

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AND REGULATION COMMITTEE
23 March 2011
A Report by the Assistant Director - Planning & Sustainability

Application No: 2/10/9032

District: Allerdale

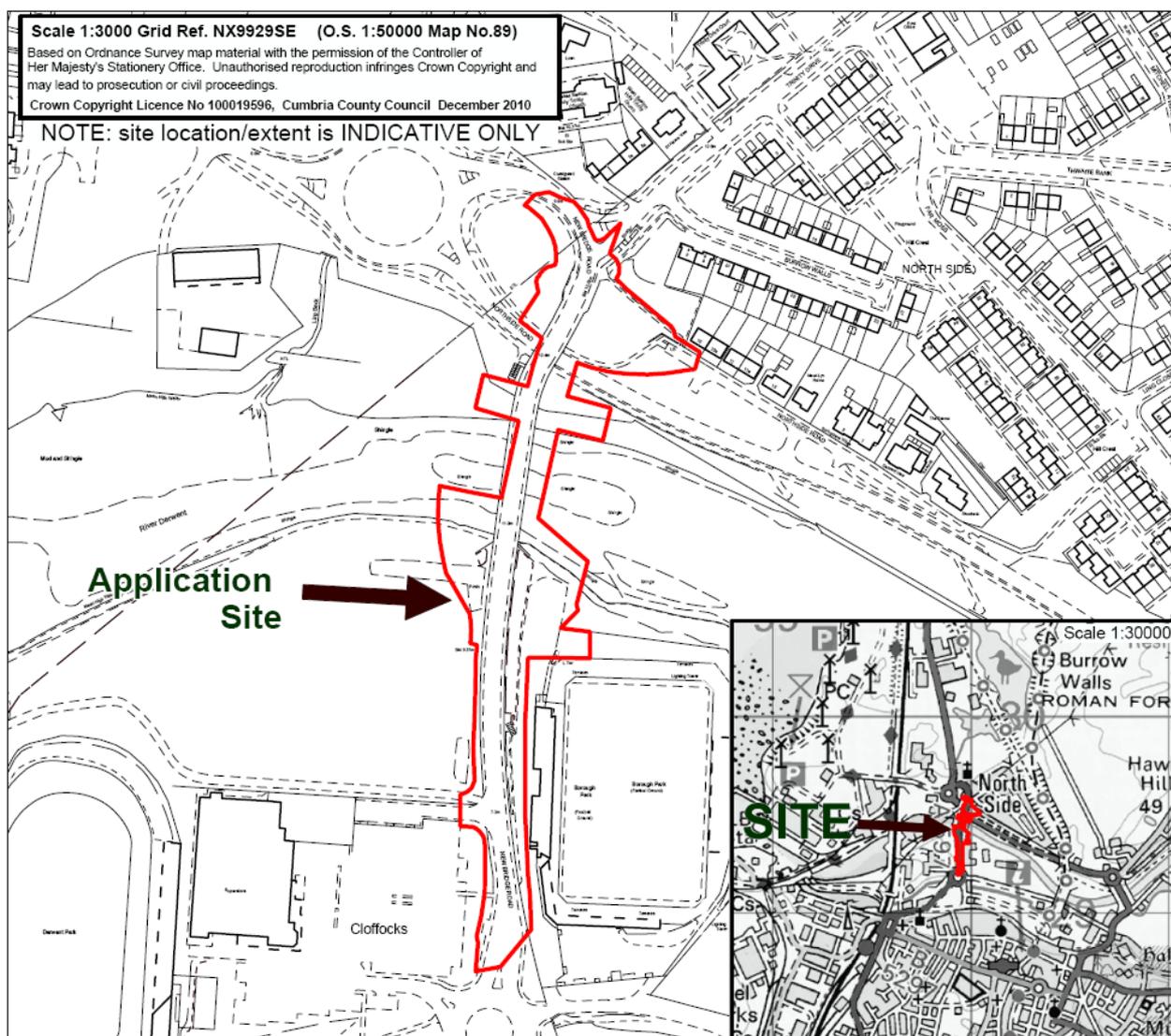
Applicant: Cumbria County Council

Parish: Workington

Date of Receipt: 14 December 2010

PROPOSAL: Replacement of former Northside Bridge with three span composite steel bridge accomodating works at Workinton AFC and landscaping scheme for the north and south banks of the River Derwent.

