

ITEM NO: 1.

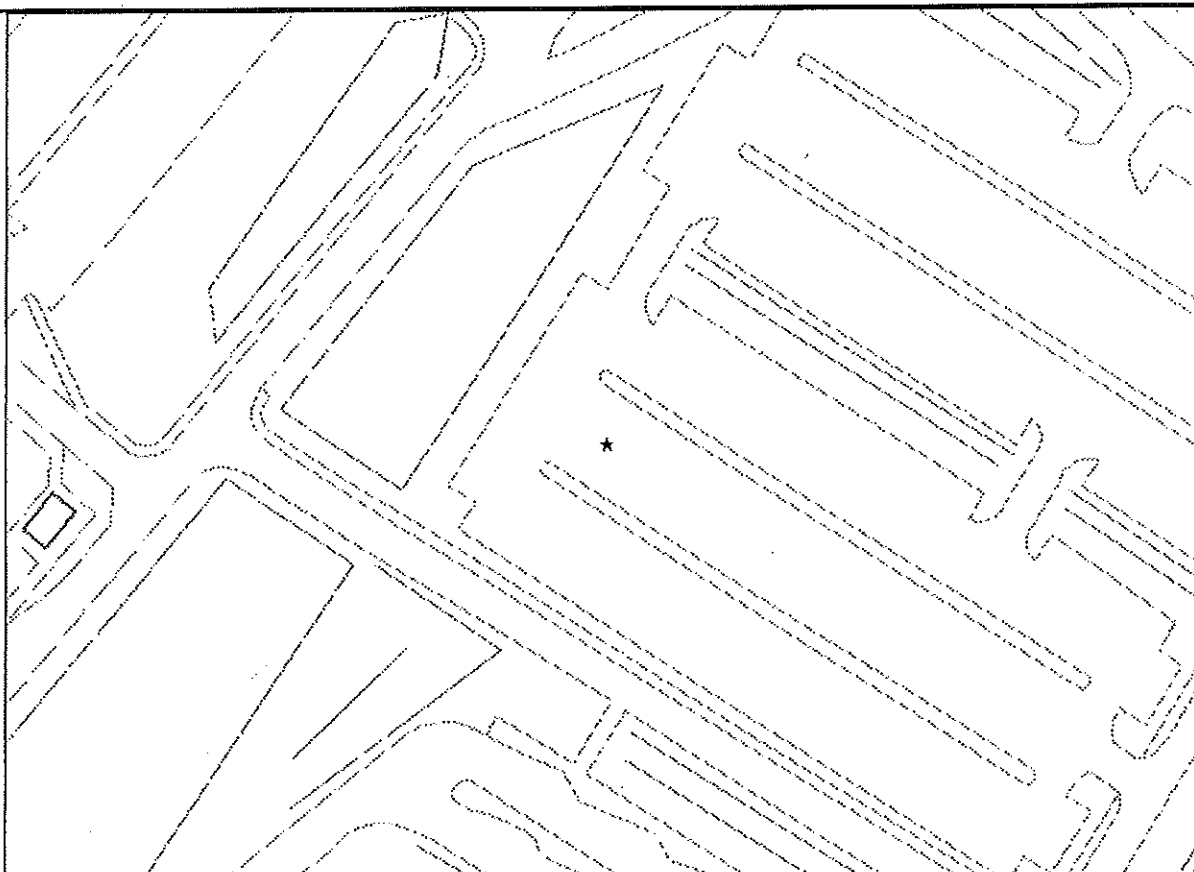


To: PLANNING PANEL

Development Control Manager

Date of Meeting: 08/12/2010

Application Number:	4/08/2298/0
Application Type:	Full : CBC
Applicant:	SELLAFIELD LTD
Application Address:	YOTTENFEWS, SELLAFIELD, SEASCALE, CUMBRIA.
Proposal	PERMANENT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR EXISTING TEMPORARY CAR PARK AND ANCILLARY STRUCTURES, CONTINUED USE OF LORRY PARK AS A MOBILE CRANE TEST AREA.
Parish:	St Johns Beckermeth
Recommendation Summary:	Approve



Crown Copyright. Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Copeland Borough Council Licence No. 100019619 (2005).

