

Planning Officer's Report; S&DR Friends Meeting 7 December 2023

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 applications are highlighted in red.

1 DURHAM COUNTY

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

Nothing further to report since October.

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

Further to previous reports, The County Design and Conservation Officer has commented on the impact of the proposals on heritage assets, including the Haggerleases Branch of the S&DR, as follows;
The relationship of the development to the non-designated historic railway infrastructure especially that of the S&DR Haggerleases Branch Line has been considered in detail and again whilst there will be a degree of change to setting this has been assessed against the provisions of Policy 46 of the CDP and does not give rise to objections. The proposals to include interpretation in the mitigation plan will also better reveal significance to a wider audience which is welcomed. It is advised that whilst a degree of change to the setting of designated and non-designated assets has been identified in the consideration of this proposal, the change does not reach a level which results in harm warranting objection to this proposal.

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

Further to previous reports, **planning permission was granted** by officer delegated authority on 21 November. The officer concluded;

The proposal to add artwork to the boundary wall that is related to the history of the Stockton and Darlington Railway would enhance the value of the asset, particular in this location where the line of the track bed is overgrown to the point of being indistinguishable.

It is considered that the less than substantial harm would be outweighed by the public benefits of the development in accordance with CDP Policies 44 and 46, Part 16 of the NPPF and Paragraph 7 of the NPPW.

Condition 5 states;

Within 6 months of the date of this planning permission a scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing detailing artwork to be installed on the exterior of the northern site wall. The proposed scheme shall be developed in consultation with the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The approved scheme shall be implemented within 12 months of the date of this permission and shall be maintained for the life of the development.

It remains unclear if the hedge is to be removed and this will affect the design of the mural.

p DM/23/01151/FPA Change of use from agricultural land to private garden; Land North Of Chapel House Phoenix Row

Further to October's report, the applicant has submitted a response to comments received, including ours, and a site meeting to discuss a solution to the concerns raised is to be arranged for this week. I will attend and Mary Smith has agreed to represent the local group.

q DM/23/02905/FPA Erection of industrial buildings etc. Plot 3B Merchant Park, Millennium Way, Aycliffe Business Park

This application is for industrial units between the Hitachi works and the S&DR, see aerial below. I submitted the following comments;

The site lies between the S&DR Bishop Line and the Hitachi works; it is well enclosed by existing broadleaf woodland planting and the new development will be barely visible from the railway. The application documents make no reference to Local Plan 46 regarding the S&DR, but they conclude that the proposed development would have a neutral effect on its setting and that the significance of this non-designated heritage asset would be preserved. In view of this, the Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway have no objection to the proposals.

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

Still nothing to report on the details for information displays and the walking and cycling route

p 22/01342/FULE Greater Faverdale (Burtree Garden Village) re-submission

Further to previous reports, we have been asked for our comments and advice on a re-submission of this application by 20 December.

This application relates only to Phase 1 of the proposed Garden Village, but it provides plans for the development of the whole site in three phases. Our concerns are about the inadequacy of the overall Master Plan providing a suitably landscaped corridor between phase 2 and the S&DR Bishop Line and the provision of the Walking & Cycling Route.

I propose to reaffirm those concerns in response to this consultation (see my March 2023 planning report for our comments)

t 23/00216/RM1 Reserved matters approval for landscaping etc pursuant to outline planning permission 19/00036/OUT for industrial etc development west of The A66 Bypass and south of Tornado Way.

This application was approved on 10 October by officer delegated authority.

Local Plan Policy ENV2 (S&DR) was accepted as a relevant policy to consider, but we were unsuccessful in our request for additional landscaping to soften the impact of the development on the setting of the S&DR.

The officer's report says;

22. It is acknowledged that the proposed development on this part of the site is of some considerable scale and footprint, which will be clearly visible from the adjacent footway/cycleway on the opposite side of Tornado Way and will have some impact on its setting. The setting of the route of the S&DR at this point is characterised by presently open and undeveloped land to the north side of Tornado Way and by industrial and employment development, including land safeguarded for future employment development in the Local Plan, to the south side of Tornado Way.

23. In taking a balanced approach to assessing the impact of the proposal on the setting and significance of the route as a non-designated heritage asset as the NPPF sets out, it should be acknowledged that the application site forms part of a wider employment allocation to the south side of Tornado Way which is safeguarded for employment development by Local Plan Policy E1. The site also benefits from an existing outline permission for employment development. In the wider context, the Amazon building is located to the south of the site and the proposed building would be comparable in height to the Amazon warehouse. It would also be seen in the context of other buildings of a substantial height at Lingfield Point to the northwest of the site.

24. In this context, and for the reasons set out above, it is not considered that the proposed development would unacceptably impact upon the setting of the route of the S&DR and the proposal does not conflict with the requirements of Local Plan Policy ENV2.

v 23/00694/FUL Erection of 2 aircraft hangars for maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) use, new access road to the airport train station, etc. Land north of the runway Teesside Airport.