Northside Bridge (A597), Between Cloffocks and Northside, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 2DT



RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That having had regard to the environmental information planning permission is granted for the reasons stated in Appendix 1 and subject to the conditions listed in Appendix 2.
- 1.2 That the planning assessment in Section 4 provides the basis of the statement required under Regulation 21 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999 (as amended).

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 It is proposed to replace the former Northside Bridge with a three span composite steel bridge to link into the existing highway network. The steel structure allows a clear span over the river without a central pier in the river bed. The southern and northern piers would have a smaller footprint than the previous piers and do not extend as far into the River Derwent. The abutment walls overlooking the river would be faced in sandstone reclaimed from the previous bridge
- 2.2 The proposed structure is 5m wider than the previous bridge in order to incorporate 2.5m wide footpaths and 1.5m in-highway cycle ways on each side of the bridge. The alignment is approximately the same as the previous bridge but the highway approaching the proposed bridge on the south side extends 5m further east than the previous bridge. The planning application site therefore includes land beyond the original highway, including land used by Workington Town Football Club and Workington Rugby Club. The application site also includes the required working areas for construction of piers and abutments.
- 2.3 Pedestrian links to the surrounding networks would remain essentially the same as for the previous bridge, except that the steps between Northside Road and the deck of the bridge would be located at the main north abutment, bringing pedestrians down on the pavement north of Northside Road, rather than south of the road as previously. These steps would link to the bridge via a paved area adjacent to, and down stream or west of, the north abutments.
- 2.4 The original submissions included three viewing platforms and a 1:21 zig-zag ramp adjacent to the north abutment on the east side of the bridge. Following comments from the Police Architectural Liaison Officer (ALO) and the objections from residents listed below this element has been removed from the planning application.
- 2.5 Lighting for the bridge would be provided by five pairs of 10m high lighting columns fitted with directional LED luminaires. These would provide lighting on the bridge itself of 10-20 Lux and 1-2 Lux at the river level.
- 2.6 The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES).

3.0 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 Allerdale Borough Council has no objections but asked for pedestrian access from south to west (see paragraph 4.12), and banning right turns into Trinity Drive (see paragraph 4.7) to be considered.

- 3.2 Workington Town Council has no objections but raised a point of information about a third party offer to provide an oak tree as a memorial to PC Barker.
- 3.3 The Highway Authority has no objections subject to conditions requiring details of construction compounds and a traffic management scheme for the construction period.
- 3.4 The Highways Agency has no objections.
- 3.5 The Environment Agency has no objections subject to a condition relating to contaminated land.
- 3.6 Natural England has no objections subject to advice on lighting, and use of native species in planting schemes.
- 3.7 English Heritage do not wish to comment.
- 3.8 The Coal Authority has no objections but comment about past shallow coal workings and the need to respond appropriately to any contamination found during construction.
- 3.9 Northern Gas Networks have no objections but comment that the applicant has consulted them about the nearby gas pipeline.
- 3.10 Cumbria Constabulary have no objections but raised concerns about the provision of viewing platforms above Northside Road attracting anti-social behaviour.
- 3.11 The Port of Workington, 4NW, Government Office for the North West, United Utilities Water Network, and the Ramblers Association Allerdale District have been consulted but no replies had been received when this report was prepared.
- 3.12 The local Member Mr AL Barry has been notified.
- 3.13 Representations have been received from six local residents, five of whom object to the ramp and viewing platforms north east of the bridge that are no longer part of the planning application. Neighbours have been re-consulted about the revised plans but further comments had not been received at the time this report was written.
- 3.14 One of the above objectors also objects to the cycle lanes being in the highway rather than separated by a physical barrier and points out that the open parapet will expose pedestrians and cyclists to high winds. He asks for a solid parapet to be provided.
- 3.15 Another of the objectors wrote a second time to object to the use of the area in front of the cul-de-sac east of the bridge as a satellite construction compound.
- 3.16 The sixth representee expresses disappointment about the proposed design.