BACKGROUND

Temporary planning permission for the Yottenfews car park, including ancillary structures such as bus shelters and security lodge, was originally granted in 1985, the primary purpose at that time being to provide a contractors' car parking facility during the construction of THORP. Renewals of this temporary planning permission to facilitate continued use by Sellafield employees, visitors and sub-contractors have subsequently been granted, the most recent being for a further temporary period of two years which expires on 31 December 2010 (4/08/2451/0F1 refers).

THE PROPOSAL

Permanent planning permission for the continued use of the Yottenfews car park is now sought by virtue of this planning application which was received in June 2008. The application also seeks to regularise the established use of the segregated lorry parking area as a crane testing and HGV parking area to allow commercial vehicles to wait pending security clearance to enter the Sellafield licensed site. The application is accompanied by the following documents:-

- Design and Access Statement
- Supplementary Landscape and Ecology Details
- Sellafield Accommodation Strategy
- Sellafield Site Access Strategy
- Sellafield Travel Plan

The total Yottenfews site covers an area of 14.28 hectares which includes significant areas of associated landscaping (approximately 6 hectares), and is located some 0.5km to the north of the Sellafield licensed site.

1300 car parking spaces are provided across 5 car parking areas together with 5 bus shelters at the pick up/drop-off point. In addition there are 167 spaces providing an overspill car park for the Sellafield Visitors Centre. Access is off Yottenfews Lane (U4044) which runs along the southern boundary of the site.

APPLICANTS' JUSTIFICATION

The applicants state that the Yottenfews car park is essential in supporting Sellafield site operations and to maintaining security arrangements at the neighbouring licensed nuclear site. As a result of the requirements of the Office of Civil Nuclear Security to reduce the car parking space on the Sellafield site and increase the search rate of vehicles entering the site, the applicants reaffirm their need to maintain an off-site car parking resource for their employees and visitors to the site.

Given that Sellafield attracts a large workforce drawn from a wide geographical area, the relatively remote location of the site and scarcity of public transport infrastructure, a car park close to the site is deemed essential.

No changes to the existing arrangements at Yottenfews are proposed by this planning application; the main function of providing a "park and ride" facility for workers to and from the Sellafield site will continue.

The applicants advise that the existing Yottenfews car parking facility currently operates at an average of approximately 90% occupancy and that 43% of Sellafield staff now car share, based on the 2007 Staff Travel Survey. They also anticipate that in the future, due to the transition from shift working to day working, the demand for off-site car parking will increase. Implementation of the Sellafield Travel Plan is aimed at reducing the risk of the current car park capacity at Yottenfews being exceeded.

CONSULTATIONS

Upon receipt of the planning application the following bodies were consulted:-

Cumbria Highways – no objections

Copeland's Flood and Coastal Defence Engineer – no objections

Health & Safety Executive (Nuclear Directorate) – state that the Office for Civil Nuclear Security considers it essential that the volume of traffic entering the Sellafield site is kept to an absolute minimum at all times. Therefore, they fully support the planning application.

Copeland's Landscape Officer – no objections

Cumbria County Council Emergency Planning – no comments received.

No representations in respect of the planning application have been received from members of the public or other outside bodies.

PLANNING POLICY

As the applicant's Design and Access Statement notes, the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 recognises that the Borough is essentially rural and public transport options are limited. Remoteness and poor public transport links are particularly relevant to Sellafield operations with the workforce commuting from dispersed communities over a wide geographical area to an employment site situated in a relatively isolated rural location.

Local Plan policies relevant to the consideration of this planning application include:-

- DEV 1 Sustainable Development and Regeneration
- DEV 5 Development in the Countryside
- DEV 6 Sustainability in Design

- DEV 7 Planning Conditions and Obligations
- TSP 3 Traffic Management
- TSP 4 Measures to Improve Public Transport
- TSP 7 Transport Assessments and Travel Plans
- TSP 8 Parking Requirements
- NUC 3 Relocation of Non Radioactive Development

ASSESSMENT

The present and future significance of the Sellafield licensed nuclear site to the social and economic wellbeing of West Cumbria cannot be overstated. Nor can the need for associated security measures which, following the London terrorist attacks in July 2005, have been rightly enhanced so as to preclude vehicular access to the site for employees and visitors other than on an exceptions basis. This has resulted in increased pressure for continued off-site parking at Yottenfews and, together with other factors, provides the applicant's justification for now seeking permanent planning permission following 25 years continuous use on the basis of a series of temporary planning permissions.

National and local planning policy and guidance is very much directed towards sustainable forms of development supported by sustainable modes of transport. Given the relatively isolated rural location of the Sellafield complex and the inadequacies of the local public transport services there is clear disparity between the ideal and what actually exists.

