
2017/0782

Applicant: Mr Richard Wilkinson, C/o AJA Architects LLP

Description: Formation of car park

Site Address: Land off Park Spring Road (opposite ASOS), Little Houghton, Barnsley, S72 7GX

The application is referred to Planning Regulatory Board because it is subject to a S106 Agreement for Ecological Mitigation.

Description

The site is located to the west of a roundabout forming part of the A6195 Park Spring Road immediately opposite the distribution centre occupied by ASOS. The nearest residential areas are Edderthorpe, Little Houghton, Great Houghton and Middlecliff.

The site comprises 1.33ha of land in total. The site forms part of a wider area that was previously used for mining between the 1890s and 1991 and was then the subject of open cast colliery workings between 1997 and 2001 by UK Coal. In addition a disused railway line passes along the north west boundary of the site. The land has since been restored and is now covered by grass with scattered shrubs and trees.

The River Dearne runs in a north-south direction to the west of the site. A banking/bund is located on the north western boundaries that form curved flood defence bunds which follow the alignment of the disused rail line.

Apart from ASOS and the A6195 to the east of the site, the land to the north, west and south is relatively open and remote from any residential properties. There are a few scattered farms and properties nearby, the closest being Crook Farm located approximately 0.8km to the west, Store Mill Farm located 1.5km to the north west, Tyers Hall Farm located 1.8km to the south west and a housing development located on Doncaster Road 1.8km south west of the proposed development. Levels across the site are relatively flat except for the bunding at the north-west boundary.

Proposed Development

It is proposed to create a secure car park on the site, providing 370 additional car parking spaces. Access and egress is via an existing spur off the roundabout to the south of the site. The car park is laid out in a linear fashion with the majority of spaces running north to south through the site. Spaces are 2.4m by 4.8m with 6m wide circulation lanes. Pedestrian access is via a gate onto Park Spring Road and along the existing footway adjacent the vehicular access to the south.

The car park is to be secured by a 2.4m palisade fence with security gates at the pedestrian and vehicular access points. Existing planting around the site perimeter in the form of a hedgerow, shrubs and small trees is retained and reinforced. Lighting is provided across the site and at the entrance via a series of lamps mounted on posts at 6m. Plans showing the luminance spread of lighting have been provided with luminance dropping predominantly to between 2 and 5 at the site boundary which is similar luminance levels at the boundary of the main ASOS site opposite.

A substation is proposed at the south east corner.

BMBC Planning History

B/79/3937/HR – Storage on land to the north of colliery and to deposit colliery waste in disused railway cutting. Decision: Grant planning permission with conditions 15/02/1980.

B/96/0208/HR – Extraction of coal by open cast. Redevelopment of site and restore to agricultural, woodland etc. Decision: Grant planning permission with conditions 29/11/1996.

B/96/0728/HR - Application for outline planning permission for use of land for industrial/employment uses B1, B2 and B8. Decision: Grant planning permission with conditions 18/12/1996.

B/99/1064/HR – Application for renewal of outline planning permission B/96/0728/HR for use of land for industrial/employment uses B1, B2 and B8. Decision: Outline planning permission granted with conditions 07/02/1999.

B/03/0726/HR – Application for the modification of condition 1 of outline planning permission B/99/1064/HR. Decision: Approved 09/09/2003.

B/05/1114/HR – Mine gas extraction borehole, ancillary apparatus, mine gas extraction and electrical power station. Granted planning permission with conditions 19/08/2005.

2008/1426 – Erection of 19 industrial units with associated external works and landscaping. Decision: Planning permission granted with conditions 08/12/2008.

2011/1443 - Erection of 19 industrial units with associated external works and landscaping (extension of time limit of planning permission 2008/1426. Decision: Planning permission granted with conditions 22/02/2012.

2014/0559 - Erection of a Renewable Energy Park comprising of a Timber Resource Recovery Centre and Anaerobic Digestion facility. Decision: Refused permission 26/11/2014.