“The bridge is somewhat ugly and consideration of visual impact should be taken. A more aesthetically pleasing bridge such as the Clyde Arc in Glasgow would be more suitable and a striking reminder of that tragic day.”

4.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 As a replacement for the masonry road bridge that carried the A597 over the River Derwent until it collapsed in the floods of November 2009, the proposals conform in principal to the Development Plan. The main planning issues and the proposed mitigation are explained below.
- 4.2 The proposals do not incorporate a memorial to PC Barker although this has been discussed alongside this application. The latest information from the applicant is that a plaque would be incorporated into the bridge at a suitable point and interpretation boards may be placed in an open area, possibly the space north of the river and immediately west of the road. However these are not planning issues as they do not form part of the application.

Flooding and flood risk

- 4.3 The reduced footprint of the replacement bridge and amendments to the steep slope of the south embankment would give additional space to allow flood water to flow away quickly without excessive loads on the structure. The Environment Agency has no concerns about the proposals with respect to this issue.

Archaeology

- 4.4 The construction and working areas have been modified to avoid the area west of the north side approach where a Viking sword was found in the early 1990's. The development site does however have the potential to disturb archaeological remains. A watching brief and programme of archaeological recording is considered a sufficient response.

Highway Safety

- 4.5 When complete the proposed replacement bridge would relate to the pre-existing road layout in the same way as the original bridge. The only three issues raised have been: the right turn lane proposed at the right turn into Trinity Drive; traffic circulation and highway access during the construction period; and cyclists safety on, and at either end of, the new bridge. The latter issue is considered in paragraphs 4.16 to 4.20 below.
- 4.6 A number of options were considered for the access from the bridge into Trinity Drive. The slightly substandard right turn (narrow in highway waiting area) proposed has been submitted to a Safety Audit and the Highway Authority has no objection to the final design.
- 4.7 Allerdale Borough Council requested that banning right turns into Trinity Drive for northbound traffic be considered. This would require all estate traffic from the south to go round the main Northside roundabout and back to make a left turn into Trinity Drive. It was considered as an alternative in the options appraisal and excluded on safety and traffic flow grounds.
- 4.8 Two construction compounds, one north and one south of the river, are likely to be needed. The major construction compound with offices and staff car parking would be adjacent to Tesco's on the south side, and the steel structure would be fabricated there. Plans of this compound and a range of suitable highway access points have been discussed with the Highway Authority.

- 4.9 Where construction compounds are adjacent to the planning application site they would normally be permitted development. However the implications of access to the highway network require these to be controlled under conditions and any PD rights removed (see suggested condition 8).
- 4.10 Plant and machinery would have to be moved between the working areas and the Highway Authority requests that this should be controlled by a Traffic Management Scheme.
- 4.11 If a satellite compound is required north of the river this would house only welfare facilities for workers. The most likely site is east of the bridge adjacent to a row of bungalows and highway access on to the cul-de-sac would be safer than having an additional access directly on to Northside Road itself. Potential nuisance from traffic could be reduced by allowing vehicle deliveries to the welfare function only. A Construction Method Statement under condition 9 would provide for managing this and other potential adverse impacts of the compounds.

