

Copy of email from Geoff Woodcock, ESH Group dated 9th June 2008

Further to your e-mail below regarding the planning application for Prospect House, can I make it quite clear that I have no 'axe to grind' whatsoever with this development, as I do not consider that it competes with our proposal for the Water Treatment Works (WTW), consequently I would not consider raising an objection to the application and would wish the applicant well with his scheme.

However, as you have put forward this proposal as "in keeping with the environment" and fully supported by TRAG, I felt it only right to look at the proposal in some detail to see if there are elements we should learn from, (assuming, of course, that I have visited and am looking at the aerial photo of the correct site, as the perspective view supplied only relates the site to one adjacent bungalow?), I would comment as follows:-

- Having been very concerned with regard to the trees on the WTW, I am surprised that TRAG are not similarly concerned about the impact on the trees within this site, three of which are protected by TPO's and, as can be seen from the aerial photo, will have to have their canopies severely cut-back to enable the new block to be built, with probable root damage from foundation excavation likely to cause stability problems. The large tree at the front of the site will also have to be removed completely to create the road access.
- This proposal appears to require the removal of the allotments to the rear of Prospect House for the creation of 11 car parking spaces, aren't TRAG concerned about the loss of allotments, which are a very sustainable resource in this day and age? When I visited the site, both greenhouses were occupied.
- Does the increase in traffic flows not similarly concern TRAG, as it does on the WTW, particularly in a location so close to a Zebra Crossing?
- With regard to design, any developer would expect an extension to an existing building to be designed in a sympathetic way, using similar materials, Prospect House dates back to 1895, I assume all of the new build is in matching materials?
- The 'perspective view' supplied does not seem particularly accurate, Prospect House is 2.5 storey with the top floor in the roof, the new addition to the rear, is fully 3 storey without using the roof-space, however in the sketch, it appears that the new extension has a much lower roofline than the existing? I appreciate that perspective views do reduce into the distance, but this one shrinks rather rapidly, not really showing the impact on adjacent property.
- With regard to "raising the profile of Throckley Village", I am rather surprised that the new frontage to the site consists of 12 Wheelie Bins?
- On the subject of energy efficiency, this scheme will only have to comply with current building regulations, where the Code for Sustainable Homes is now mandatory at only 'level 1', whereas I explained in some detail to your group that the WTW was put on the market by Northumbrian Water (NWL) at 'Code Level 3' and we have been investigating how to reach 'Level 4', which is also the standard that has been volunteered by Newcastle City Council (NCC) on their own land that they are currently selling for housing development.
- NCC, NWL, English Partnerships and One North East are leading the way for the Region in being ahead of the Governments plans for Sustainable Development in House Building; Developers such as ourselves need to work with these influential bodies to be a part of the planned, sustainable growth in house building.

In conclusion, I am sure the Planning Authority would have picked up the above points anyway and, probably many more, if and when the scheme is submitted for planning. Having had the pleasure of meeting some of your group, I must say I am rather surprised that you are "fully supportive of this build" and have chosen to overlook the more harmful impacts on the local Environment?

We at Esh Group have gone a long way towards addressing TRAG's main issues with regard to the location of flats within our scheme for the WTW, at considerable cost, I am now happy

to leave the issue of design, sustainability, energy efficiency, etc to be determined by Newcastle City Council's Planning Committee.

Best Regards

Geoff Woodcock
Operations Director
Esh Developments