2015/0137 - Erection of a Renewable Energy Park comprising of a Timber Resource Recovery Centre and associated infrastructure. Decision: Approved 29/06/2014

Planning Policy

Planning decision should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The development plan consists of the Core Strategy and the saved Unitary Development Plan policies. The Council has also adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

The Council has submitted our emerging Local Plan to the Secretary of State but we are at an early stage in the examination process. It establishes policies and proposals for the development and use of land up to the year 2033. The document is a material consideration and represents a further stage forward in the progression towards adoption of the Local Plan. As such increasing weight can be given to the policies contained within the document although, in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, the extent of this will depend on:

- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given) and;

- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

Saved UDP Policies

UDP notation: DA4 - Area of Investigation for Potential Employment Development

Barnsley Core Strategy

CSP3 'Sustainable Drainage Systems'
 CSP4 'Flood Risk'
 CSP19, 'Protecting Employment Land'
 CSP24, 'Safeguarding of Former Railway Lines'
 CSP26 'New Development and Highway Improvement'
 CSP28, 'Reducing the Impact of Road Travel'
 CSP29 'Design'
 CSP33 'Green Infrastructure'
 CSP36 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity'
 CSP37, 'Landscape Character'
 CSP39 'Contaminated and Unstable Land'
 CSP40 'Pollution Control and Protection'
 CSP42 'Infrastructure and Planning Obligations'

SPD's

- Parking

Local Plan

Proposed Employment Allocation: Employment Proposal/Urban Fabric/Safeguarded Former Railway Lines

National

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraphs of particular relevance to this application include:

18-22 – Building a strong competitive economy, significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

39-41 - If setting local parking standards....local authorities should take into account: the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of development, the availability of and opportunities for public transport and local car ownership levels and an overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles.

58 & 60 – Design considerations.

Consultations

PROW – Have suggested that warning signs should be provided for users of the bridleway near to the entrance of the car park, to ensure highway safety at the entrance to the car park.

RSPB – Have raised concerns that the proposal will block a possible future access to the Edderthope Flash site to the north which is an opportunity to improve the long term accessibility and maintenance of this site.

Pollution, Air Quality – A request was made that the proposed car park incorporates an EVCP and secure cycle storage. However, there are 50 secure cycle spaces in the main ASOS car park and the applicant has confirmed that they are looking at EVCP installation on the site already, which can be conditioned and monitored through the Travel Plan process.

Parish Council – No comments received

Pollution, Noise and Light – No objections

Land Contamination – No comments

Drainage – No objections subject to conditions

Yorkshire Water – Have raised no objections

Highways – No objections in principle subject to conditions.

South Yorkshire Police – Have commented that crime figures in the area are of little concern and recommended that the applicant looks to enter the Safer Car Parking Scheme.

SYMAS – No objections subject to conditions

Ecology – No objections subject to conditions for mitigation on site as well as a commuted sum towards off site biodiversity improvements.

Tree Officer – No objection subject to landscaping conditions

Ward Councillors – No comments received

Representations

The application was advertised through a press advert, neighbour letters and site notices. One representation has been received objecting to the loss of greenspace and impact on air quality associated with additional traffic.

Assessment

Principle of Development

The site is allocated as employment land in the UDP and the emerging Local Plan. Policy DA4 in the UDP identifies the former Houghton Main Colliery, of which this site is part, as an area for potential employment development whilst Core Strategy Policy CSP 19 protects existing employment land, retaining it in order to safeguard existing or potential jobs.

Emerging Local Plan policies LG2, E1 and E2 set the strategic direction for employment land across the borough to 2033. Employment land is focused in Urban Barnsley and the Principle Towns with only 12.9ha allocated outside of these areas which includes the proposed site as part of a larger allocation (N2). Policy E5 provides guidance as to appropriate uses on employment land with ancillary uses (such as car parking) allowed where appropriate in scale.

The proposal is for car parking, required to support an existing employer who employs circa 4,000 staff working shifts with additional staff employed to meet seasonal peaks. The site currently has parking for 553 cars which equates to 1 space per 2 staff members (based on an average of 1,100 per shift as stated in the Transport Statement). This is in excess of the 1 per 3 staff recommended for storage and distribution in the Parking SPD. At seasonal peak periods staff numbers increase by circa 400 per shift. This brings the total parking on site (currently available) broadly in line with the SPD at 1 space per 2.7 members of staff. The increase in parking by 370 spaces will, therefore, take the parking available on site well above the guidelines in the parking SPD.