Further to October's report, **permission was granted** on 23rd October by delegated officer authority, subject to a section 106 agreement securing a financial contribution towards improving walking and cycling in the area, including the S&DR Route. The officer's report says;

The application site is to the south of the historic Stockton and Darlington Railway route and the applicant has agreed to make a sustainable transport contribution which will be based on £200 per car parking space. This contribution will be used to enhance the walking and cycling routes in the vicinity of the development. In particular to try to improve access from Dinsdale Railway Station to the development and also to improve the walking and cycling route between the airport and Stockton as part of the Stockton and Darlington Railway walking and cycling route. This would be secured as part of the Section 106 Agreement. The development would not have an adverse impact on the visual appearance or character of the route and the development would accord with policy ENV2 of the Local Plan in this regard.

w 23/00632/OUT Outline planning application for the erection of 3 no. units for industrial/business/storage and distribution use, Land At Lingfield Point. Darlington

Further to previous reports, a decision on this application has been deferred until 30 January 2024 at the request of National Highways.

x Darlington Bank Top station

23/01004/PA. Prior Approval application for the provision of two platforms with footbridge, lifts, stairs, canopy, enclosed waiting room and associated works, together with works within the main station building including the demolition of the 1970's travel centre, retail units and part of the barrel roof to facilitate the installation of a linked footbridge, lifts, escalator, upper lobby and split stairs to platform 1 and re-positioning of ticket gate line on platform 4

23/01001/LBC Listed Building Consent for the demolition of the 1970's travel centre, retail unit and part of the barrel roof to facilitate the installation of a footbridge (internal and external linking to new multi-storey car park) lifts, escalator, upper lobby and split stairs to platform 1, re-positioning of ticket gate line on platform 4 together with associated works

These applications for the proposed internal footbridge in the station were accompanied by a Statement of Significance by the North of England Civic Trust 2017 and a Heritage Statement by Dr Gillian Scott for BAM Nuttall 2023.

Network Rail arranged an online presentation for us on 21 November attended by our Chair, Vice Chair and myself. Discussion satisfactorily answered all of our questions and resolved a few issues. A record of the meeting has been provided to us.

Comments on the applications were requested by 28 November. We were going to submit the following support but the **permissions were granted** by officer delegated authority on 27 November.

The Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway are pleased to support the applications.

We thank Network Rail for their virtual presentation and discussion on the proposals. This has helped our understanding of the design concept.

The submitted Heritage Statement is well researched and we agree that the selection of the Azuma option and entry of the proposed footbridge through the station roof is the right solution to a difficult problem.

We look forward to discussion with LNER regarding the provision of information for arriving passengers about the town's railway heritage, especially during the S&DR Bicentennial celebrations, and to installing artworks and other features throughout the station using a railway heritage theme.

We particularly look forward to the speedy and trouble free completion of the works in time for September 2025.

Network Rail has provided us with contact details for discussions with LNER.

Historic England had no objections, saying;

The harm caused to significance through the loss of fabric and the visual disruption to the easternmost train shed is less than substantial in degree and should be considered alongside the wider public benefits of the proposal (in line with para.202 of the NPPF), noting the efforts the design has made to minimise the harm.

y Walking and Cycling Route; Mill Lane to St George's Way, Middleton St George.

We have been consulted on details for the improved path between Mill Lane and St George's Way prior to a planning application being submitted. This will be an improved link in the S&DR Walking & Cycling Route.

We submitted the following comments;

Thank you for consulting the Friends of the S&DR on the proposed footpath improvements.

We are delighted to be able to support this and we look forward to its speedy and successful implementation.

One comment, however, is that we would prefer to see traditional timber farm gates at gates 1 and 2 rather than the proposed galvanised version. This would be more in keeping with the rural location and would be consistent with the gates installed at the Fighting Cocks crossing.

3 STOCKTON BOROUGH

b 23/0061/REM Details for phases 3-9 for the creation of new urban Park etc at Castlegate.

Further to previous reports, we still await the submission of details of all artworks, heritage details and interpretation signage artworks, as required by condition 6 of the planning permission.

e 23/1201/FUL Eaglescliffe station car park

This application was approved on 18 October under officer delegated authority. Implementation will be completed before September 2025 to enable a link in the S&DR Walking and Cycling Route to be provided. It has been confirmed that the existing footbridge at the station will be retained with a new deck to act as a back-up in the event of the lifts at the new bridge failing.

j : 23/1340/LA Extensions etc at Preston Hall Museum

Further to October's report, the Planning Committee **granted permission** on 8 November. The Council's Highway's Transport and Design Manager had a number of comments regarding landscape and visual impact, suggesting changes to be made and this will be dealt with by condition. The Historic Buildings Officer advised that harm will be caused by the design of the extensions to the setting of the main Preston Hall and to the fabric of the associated outbuildings. However, in accordance with National Planning Policy, this harm is outweighed by the public benefit that the proposals will secure.

k Durham Lane Cycleway

Further to October's report, the Council's Transport Officer confirms that the cycleway will follow the Yarm Branch route on the west side of Durham Lane and that trenches will be dug to check on any remains of the trackbed. The cycleway will link with the main S&DR Route and provide a spur as far as the Cleveland Bay.

l 23/1730/FU L and 23/1711/LBC Application of render to the existing single storey extension to include removal of 1no window and 1no door, replacement of 1no window and 1no door and installation of 1no roof lantern and other ancillary works. Layfield House, Urray Nook Road, Eaglescliffe.

There is nothing further to report since October

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

Known as Mandale Park, this development has been completed but the landscaping does not accord with the submitted plans. I therefore sent in the following comments;
Local Plan policy HE3 requires development to have regard to the setting of the former Stockton & Darlington Railway, which runs along the northern side of the site's Urray Nook Road boundary. This setting was previously characterised by the trees and other vegetation in the northern part of the site, since removed and replaced by the development now carried out.
The submitted detailed landscape plan shows trees to the north of the units, but fewer than shown in earlier submitted landscaping plans for the site. I saw (see attached photograph) on my site visit on 2nd November that landscaping appears to have been completed in variance with the submitted plan. In particular, there are no trees in the north-western corner of the site.
It is the Friends' opinion that more trees should be planted to respect the setting of the S&DR and the view from the railway, in order to soften the impact of the prominent appearance of the featureless northern gable ends of the new buildings. Otherwise the development neither preserves nor enhances the setting of the S&DR, contrary to Policy HE3.



Ross Chisholm, Planning Officer, 03/12/2023