Pedestrian amenity and safety

- 4.12 Allerdale Borough Council have commented that the loss of the steps directly down to the south side of Northside Road introduces a detour and additional road crossing for those walking between Port of Workington and the bridge. However the support for the new bridge is too narrow to enable provision of such steps at this point.
- 4.13 Solid parapets have been requested by one of the objectors to provide protection from wind. The applicant comments that the open mesh parapet design is necessary to avoid turbulent wind flows and strain on the metal structure.
- 4.14 The Police ALO had commented that the viewing platforms originally proposed were likely to attract anti social gatherings that would alarm and threaten passing pedestrians as well as neighbours. The potential for the viewing areas to be used to launch projectiles on to vehicles on Northside Road was also raised. The Police ALO has thanked the project team for removing this feature and says:
- “I have no doubt that this will be very much in the interest of the success and sustainability of the whole project; the peaceful enjoyment of the facility by pedestrians (including the disabled) without fear of crime, and not least the quality of life of nearby residents.”
- 4.15 The remaining open viewing area on the west or downstream side has excellent natural surveillance and is further back from the Northside Road carriageway below.

Cyclist amenity and safety

- 4.16 The previous bridge did not have any cycle lanes on it, but had shared cycle and pedestrian routes on the approaches to the bridge. The proposal provides 1.5m wide cycle lanes in the carriageway in both directions, and extends these on the south bank as far as the roundabout. The existing highway on the north bank is not being changed as part of this development and is too narrow for an in-carriageway cycle lane.

- 4.17 One objector and the Rights of Way Planning Officer stated that the cycle lane should be segregated given the traffic flows on the bridge. As part of the Places Matter consultation the Cycling Development Officer discussed the issues with a number of cycling group representatives who would also prefer to see a shared footpath/cycleway across the bridge. This would have linked into the existing shared routes and avoid a number of potential danger points.
- 4.18 The applicant contends that widening pavements to include cyclists would decrease the safety of other cyclists, many of whom would choose to stay on the carriageway but be denied the additional 1.5m designated lane. It is also pointed out that an alternative off road cycle route will be available at Navvies Bridge.
- 4.19 The Stage 1 safety audit identified a problem at the north end of the northbound cycleway where it links to an existing shared cyclist/pedestrian path, and recommended a dropped kerb to reduce risk of cyclists falling off bikes while mounting the kerb on to the shared route. This has been incorporated in the scheme and would help north travelling cyclists leave the carriageway before the potentially dangerous right hand turn into Trinity Drive.
- 4.20 Further potential dangers to cyclists have not been examined yet and a Stage 2 Audit will be carried out once the design is finalised. Suggested condition 14 would require this audit to specifically consider non motorised users and also require submission of a scheme detailing signage to minimise danger for cyclists.

People with Disabilities

- 4.21 Level access across the bridge from the housing areas north of the river is the key requirement for those using wheelchairs or having restricted mobility or stamina due to disability. The replacement bridge does not change this provision. Disabled access from the lower areas adjacent to the river is currently via a 1:10 path or via the “at-grade” pavement adjacent to the highway. The need for the 1:21 ramped additional access route originally proposed, and now omitted from the proposal, was not established as there is a suitably ramped (but longer) approach by following the footpath adjacent to the highway. The shorter but steeper access track is also available for those who prefer this option.
- 4.22 Allerdale planning officers have been re-consulted on the revised General Arrangement Plan and while they commented verbally that they do not consider that a new route for people with disabilities is required no formal reply had been received when this report was prepared.

Landscape and Visual Impact of the completed bridge

- 4.23 The new bridge would be slightly higher and wider than the old one, and thus seen from a wider area, but the slimmer structure would open up views up and down the river. Areas where 66 -100% of the bridge would be visible are limited to the immediate river valley, higher ground north east of the bridge, and the approaches to Workington from the A66. One representee asked for a more aesthetically pleasing bridge, but the public consultation did give rise to some requests for a modern design, with open views up and down the river.

