

Planning Panel 24 November 2021

Lead Officer: Nick Hayhurst – Head of Planning and Place

A report to update Members on the current status of the following planning application:-

Planning Application Ref: 4/18/2287/001

Location: Land at Harras Moor, Whitehaven

Proposal: Outline Application For Development Of Up To 370 Houses With Associated Open Space And Infrastructure

Recommendation: That the report be noted

Resource Implications: Nil

1.0. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1.1. An outline planning application was submitted by Homes England on 26th June 2018 for the development of land at Harras Moor, Whitehaven to provide up to 370 dwellings.
- 1.2. Following a site visit Members resolved at the Planning Panel meeting on 18th September 2019 that they wished to go against their Planning Officers recommendation and refuse the outline planning application. Members' main concerns resolved around highway safety and the adequacy of the local road network to accommodate the likely volumes of traffic that would result from a development of this a scale. In accordance with the Councils Constitution "minded to" decisions are subject to a month cooling off period.
- 1.3. There has been a significant delay in the processing of this planning application as set out in the update report that was presented to members at the Planning Panel on 1st September 2021. Since that time the applicant has undertaken the following:
 - The submission of additional information relating to Ecology and a Habitat Regulations Assessment as requested by Natural England. Natural England has been consulted on this additional information and have agreed to the proposals subject to the inclusion of a planning condition;
 - The submission of a supporting letter to respond to the issues raised by the Woodland Trust with regards to separation distances to the ancient woodland which adjoins the application site;

- The preparation of an assessment on the need for sports provision in response to the objection received from Sports England with regards to the loss of a former sports pitch on the site. This matter is still under discussion with Sports England;
 - The agreement of the extent and general arrangement of off-site highway works as required by both the Highway Authority and Highways England. It is anticipated that they would be covered under a Section 278 agreement with the Highways Authority;
 - The submission of a revised Planning Statement to reflect the changes to the Council's Planning Policy position with regards to the emerging Local Plan and also to reflect recent revisions to the NPPF;
 - Refresh of various other reports due to the delays in the timescale to ensure that they reflect the current situation; and
 - A review of the proposal by the applicant to reflect the issues raised by Covid-19 outbreak in terms of viability and phasing.
- 1.4. The above reflects the complexity of the application and the need, due to the timescales involved, to update the revised evidence that supports the overall development. Discussions between Officers and Homes England are continuing to resolve the outstanding issues before the application can be reported to Members for a decision. The applicant has agreed an extension of time in order to allow the process to continue.
- 1.5. Members will be given a further update at a subsequent meeting within the 3 month time period set out in the revised Constitution if the application is unable to be presented to the Planning Panel for a decision in the intervening period.

Contact Officer: Nick Hayhurst

Background Papers: Planning Application File Reference 4/20/2251/001