Nevertheless, whilst ASOS is a storage and distribution business (B8) it operates in a different way to traditional warehouses, with higher volumes of staff employed to pick and package individual items for delivery to multiple destinations. The current car park is accessed from Park Spring Road (A6195) via the main site access alongside service vehicles. This creates a conflict, particularly during shift changes where high numbers of staff are leaving the site at the same time as others are trying to gain access, alongside delivery vehicles. This conflict has led to an ongoing problem of staff parking on grass verges and lay-bys around and near to the site, which is a significant risk to highway safety. The proposed car park seeks to address this through providing additional parking on land opposite the ASOS site. The additional parking capacity, separate to the existing access, allows for appropriate car parking management strategies to reduce conflict between staff leaving and arriving as well as providing additional capacity to cover seasonal variations in staff. A car park management strategy is conditioned and parking restrictions will also be applied to address highway safety concerns associated with parking on the highway.

In terms of sustainable travel, a variety of options are available to ASOS staff including: walking and cycling (via a network of footpaths and bridleways linking ASOS to surrounding villages), bus (with stops located on both sides of the A6195 near to the site) and car share. Rail travel is possible via Thurnscoe train station, albeit this is a 15 minute cycle from the site. However, it is generally accepted that the availability of car parking is a major influence on a person's choice of travel. In this regard the proposed could have a negative impact on sustainable travel use. Therefore it has been agreed that a travel plan will be provided by ASOS with clear targets and strategies to promote sustainable travel. This will be secured by condition.

Taking account of the specific circumstances of ASOS both in relation to the high numbers of staff employed and accessing the site at specific times, the location of the development and existing constraints to the access, alongside the proposed car parking management plan and introduction of a formal travel plan, the additional parking is justified in this instance and the development is acceptable in principle.

Visual Amenity

The applicant has provided a Landscape and Visual Appraisal of the site and preliminary Landscaping Proposals. This demonstrates that the site is not highly visible being located in a low lying valley and surrounded by existing trees, hedgerows and shrubs. Additional planting is proposed around the site perimeter and as far as it is possible, existing planting is retained. The shrubs and trees that will be cleared are relatively young, self-seeded species which the tree officer has confirmed won't be a constraint to the proposed development.

The car park will be available 24 hours a day (in line with ASOS working hours) and as such security is a concern. The plans provided show a 2.4m perimeter fence with secure gates at both the vehicular access and pedestrian access. These should be screened in the most part by existing and proposed vegetation. In addition, the colour can be controlled through condition to minimise visual impact. A lighting layout has been provided showing Luma Micro LED lights mounted on 6m poles across the site. These lights are likely to be more visible, especially at night than the car park itself. However, detailed plans have been provided showing the luminance spread of the lights which is largely contained within the boundary and in the context of the existing development on the ASOS site which is also well lit at night, the overall impact is acceptable. Therefore the visual impact of the proposed is acceptable.

The proposed site lies in the Dearne Valley Green Heart Corridor as identified in the Core Strategy with Policy CSP33 seeking to protect, maintain, enhance and create an integrated network of connected and multifunctional Green Infrastructure assets. Directly to the north of the site lies Edderthorpe Flash, an RSPB owned site. Beyond this are Cudworth Common and New Park Springs (owned by the Land Trust) and West Haigh Wood (owned by BMBC). To the south is Houghton Washland, owned by the Environment Agency and managed by the RSPB both for wildlife and flood resilience purposes. It is a long term aspiration to link these sites creating a network of green spaces through which the public can move freely. However, currently the RSPB cannot access Edderthorpe Flash which restricts the ability to effectively manage the site. Public access is also unavailable. The proposed development of car parking at ASOS provides an opportunity to establish an access route into Edderthorpe Flash, through the car park and land to the north. Whilst the need for ASOS's car park to be secure negates any potential for public parking, the applicant has agreed to allow RSPB staff access through the site with maintenance vehicles. This is a significant benefit of the planning application.

Highway Safety

A highway safety scheme is currently being considered on Park Spring Road to provide two new pedestrian islands. These would be located near to the existing bus stops and footpath routes from Darfield and Cudworth. The islands would increase highway safety by providing safe refuge to pedestrians crossing Park Spring Road and act as a traffic calming measure. These islands are being put in place to address existing concerns related to bus users and cyclists / pedestrians accessing the site. The proposed pedestrian access from the car park has been located so as to utilise one of these islands although if these weren't to be implemented a condition is recommended to ensure alternative measures are put in place to facilitate pedestrian access across the A6195.