- 4.24 Adverse visual impact was one of the grounds for the strong objections from residents of the adjacent bungalows to the disabled access ramp and viewing platform detailed in paragraph 3.13 above. Perspectives of the viewing platforms in the Design and Access Statement and drawings shown to the public during a consultation exercise were unhelpful in explaining what was proposed in that ground levels had not been investigated or included accurately in the drawings.
- 4.25 Detailed drawings developed by landscape architects confirmed that retaining walls would be needed throughout the ramped area and around the viewing platform, the level of the platform would have afforded views mainly of the underside of the bridge, and the gradients of slopes to be planted with grass or shrubs were much steeper than the 1:3 recommended for successful planting and maintenance. This would have had a significant adverse visual impact on views from the east, and probably also harmed the setting of the new bridge when viewed from the south.
- 4.26 A detailed landscaping scheme for the slope in question, and for other areas, would be required under suggested condition 11.

Landscape and Visual Impact during construction

- 4.27 Adverse impacts on landscape character and visual impact during the 12 month construction period are likely but have to be weighed against the clear public benefit in replacing the bridge. Paragraphs 4.8 to 4.9 explained where construction compounds are likely to be located and the working areas are defined in the submitted plans. Mitigation measures suggested in the ES include restricting site cabins to single storey, screening/hoarding of compounds where possible, and directional lighting to avoid nuisance to neighbours.

Noise and Vibration

- 4.28 The ES analyses eight representative sensitive receptors sites, comparing operational traffic noise levels from the old bridge and the proposed bridge. None of the residential receptor sites should experience an increase in traffic noise because the original stone parapets concentrated and reflected noise towards them, whereas the open mesh would dissipate noise more evenly.
- 4.29 Noise and vibration during construction will result from piling, earthworks, cranes and generators. The ES tabulates probable impacts on representative receptors, or at specific distances, of a number of different types of plant, and concludes that construction noise levels may exceed the $70\text{dB}_{\text{LaEQ},1\text{h}}$ criterion at domestic properties between 20-40m away from noise sources due to earthworks and 40-60m from piling operations.
- 4.30 There are properties this close to the site, and the ES mitigation proposals include: limited hours of construction; acoustic enclosures for continuous plant; hoardings around demolition sites; electrical plant instead of diesel; loading/unloading sites located away from residential properties; and exhaust silencing and muffling of plant maintained in good working order.
- 4.31 It is also proposed to conduct a baseline structural survey of any property located within 60m of any piling site for comparison with the final condition of the properties. Neighbours would also be informed of hours when piling will take place.

Ecology and Conservation

- 4.32 The application site does have some ecological interest itself, but the River Derwent & Bassenthwaite Lake SAC and River Derwent & Tributaries SSSI commences at the Calva Bridge 980m upstream of the site, and is the key feature that requires consideration.
- 4.33 The operational impacts, i.e. of the replacement bridge compared to the old bridge, were thoroughly assessed in the ES, and the key issues identified were: increased lighting spill due to the open parapets affecting migrating fish and foraging bats; and loss of known populations of the Cumbria BAP species the small blue butterfly. Otters would benefit once the bridge is complete, and impacts on other species are neutral. The lighting plan provided minimises the first problem, and a scheme has been devised to attempt the translocation of a small blue butterfly colony to a new site. There are no objections from environmental consultees.
- 4.34 The temporary impacts of construction come from site clearance, from piling, and from in river working that could affect migrating fish. The latter will be controlled by the Environment Agency which has no objections to the proposals. Impacts on the river are covered in the section below on Road Drainage and the River Environment.
- 4.35 Mitigation measures suggested in the ES for the application site itself include clearing vegetation suitable for nesting birds before birds start to nest on the 1st March, but delaying clearance of vegetation suitable for reptiles until April. Exclusion of reptiles, amphibians and otters during the construction process is proposed in the ES, and mitigation measures are being transposed into the contract. Details of these would be required under suggested condition 9.

Geology, Soils and Land Contamination

- 4.36 The ES examines past contamination of the application site and concludes that handling materials left from railway and waste use would require the use of gloves for workers on the site but present no health risk to the public.
- 4.37 The Coal Authority has indicated that there have been past shallow coal workings on the site and there is a possibility of further contamination being discovered during construction. This can be dealt with by ensuring that soil contamination is monitored and appropriate action taken if necessary (see suggested condition 12).

