

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE DATE: 9 February 2011

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APPLICATION REF. NO:	10/00752/OUT
STATUTORY DECISION DATE:	3 January 2011
WARD/PARISH:	SADBERGE AND WHESOE
LOCATION:	Darlington Golf Club, Haughton Grange Whinfield Road, Darlington DL1 3JD
DESCRIPTION:	Construction of new link road between Sparrow Hall Drive and the existing golf club access road (outline) (Amended Plans Received 16 December 2010)
APPLICANT:	Mr David Proud

APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Outline planning permission is sought for the construction of an access road from Sparrow Hall Drive and the existing golf club access road.

As required by the Regulations, the following information has been submitted with the application: details of use, amount of development, indicative layout, scale parameters and indicative access point.

The indicative plans show the access road as being some 4.8m in width plus a 2m wide pedestrian footpath (pavement) to the side. The indicative plans also show the new proposed access road as being some 32m in length. The indicative plans include tactile paving and a footpath on the opposite site of the Sparrow Hall Drive to connect the proposal with the existing footpath network. The access path would cross a large grass verge to the north of Sparrow Hall Drive to connect with the existing access path to the Golf Club.

Current direct access to the Golf Club is along a narrow, poorly maintained, single vehicle wide track, approximately 600m long, off Whinfield Road. There are insufficient passing points along this track, which is a concern of the current users and causes problems when traffic is crossing in opposite directions.

The proposal would take access to the Golf Club direct from Sparrow Hall Drive. This would be the only vehicular access to the Golf Club. In the Transport Statement that has been submitted it is stated that the Golf Club generates the majority of its trips during daylight hours when members are arriving to play golf or departing on completion of their round. It is also stated that the peak day to day flow of traffic is in the region of 12 cars per hour arriving at the club and subsequently leaving. In addition to members' traffic a small quantity of delivery vehicles also visit the golf club.

PLANNING HISTORY

The site has a lengthy planning history however this is not of direct relevance to the current planning application.

PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

The following policies of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan are relevant:

E7 (Landscape Conservation)
E12 (Trees and Development)
E23 (Nature and Development)
E29 (The Setting of New Development)
T8 (Access to Main Roads)
T12 (New Development - Road Capacity)
T39 (Conditions for Pedestrians)

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

Occupiers of neighbouring properties were advised of the proposed development by way of letter. Five objection letters have been received and the points raised are as follows:

- *I object to this application because of the increase in traffic which will occur along Sparrow Hall Drive already congested at times by on street parking. Also because of the proximity of the play area.*
- *I object to this application on the grounds that there will be a big increase in traffic from people trying to avoid the traffic lights at Asda during busy periods. There are already problems with off road motorbikes and, since the pedestrian link was put in, cars have tried to use this new footpath/cycleway. Large numbers of pedestrians use this area, particularly small children travelling to and from the school near Asda and people accessing Green Lane to exercise dogs. The end of Sparrowhall Drive is also used for parking by people playing football on Springfield Park etc. Making this a through road will increase traffic, danger to pedestrians and will inevitably lead to more noise and disturbance for residents in what is a relatively quiet area.*
- *I must oppose this as an oversized cycle path has just been constructed, the traffic already on Sparrow Hall Drive is extremely busy as there are many roads off it, not to mention the hold ups from the constant stream of learner drivers. This is already an accident waiting to happen, so to construct another line of traffic will compound to the already congestion. Surely not.*
- *We strongly object to this application being granted. Congestion due to continuous parking on the southern side of Sparrow Hall Drive. Children crossing between parked cars to play area on north side of road. Additional parking on northern side of road at junction with Whinfield Road, forcing vehicles to face traffic entering Sparrow Hall Drive having faced this problem personally in both directions. It is strongly felt locally that the granting of this application is a far greater inconvenience to residents to not granting it to the applicants.*
- *Sparrow Hall Drive has provides more than adequate access into and out of 'The Elms' estate on which I have lived with my children for 18 years. The construction of a new link*

road will do nothing other than increase the volume of traffic significantly which is both unnecessary and serves no purpose or benefit to the residents. I genuinely believe it could also increase the potential of extra crime in the area because it will give greater access to house burglars and car thieves. The increased traffic will also make it a more dangerous place for the vast number of children who live on the estate and use the adjacent field and play area for recreational purposes. It will also significantly increase the noise levels on the estate creating noise pollution and will totally destroy the harmony of the estate. I genuinely believe it will be seen as a quick option to get to get to Winbush Way to avoid the traffic lights near Adsa at the Whinbush Way / Springfield Road junction. I have absolutely no doubt it will become a speed track and this creates the obvious fear of accidents or worse. Overall the construction of the new road will have absolutely no benefit to the residents and as the council is there to look after its residents then I strongly urge that you do not proceed with the plan.

The **Highways Officer** has commented that there is sufficient capacity within the local highway network to accommodate the additional traffic generated by the proposal. The Highways Officer has also stated that a condition to secure a link to the footpath network and for details of provision of interceptor drains (for surface water) would be required.

The **Arboricultural Officer** has raised no objections to the proposal but has commented that there is an early mature Ash tree (in poor form and reasonable condition) located within the hedge row which may need to be removed to facilitate the development. The Arboricultural Officer has also commented that a condition should be attached to any planning permission for three trees (Oak, Lime and Hornbeam) to be planted as part of a tree planting scheme.