There will be no increase in traffic movements on the network, rather the proposed car park has been applied for to address existing issues accessing and egressing the ASOS site during shift changes.

Therefore the proposed is acceptable on highway safety grounds.

Residential Amenity

The site is in a relatively isolated location, away from residential properties. As such the impact on residential amenity is very low.

Biodiversity

The application is accompanied by a detailed ecology report and, following discussions with the Council's ecologist the applicant has agreed to additional ecological survey work and various mitigation measures including:

- An Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) to be present on site during construction;
- A Construction Environmental Management Plan;
- Any herpetile species caught will be released to Houghton Washlands; and
- A commuted sum of £25,000 for offsite biodiversity enhancements.

Conclusion

The proposed car park is ancillary to the existing employment use and as such complies with Core Strategy Policy CSP 19 and emerging Local Plan Policy E5. Whilst levels of parking on site will be in excess of guidance contained in the Parking SPD, the nature of ASOS's business and volumes of staff employed differs from a traditional B8 use and, taking account of existing highway safety concerns associated with staff parking on the highway, is justified in this case. Therefore the proposed is recommended for approval.

Recommendation Grant subject to conditions and the signing of the S106 agreement

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.
Reason: In order to comply with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the plans (6057-009, 6057-006, 6057-002, 2113-PL001 and E01) and specifications as approved unless required by any other conditions in this permission.
Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with LDF Core Strategy Policy CSP 29, Design.
- 3 No development shall take place unless and until full foul and surface water drainage details, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter no part of the development shall be occupied or brought into use until the approved scheme has been fully implemented. The scheme shall be retained throughout the life of the development unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: To ensure the proper drainage of the area and comply with Core Strategy Policies CSP 3 and CSP4.
- 4 No surface water shall be discharged to the drainage system from any areas of the site used by vehicles, without the use of petrol/oil/grit interceptors, the details of which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work on site commences.
Reason: To prevent pollution of the water environment in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSP 40.

- 5 Prior to the commencement of development, suitable site investigation works (as per those recommended in the supporting material) must be undertaken to fully investigate mining legacy risks and ensure the car park is suitably designed and constructed. The site investigation and subsequent development should be undertaken in compliance with CIRIA publication 32 where applicable.
Reason: To comply with NPPF paragraphs 120/121 Land Stability.
- 6 Prior to the commencement of use of the car park full details of the mitigation measures identified in the Ecological Survey(s), including a timetable for their implementation, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.
Reason: To conserve and enhance biodiversity in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSP 36.
- 7 The parking/manoeuvring facilities, indicated on the submitted plan, shall be surfaced in a solid bound material (i.e. not loose chippings) and made available for the manoeuvring and parking of motor vehicles prior to the development being brought into use, and shall be retained for that sole purpose at all times.
Reason: To ensure that satisfactory off-street parking/manoeuvring areas are provided, in the interests of highway safety and the free flow of traffic and in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSP 26, New Development and Highway Improvement.
- 8 All planting, seeding or turving comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which die within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with other of similar size and species.
Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSP 36, Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
- 9 All surface water run off shall be collected and disposed of within the site and shall not be allowed to discharge onto the adjacent highway.
Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSP 40, Pollution Control and Protection.
- 10 Prior to the commencement of use of the car park a draft Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall indicate measures that will be put in place to encourage sustainable travel and travel by modes other than the private car, including the potential for cycle spaces and the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points, and allow for regular reporting and monitoring to be undertaken. Subsequently, within six months of the site becoming operational, a detailed travel plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and once approved, it shall be fully implemented and retained as such thereafter
Reason: In the interest of promoting use of public transport, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSP 25.

11 Prior to the commencement of development, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority of arrangements which secure the following highway improvement works:

- a) Physical measures to prevent parking on the highway
- b) Measures to facilitate pedestrian access across the A6195

The works shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and a timetable to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSP 26.

