

# Planning Officer's Report; S&DR Friends Meeting 4 July 2024

Any further updates or new applications will be reported at the meeting. Otherwise, this report will be taken as read unless members have comments or questions to raise. Decisions and new items are highlighted in **red**.

## 1 DURHAM COUNTY

### **k DM/22/01891/FPA Craggwood Holiday Park proposed extension**

No change. The expected details of how the embankment of the Haggerleases Branch is protected have not yet been submitted.

### **l DM/23/00486/FPA Proposed Bluestone Solar Panel Farm, High Lands, Cockfield**

No change; we still await consultation on the interpretation panel(s).

### **n DM/22/03739/FPA New wall etc at Northern Metal Recycling. Hackworth Industrial Park, Shildon**

No change. We await being consulted by Mr Bell on the design of the mural.

### **Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

We have been notified of consultation on a Supplementary Planning Document on Non Designated Heritage Assets.

The purpose of this is to define the selection criteria against which the County's non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs) are to be identified and assessed. These assets are to be identified by plan making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets (such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and conservation areas).

The report confirms that NDHAs already included in one of the following categories will be automatically given weight in making planning decisions;

- The Historic Environment Register
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals
- The County Durham Local List
- Neighbourhood Plans

Numerous S&DR NDHAs exist and most of these fall into one of the above categories.

The consultation document recommends that any asset falling outside these categories should be submitted for inclusion in the Local List and guidance is given on how to do this.

**I recommend that the Friends;**

- a) support the draft Supplementary Planning Document, and**
- b) identify those S&DR assets which do not fall into any of the defined categories and submit them for inclusion in the Local List.**

The whole consultation document can be viewed via

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/31271/Non-Designated-Heritage-Asset-Supplementary-Planning-Document-consultation>

The deadline for comments is July 14<sup>th</sup>.

## **Conservation Area**

Some consultation took place in 22/23 on draft boundaries and we have asked to see the Character Appraisal. Following our requests for an update, we received this response; *'..it is still the intention to designate the Conservation area, however, capacity has meant that we have had to prioritise funded and time dependant projects such as the Walking and Cycling route. This work will be picked up in due course.'*

## **2 DARLINGTON BOROUGH**

### **i North Road Rail Heritage Quarter – Hopetown**

#### **23/00186/CON Details for the Head of Steam Station Building**

#### **24/00133/CON Details relating to alterations to the Hopetown Carriage works building**

As reported at last month's meeting, revised drawings were submitted and the conditions on both applications were discharged on 5 June. Hopetown opens on 16 July.

#### **24/00593/CON Details for landscaping etc at Hopetown Visitor Attraction**

Plans showing details for the landscaping of the various elements of Hopetown have been submitted. Of particular interest to the Friends is the plan showing proposed tree planting at the Skerne Bridge car park.

The key to this plan says 'Extra heavy standard trees to be planted in car park adjacent to Skerne Bridge' as well as low level shrub planting. The trees are equally spaced out between the rows of parking bays without regard to any impact they may have on the setting of the bridge and its approach embankments when seen from Dobbin's View. The species and heights at maturity are not given.

There are several national and local planning policies protecting the setting of this asset, as well as the recommendations of the Rail Heritage Quarter Conservation Management Plan. Trees are essential to soften the visual impact of the car park and to respect the bridge setting, but some of the proposed trees should be omitted (or replaced by smaller growing species) and an image produced showing how the bridge will be seen from Dobbin's View when the trees have achieved maturity.

There seems little point in spending public money to buy the vacant site on High Northgate to create 'Dobbin's Park' if you won't be able to see the bridge for the trees.

Interestingly, the car park has already been laid as an unrelieved expanse of tarmac with rows of parking bays marked in white paint, all ready for use. Tarmac will have to be ripped up and the car park relined to create the strips for shrub and tree planting.

#### **m 21/01353/FUL Site of Former Corus Works (East Site) Whessoe Road**

No change. Further to previous reports, the applicant is preparing revised proposals to take into account comments received. We raised concerns about the appearance of the development from the railway and the need to include a link to the Walking and Cycling Route.

**o 22/00213/FUL Installation of a solar farm on land north of Burtree Lane**

No change. Some details have been submitted for approval, but these do not relate to matters of concern to us, eg landscaping, information displays and the walking and cycling route.

**y 24/00083/DC Walking and Cycling Route; Upgrade between Mill Lane to St George's Way, Middleton St George.**

Following discussion at last month's meeting, I submitted the following;

*At last night's meeting, the Friends of the S&DR noted with interested recent objections regarding the damaging effect of the width of the new path on the ecological value and tree presence of the Whinnies Nature Reserve. The Friends agreed to have no objection to a reduction in the width of the path to reduce the harm, provide that it will still be possible for wheelchairs to pass each other.*

The period to decide this application has been extended to allow revised plans to be submitted.

**Conservation Areas**

Further to previous reports, the Council has delayed requesting Cabinet for approval for public consultation on the proposed Northgate CA extension until September, thus avoiding the summer holidays. Cabinet will consider the proposed Middleton St George CA in November, with consultation taking place before the Christmas holiday.

**3 STOCKTON BOROUGH**

**m 23/1768/DCH discharge condition no5 (Soft Landscaping) of planning approval 21/2240/FUL - Erection of industrial/business units at Urlay Nook Road Eaglescliffe.**

No change. There has been no progress with this application since November 2023

**n 23/2223/FUL Erection of 87no. dwellings on land East Of Mandale Park Urlay Nook Road Eaglescliffe**

We have asked for the formerly proposed tree planting on the Urlay Nook Road frontage to be reinstated.

**p 24/0249/COU Application for the conversion into 2no dwellings at 519 Yarm Road Eaglescliffe**

No change. Tees Archaeology have been consulted (at our request) and they agree that a condition requiring archaeology work be attached to a permission.

**4 MIDDLESBROUGH**

**Draft Local Plan**

No change. The Council has acknowledge receipt of our comments but have not yet responded to our request for a meeting to discuss policy to protect the 1830 S&DR extension.

Ross Chisholm, Planning Officer, 01/07/2024