

Minutes of the Meeting of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY, 6<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2019** at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Cullen (Chairman) and Councillors Allen, Wilson and L. Zair

**Also Present:** Councillors Brownson, Chappell, Fleming and A. Zair  
David Anderson (Town Clerk)

**PL.6/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
Councillors Cullen, Newton Woods.

**PL.7/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
No declarations were made.

**PL.8/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**  
There were no members of the public present.

**PL.9/19 DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL: PLANNING APPLICATIONS**  
Consideration was given to a schedule of planning applications received since the last meeting. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Detailed consideration was given to the following applications: -

**DM/19/02221/FPA / DM/19/02222/LB 80 Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland DL14 7EQ. Change of use of former department store to 3no. ground floor units with flexible A1/A3 use and 27 apartments, associated internal and external alterations and partial demolition**

Following detailed consideration Members agreed to submit the following comments: -

80 Newgate Street was a Grade II listed building which occupied a large and prominent location in the town centre within the Bishop Auckland Conservation Area. The building had been vacant since January 2017 which was a cause of major concern, not only that the building was currently on the National Heritage at Risk Register, but also that it had a negative impact on the appearance of the town centre and its perceived vitality. The Council was keen for this building to be brought back into appropriate use as soon as possible to safeguard its long term future and also that it may contribute positively to the regeneration efforts that were currently taking place.

The Council welcomed the proposal to sub-divide the ground floor into three smaller commercial units which were more in line with market demand and therefore may be able to be brought back into use in the near future. This would contribute positively to the vitality of the town centre and also create a number of jobs.

There were however concerns relating to the creation of 27 apartments. The Council felt that there had been a proliferation of developments to create apartments, particularly smaller one bed apartments, within or close to the town centre, which taken collectively may have a detrimental effect on the area.

The Council considered that the provision of parking spaces was insufficient to support a development comprising 12 no 1 bed 2 person apartments, 7 no 2 bed 3 person apartments and 8 no 2 bed four person apartments. The only alternative parking available in the vicinity was pay and display, which was unlikely to be acceptable to occupants of a residential development.

**Signed:** .....  
**Chair**

If planning consent was approved, it was expected that the quality of the development would be in keeping with the status of its Grade II listing.

**DM/19/02223/FPA / DM/19/02224/LB - 80 Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland DL14 7EQ. Change of use of former department store to 3no. ground floor units with flexible A1/A3 use and 62 no. bedroom hotel, associated internal and external alterations and partial demolition**

Following detailed consideration Members agreed to submit the following comments: -

80 Newgate Street was a Grade II listed building which occupies a large and prominent location in the town centre within the Bishop Auckland Conservation Area. The building had been vacant since January 2017 which was a cause of major concern, not only that the building was currently on the National Heritage at Risk Register, but also that it had a negative impact on the appearance of the town centre and its perceived vitality. The Council was keen for this building to be brought back into appropriate use as soon as possible to safeguard its long term future and also that it may contribute positively to the regeneration efforts that were currently taking place.

The Council welcomed the proposal to sub-divide the ground floor into three smaller commercial units which were more in line with market demand and therefore may be able to be brought back into use in the near future. This would contribute positively to the vitality of the town centre and also create a number of jobs.

The Council also supported the development of 62 no bedroom hotel. A recent study by Hotel Solutions had concluded that there was an urgent need to encourage additional accommodation providers in and around Bishop Auckland to capitalise on opportunities presented by The Auckland Projects (TAP). There was currently no spare capacity to cater for the additional overnight stay demands which TAP attractions and Kynren would generate. The anticipated requirement for TAP visitors was 300 - 1,000 bed spaces. This aspect of the development would create a number of jobs on a permanent basis and add to the vitality of the town centre.

It was felt that the number of parking spaces provided on site for guests was sufficient given the current and anticipated number of pay and display parking within the town which would be appropriate to visitors.

If planning consent was approved, it was expected that the quality of the development would be in keeping with the status of its Grade II listing.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the above comments be submitted to Durham County Council for consideration.
  2. That the Town Council has no objections or comment to make on the remainder of the planning applications detailed on the schedule.

**PL.10/19 DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL – PLANNING DECISIONS**

Consideration was given to schedule of planning decisions that had been determined under delegated authority. (For copy see file of Minutes)

**RESOLVED:** That the schedule be noted.

Signed: .....  
Chair