A key factor in the determination of this planning application is to review site issues/constraints and put forward solutions via an associated Travel Plan as required by Policy TSP 7 of the adopted Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016.

A large workforce is employed at Sellafield with up to 9500 on site during a typical working day. There is associated congestion on the A595 at peak times, with 90% of staff arriving from the north. The Sellafield Accommodation and Site Access Strategies which accompanied the planning application embrace mitigation measures aimed at relocating some 1100 of the 5100 office based staff at Sellafield off-site and to Whitehaven in particular.

As originally submitted, however, the key Travel Plan document was considered weak in many respects, particularly:-

- Baseline assessment data to support the proposed travel plan measures
- No long term strategy for sustainable transport solutions
- Weaknesses in existing monitoring and governance on site and for the 'Park and Ride' at Yottenfews.

The identified deficiencies resulted in significant delay in progressing the application. More recently, however, this has been addressed by a very constructive dialogue being entered into, assisted by the Councils appointment of specialist transportation and sustainability

consultants which culminated in a most productive Sellafield Travel Plan Strategy Meeting/Workshop being held at Sellafield Visitor Centre on 27 September 2010 attended by representatives of all key stakeholders, including Cumbria County Council and Direct Rail Services.

A Travel Plan is a package of site specific initiatives aimed at improving the availability and choice of travel modes to and from a site. Sellafield already benefits from a Travel plan, the objectives of which are:

- To reduce traffic on the A595
- To reduce the number of single occupancy cars used to travel to work

Although the most recent version of the Sellafield Travel Plan (May 2010) is much improved, it was acknowledged at the workshop that deficiencies still exist, particularly relating to the robustness of the baseline data. It was agreed that this baseline data needs to be updated. Eight workstreams have been identified for inclusion within an updated version of the Travel Plan:-

1. Relocation of staff off-site.
2. Public Transport - Buses. Contract bus services ceased on 1 October 2010 when a commercial bus service commenced (Stagecoach).
3. Public Transport – Trains. Working with the Coastal Community Rail Partnership. Reducing (eventually removing) rail fare subsidy.
4. Cycles. Target potential increase in cycle users.
5. Car sharing. Promoted over Summer 2010 which had a very positive reaction.
6. Efficiency savings ("645 initiative")
7. Other Initiatives e.g. home working or changes to work patterns.
8. Monitoring and Communications – internal governance meetings and external communication via existing Stakeholder workings group.

SUMMARY

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) "Delivering Sustainable Development" sets out the Government's objectives for the planning system, stating that sustainable development is the main principle underpinning planning. The relatively isolated rural location of the Sellafield complex has to be accepted but the Council, in its role as local planning authority, has consistently maintained that increased sustainability measures can and must be addressed in relation to the continued presence of the neighbouring Yottenfews car park. This has resulted in the significant delay in determination of this application but close co-operation and the involvement of specialist consultants over recent months, culminating in the joint workshop held on 27 September 2010, has brought about common understanding

of and agreement to address these key issues via an updated Travel Plan which can be required by way of conditions attached to any subsequent grant of permanent planning permission.

Recommendation:-

Approve subject to:-

Conditions

1. Permission shall relate to the following plans and documents as received on the respective dates and development shall be carried out in accordance with them:-

Location Plan (Drawing No. 1 BE 2543557 Rev A) received on 11 June 2008.

Overspill Car Park – Access Roads General Arrangements (Drawing No. 1B 153816 Rev A) received on 11 June 2008.

Topographical Survey of Yottenfews (Drawing Nos. 0BE 2543548B – 0BE 2543555B inclusive) received on 11 June 2008.

Block Plan showing Car Park, Bus Terminal, Bus Shelters, Security Gatehouse and Structure Panting (Drawing No. 1 BE 2518526 Rev B) received on 11 June 2008.

Contractors Car Park Phase 2 – General Layout Showing Drainage (Drawing No. OPR 564205 Mod. C), received on 11 June 2008.

Contractors Car Park – Drainage and Water Services (Drawing No. OPR 523391 Mod. E), received on 11 June 2008.

Details of Services, Finished Levels, Fences and Bunds (Drawing No. OPR 833051 Mod. E), received on 11 June 2008.

Replacement Security Gatehouse (Drawing No. 1 BE YOT/SK/001 Mod. P2) received on 11 June 2008.