Road Drainage and the Water Environment

- 4.38 The potential impacts in both operation and during construction have been analysed and mitigation proposed in the ES. With the mitigation proposed in an Environmental Management Plan the impacts are assessed as neutral or slight beneficial. Neither Natural England nor the Environment Agency have sustained any objections to the proposals.

Human Rights Act 1998

- 4.39 The proposal will have a limited impact on the visual and environmental amenity of the area. Any impact is minimal and proportionate to the wider social and economic interests of the community.

Conclusion

4.40 The proposed development is necessary to restore transport links and the design chosen following public consultation is appropriate. The ES demonstrates that temporary impacts from construction can be mitigated and I therefore recommend that planning permission is granted.

Paul Feehily
Assistant Director - Planning & Sustainability

Contact

Mrs Maggie Mason, Kendal, tel: **01539 713548**,
email: maggie.mason@cumbriacc.gov.uk

Background Papers

Planning Application File Reference No. **2/10/9032**

Electoral Division Identification

Mr A L Barry, St Michael's Workington.

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**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010**

Summary of Reasons For Grant of Planning Permission

- 1 This application has been determined in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Acts, in the context of national and regional planning policy guidance and advice and the relevant development plan policies.
- 2 The key development plan policies taken into account by the County Council before granting permission were as follows:

Allerdale Local Plan 2006 (saved Policies 2007)

Policy EN2:

When assessing proposals for medium to large scale development, the Council will consider the siting, form, density, layout and orientation of the development and, where appropriate, will require a pattern of development which is as energy efficient as possible.

Policy EN32:

Proposals for development or changes of use which would have an unacceptable adverse effect, either directly or indirectly, on animal and plant species protected by law, will not be permitted unless the need for the development on the relevant site clearly outweighs the presumption in favour of conservation. Where development is permitted, the Council will use conditions and/or legal agreements requiring developers to take steps to secure the protection of such animals and plants.

Policy EN39:

Proposals for the development of, the change of use to, or alterations to buildings open to the public for employment, educational, leisure or tourism use, should provide suitable access and facilities for people with disabilities, as customers, visitors and employees, where practicable and appropriate.

- 3 In summary, the reasons for granting permission are that the County Council is of the opinion that the proposed development is in accordance with the development plan. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made otherwise and with the planning conditions included in the notice of planning consent, any harm would reasonably be mitigated. Furthermore, any potential harm to interests of acknowledged importance is likely to be negligible and would be outweighed by the benefits of the development.

Development Control and Regulation Committee 23 March 2011.

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

APPROVED DOCUMENTS

- 2 The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved documents, hereinafter referred to as the approved scheme. The approved scheme shall comprise the following:

- a. The submitted Application Form – dated 10 Dec 2010
- b. Northside Bridge Environmental Statement, Capita Symonds, 2010
- c. Design_and_Access_Statement PL001_Dec_2010
- d. Plans numbered:
 - i) Site Plan_CS042170/7000/PL001_Rev 04
 - ii) General Arrangement I_CS042170/S1/GA 01_Rev P1
 - iii) General Arrangement II_CS042170/S1/GA 02_Rev P1
 - iv) General Arrangement plan_CS042170/100/013_Rev P2_March 2011
 - v) Lighting contours_CS042170/7000/PL003_RevP0
 - vi) Highway Drainage Plan - CS042170/0500/003
 - vii) Parapet_Details_VGAN 1000-03a
- e. Ground Investigation Report_6 Dec 2010
- f. Flood_Risk_Assessment_V2_Issued 13 Dec 2010
- g. Tree Survey (including Tree Protection Plan & Tree Constraints Plan), Capita Symonds 2010
- h. Noxious Weeds Report, Capita Symonds, 2010
- i. Statement of Community Involvement, Capita Symonds 2010
- j. The details or schemes approved in relation to conditions attached to this permission.
- k. This Decision Notice

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out to an approved appropriate standard and to avoid confusion as to what comprises the approved scheme.