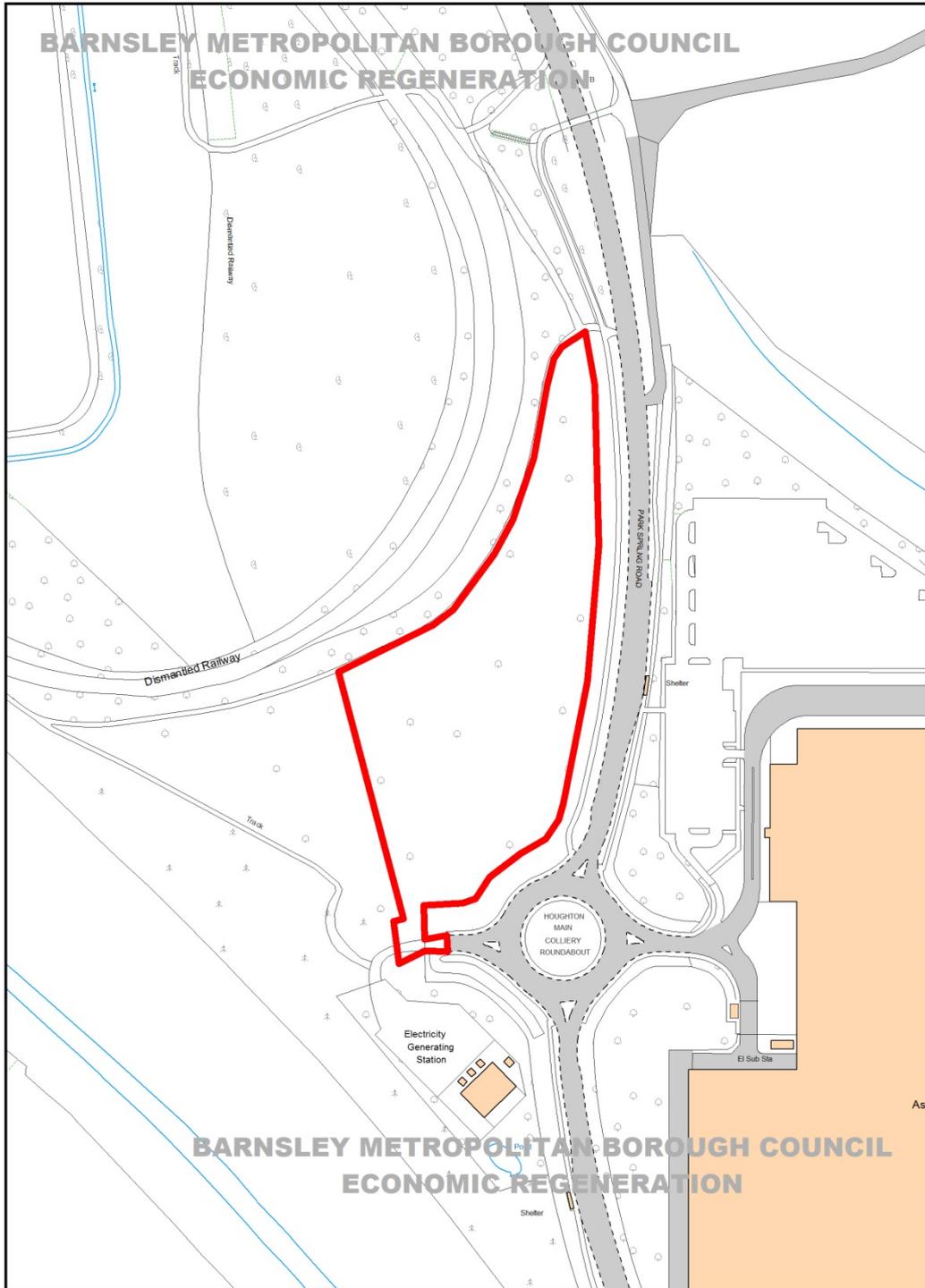
12 Prior to the commencement of use of the car park a Car Park Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall indicate measures that will be put in place to monitor and manage staff car parking on the site, linked to sustainable travel measures in the Travel Plan and address safety concerns regarding parking on the surrounding highway. The Plan will must be submitted to the Planning Authority and once approved it shall be fully implemented and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and promoting the use of public transport, in accordance with Core Strategy Policies CSP 25 and CSP 26.

13 The Palisade Panel Fencing and gates around the car park boundary shall be painted green, the specific shade to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority and applied prior to the commencement of use of the car park.

Reason: In the interests of good design and to accord with Core Strategy Policy CSP 29.

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