Typical Lamppost and Bus Shelter Details (Nos. 1-5) received on 11 June 2008

Yottenfews Car Park – Landscape and Ecology: Supplementary details for Block 6 landscaping, received on 11 June 2008.

Design and Access Statement, White Young Green, dated 3 June 2008 received on 11 June 2008.

Sellafield Travel Plan 2010-2013 Rev 3 received on 27 May 2010.

Reason

To conform with the requirement of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Within six months of the date of this planning permission, the applicant shall submit to the Local Planning Authority the results of a survey of employees and visitors travelling to and from the Sellafield site which shall be undertaken by the applicant in order to ascertain what modes of transport are used to travel to the Sellafield site and what factors influence modal choice.

From the date of this planning permission, the applicant shall continue to implement, monitor and keep under review the measures and/or work streams which are aimed at achieving the objectives of the applicant's existing green travel plan entitled "Sellafield Travel Plan 2010-2013" ("the Existing Green Travel Plan"). In particular the applicant shall observe and engage in the following monitoring and review procedures:

1. continuing to employ at all times a suitably qualified and/or Experienced Green Travel Plan Co-ordinator whose responsibility it shall be to monitor the Existing Green Travel Plan, to ensure that the applicant identifies and puts in place a reasonable set of measures or work streams to achieve the objectives of the Existing Green Travel Plan so as to reduce car usage by employees and visitors to the Sellafield site, to increase public transport usage and to promote walking and cycling to and from the Sellafield site, and disseminate information about the Existing Green Travel Plan to both employees and visitors to the Sellafield site;
2. attending quarterly meetings with the Local Planning Authority to discuss the implementation of the Existing Green Travel Plan and, in particular, the progress made by the applicant towards achieving the objectives of the Existing Green Travel Plan, and to discuss the merits of any new green travel plan related initiatives identified by the applicant or the Local Planning Authority during the preceding three month period.

Six months prior to the Existing Travel Plan coming to an end, the applicant shall submit to the Local Planning Authority for approval a new green travel plan for the period of 2013 – 2016 ("the New Green Travel Plan") that has the following primary objectives:

1. to reduce the number of single occupancy car trips to and from the Sellafield site;
2. to promote the use of sustainable transport modes to and from the Sellafield site;
3. to reduce traffic flows on the A595 in particular those travelling from the north of the Sellafield site; and

whilst at all times maintaining the efficient and safe operation of activities at the Sellafield site.

The New Green Travel Plan shall contain details of the following matters:

1. an assessment of the Sellafield site (including employee numbers, facilities, principal activities, anticipated changes in employee numbers and transport links);
2. the results of the most recent survey of employees and visitors travelling to and from the Sellafield site undertaken by the applicant to ascertain what modes of transport are used to travel to the Sellafield site and what factors influence modal choice;
3. a reasonable set of measures and/or work streams aimed at achieving the green travel plan's objectives by promoting and facilitating walking, cycling and the use of public transport with a view to reducing the number of single occupancy car journeys made by employees and visitors to the Sellafield site; and
4. a system for monitoring the operation of the green travel plan and for reporting such monitoring to the Local Planning Authority.

The applicant shall implement the New Green Travel Plan in full (as approved by the Local Planning Authority), shall monitor its implementation and shall keep its objectives and measures and/or work streams under review in accordance with the monitoring and review procedures set out above.

Six months prior to the New Green Travel Plan coming to an end, and every three years thereafter, the applicant shall submit a further new green travel plan to the Local Planning Authority for approval, such further new green travel plan to have effect for a three year period, have the same or similar objectives to the New Green Travel Plan, be implemented in full, and be monitored and kept under review in accordance with the monitoring and review procedures set out above.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety and furtherance of sustainable development in accordance with Policies DEV1, DEV5, DEV6, DEV7, TSP3, TSP4, TSP7, TSP8 and NUC3 of the adopted Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016.

Reason for Decision

With the benefit of a series of temporary planning permissions, the Yottenfews car park has been in operational use since 1985. The grant of permanent planning permission is now deemed appropriate subject to the imposition of a planning condition setting out continued requirements for a Travel Plan to help mitigate sustainability concerns associated with this relatively isolated rural location; the amount of traffic on the A595 trunk road and limited infrastructure support in terms of public transport facilities.



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Copeland Borough Council Licence No. 100019619 (2005).

Scale = 1:5000