the proposed hedge, all that can be accommodated with the constraint of the drainage easement, shown at close to their maximum height. The new (for Unit 1) and revised sections show the position. As previously stated, we are unable to plant trees along this boundary because of the drainage easement.

Retaining structures.

Unit 1 retaining wall is only 500 mm height and so could be faced with brickwork to match dark cladding if preferred. Unit 2, which has a max. height of 3.5 metres could also be brick or the cladding could be run to the ground and so match the rest of the unit.

The concrete finish for the Unit 1 car park faces into that car park and is not visible from external viewpoints and is considered acceptable on that basis within this character of development, with a similar position for the Unit 3 service yard.

We do expect that, in keeping with common practice, any planning permission will include conditions requiring construction and engineering details for retaining structures to be submitted and approved.

Colours on elevations and roofs.

We do not believe that these colours should be a determining consideration for this planning application but I set out below our reasoning for the suggested approach.

The accompanying Visual 2 shows the extent of what is currently seen and shows that the silver band to the roof helps to blend the development into the clouds and so reduce the perceived height and bulk of the development.

The proposed colours reflect those of the Units to the north to which the proposed development is considered to relate more closely in visual terms. The 'green' colours of Gateway 36 phase 2 are distanced from the application site while the additional distance to the west makes the Phase 2 development generally more visible in the landscape. This distinction between the two elements is favoured by applicants / investors as a point of differentiation between the two developments.

The roof colour has been chosen to complement the upper band of the building and to match the existing Gateway 36 Phase 1 development.

Active travel route through site

This matter has been addressed in the section above on "Access and Circulation".

We do now show relevant routes running to both the south (as existing) and north (to link with new proposals) which are proposed as 3 metre wide compacted crush stone to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians in a similar approach to that in neighbouring projects.

ECOLOGY AND LANDSCAPING

The updated landscaping plan accompanies this letter.

In order to address Ecological matters the following from Brooks Ecological are attached:

1. An Addendum to their Ecological Impact Assessment addressing points raised by Trevor Matne (your Biodiversity in-house advisor, now departed the Authority I believe) and Wildscapes, your consultants.
2. A Construction Environment Management Plan focussing on ecological matters.
3. A Biodiversity Management Plan.

If the Nesting Birds Surveys which are being undertaken as agreed in three tranches concluding in June highlight additional issues then the CEMP will be up-dated and re-issued.

The applicant has acknowledged that the scheme cannot provide the 10% NBG on site and as you know we are exploring means of achieving off-site provision that will be acceptable to Barnsley Council. We feel the ideal solution will be by acquiring credits from Environment Bank or another provider. We have also amended the scheme to include the 15metre landscape/wildlife corridor along the length of the southern boundary to mitigate the loss of trees in the southeast corner of the site. You will be aware that before his departure, Trevor Mayne confirmed in email correspondence that the quality of the existing woodland is insufficiently good to justify his objecting to its partial removal.

By way of more general background, you may recall that when the applicants first agreed to purchase the site from the MBC that a link road was proposed along the southern boundary to serve development to the east. This would have involved the removal of most of the trees and we do not recall this having been raised as an objection at that time. I am advised that if we were to reduce the built area to enable us to retain a greater proportion of this low-quality tree planting then the scheme would become economically unviable, noting the basis of acquisition previously explained.

I hope these revisions and additional comments will address concerns but we remain open to discussion to progress any matters. If you have any queries in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely
On behalf of Wharfeside Planning



Graham Connell
Director

3 Great Pasture, Burley in Wharfedale, Ilkley, West Yorkshire, LS29 7DD
07825 033796