PLANNING ISSUES

The main planning issues to be taken into account are:

- Visual Amenity
- Residential Amenity
- Highways Matters
- Landscape and Ecology

Visual Amenity

Sparrow Hall Drive is a relatively wide road and is bounded by the sides of properties in Carnoustie Grove. There are currently three roads which take direct access to the south from Sparrow Hall Drive. Whilst the proposed new link road to the Golf Club would be to the north of Sparrow Hall Drive, it would be in keeping with the character of the road network in this area.

The proposed new access tracks would cross an existing grass verge and result in the loss of a section of hedge to the north of the verge. Notwithstanding this the proposed new link road would not be a prominent feature and would be in keeping with its setting in the area. A condition requiring tree planting would be appropriate to mitigate against the impacts of the proposal.

Residential Amenity

The properties on Carnoustie Grove opposite the location of the proposed new access road do not have any windows on their side elevations which reduces the impacts of the proposal in relation to residential amenity.

The proposal would not generate significant amounts of traffic to the extent that it would result in any specific issues of noise and disturbance to occupiers of nearby residential properties.

Highways Matters

The proposal would not result in any significant increases in traffic levels in the area. In the Transport Statement submitted with the application it is stated that the peak day to day flow of traffic is in the region of 12 cars per hour. The Highways Officer has commented that there is sufficient capacity within the local highway network to accommodate the additional traffic generated by the proposal.

Landscape and Ecology

The development would result in the loss of part of a hedge on the grass verge to the north of Sparrow Hall Drive. The hedgerow is over 20m in length and is adjacent to land used for agriculture. This therefore falls within the scope of the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 where a notification would normally be required to remove part of the hedge.

As part of the hedge is proposed to be removed as part of a scheme for which a planning application has been submitted, a separate notification for the removal of the hedge is not required.

The hedge does not appear to be important as defined in the hedgerow regulations however ecological investigations have not been carried out. A condition would therefore be required for ecological investigations to be carried out and for these details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

The hedge includes a mature Ash tree which would need to be removed to facilitate the development. As part of mitigation measures against the loss of this tree and the hedgerow in general, a condition would be required for a scheme for replacement tree planting to be submitted and approved.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect

CONCLUSION

The proposal would not result in any significant detrimental impacts in terms of visual or residential amenity. As the proposal would result in the loss of a section of hedge row, conditions are required for tree planting to mitigate the impacts. In addition an ecological survey is required, so that any issues regarding the impact of the proposal on ecology can be addressed.

The proposal will not generate an increase in traffic beyond what the existing road network can cope with and does not raise any specific issues in relation to highways safety.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. A1 Outline (Reserved Matters)
2. A2 Outline (Implementation of Time)
3. No development shall commence until an Ecological Assessment of the site including the existing hedgerow has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include details of any mitigation measures that may be necessary. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details.

Reason – The proposal would result in the removal of part of a hedgerow which may have an importance with regard to ecology. An ecological assessment is required to ensure that the development will not cause any significant or unacceptable harm to ecology, in accordance with Policy E23 (Nature and Development) of the Borough Local Plan 1997.

4. No development shall commence until details of a tree planting scheme to include 1 No. Oak (*Quercus robur*), 1No. Lime (*Tilia cordata*) and 1 No. Hornbeam (*Carpinus Betula*) have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall not take place other than in accordance with the approved tree planting scheme.

Reason – The proposal would result in the removal of part of a hedgerow and a tree planting scheme is required to mitigate against this loss, in accordance with Policy E12 (Trees and Development) of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997.

5. No development shall commence until details of the provisions made for access by pedestrians including dropped crossings/tactile paving, and a short section of footway within the highway verge to the south of Sparrow Hall Drive, have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall not take place other than in accordance with the approved tree planting scheme.

Reason – The new access would attract use by pedestrians which should be adequately accommodated in accordance with Policy T39 (Conditions for Pedestrians) of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997.

6. No development shall commence until details of the provisions made for ensuring that surface water does not discharge onto the public highway, have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall not take place other than in accordance with the approved tree planting scheme.

Reason – To ensure that surface water does not discharge onto the public highway in the interests of highways safety.

Suggested summary of reasons for granting planning permission

This outline planning application involves the construction of new link road to Darlington Golf Club from Sparrow Hall Drive. The proposed development is considered acceptable and will not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal has no significant impacts in terms of residential amenity. The proposal does not adversely impact on highway safety. No issues are raised in relation to crime prevention. The proposal is considered acceptable in light of the following Policies of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

E7 (Landscape Conservation)
E12 (Trees and Development)
E23 (Nature and Development)
E29 (The Setting of New Development)
T8 (Access to Main Roads)
T12 (New Development - Road Capacity)
T39 (Conditions for Pedestrians)

INFORMATIVES

The applicant is advised that works are required within the public highway on Sparrow Hall Drive and contact must be made with the Assistant Director : Highways and Engineering (contact Mr.A.Ward 01325 388743) to arrange for the works to be carried out or to obtain authority under Sec.184 of the Highways Act 1980 to execute the works.