- 3 Demolition or construction works shall not take place outside 08.00 hours to 18.00 hours Mondays to Fridays and 08.00 hours to 13.00 hours on Saturdays nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- 4 No clearance of vegetation shall take place within the bird breeding season i.e. 1 March - 31 August inclusive unless measures have previously been taken to exclude nesting birds.

Reason: To prevent harm to protected species.

- 5 No development or clearance shall commence within the site until a written scheme of investigation for an archaeological watching brief has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To afford reasonable opportunity for an examination to be made to determine the existence of any remains of archaeological interest within the site and for the investigation and recording of such remains.

- 6 The archaeological watching brief required under condition 5 shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified archaeologist for as long as required by the written scheme of investigation. Within two months of the completion of the watching brief, 3 copies of the report shall be supplied to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To afford reasonable opportunity for an examination to be made to determine the existence of any remains of archaeological interest within the site and for the investigation and recording of such remains.

- 7 Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 12, Class A(b) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 except for temporary lighting required during construction no lighting other than that shown in the approved scheme shall be installed within the development area unless a scheme detailing the column design and lighting contours has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation.

Reason: To prevent harm to protected species and in the interests of visual amenity.

- 8 Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 no development shall take place until a plan showing access to the highway from construction compound(s) has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 9 No development shall take place until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Scheme shall include the following:

- a. Traffic Management Plan to include all traffic associated with the development, including site and staff traffic;
- b. Noise Management Scheme to monitor and mitigate noise and vibration from construction and to monitor any properties at risk of damage from vibration;
- c. Mitigation measures to reduce adverse impacts on residential properties from construction compounds including visual impact, noise, and light pollution
- d. Mitigation measures to ensure that no harm is caused to protected species during construction.

When approved the scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and highway safety.

- 10 No development shall take place until a Tree Protection Scheme has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The Scheme shall include:
- a. A tree retention/removal plan showing trees to be retained on site and outside the site but adjacent to the site boundary, with their root protection areas
 - b. an Arboricultural Method Statement demonstrating how the site will be redeveloped without causing harm to trees to be retained; detailed design for the tree protection fences to be erected; and where appropriate proposals for tree friendly building techniques, no dig techniques and tree work such as pruning and felling.

When approved the scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

- 11 No development shall take place until a Landscaping Scheme has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the following:
- a. details of any paving, ramps, benches, boundary and retaining walls and fences;
 - b. the species type, number and spacing of all trees and shrubs to be planted;
 - c. seeding mix for areas to be sown as grassland.

When approved the planting shall be implemented in the first available planting season following completion of the development. Any trees or shrubs that die or become diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced with plants of a similar size and species unless alternative plant size and species have been agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

- 12 No development shall take place until a Contaminated Land Scheme has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of monitoring of land contamination during development, and action to be taken if contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site. When approved the scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To protect the water quality of the River Derwent

- 13 No development shall take place until a scheme has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority detailing the method by which small blue butterfly habitat shall be translocated to a replacement site within the ownership and control of the applicant. The scheme shall include details of the following:
- a. method for protecting the area of kidney vetch identified on plan CS042170/100/013 Rev P2 until such time as translocation is appropriate;
 - b. method and timing for removing the kidney vetch together with its soils and growing medium such that pupae below the plants are not disturbed;

- c. preparation of new habitat site identified on plan CS042170/100/013 Rev P2 to ensure soil conditions are appropriate;
- d. a 5 year management plan for the translocation site identified .

When approved the scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To preserve and enhance biodiversity.

14 The development hereby permitted shall not come into use until a scheme for cyclist safety has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:

- a. Non motorised user Stage 2 safety audit of all areas between the roundabouts north and south of Northside Bridge;
- b. Signing and road marking to direct north and south travelling cyclists to the safest available route.

When approved the scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason: In the interests of highway, pedestrian and cyclist safety.