

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

ASHINGTON & BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council** held in Newbiggin Sports and Community Centre, Woodhorn Road, Newbiggin by the Sea, NE64 6HG on Wednesday, 11 October 2017 at 5.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor G Webb

(Chair, in the Chair for agenda items 1, 4, 7)

(Planning Vice-chair Councillor B Gallacher in the chair for items 5 - 6)

MEMBERS

Davey S
Gobin J J
Lang J A
Nisbet K

Parry K
Simpson E
Wilson T S

OFFICERS

Bowers H
Carter T
Filby U
Ketley M

Democratic Services Officer
Principal Planning Officer
Solicitor, Regulation
Head of Planning Services

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Campbell, E Cartie, G Davey, L Grimshaw, M Purvis and L Rickerby.

35. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council held on Wednesday, 13 September 2017, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair with the following amendments:-

- (a) Page 3, third paragraph should read Councillor Cartie.
- (b) The addition of the attendance of Councillor Purvis

The Chair referred to the previous meeting where Members had discussed the format and the timings of the meeting. Future meetings would be held at 5.30 pm

Chair's initials

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unless a significant number of planning applications were to be considered and the meeting time would be brought forward.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

36. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The report requested Members to decide the planning applications attached to the report using the powers delegated to it. Members were reminded of the principles which should govern their consideration of the applications, the procedure for handling representations, the requirement of conditions and the need for justifiable reasons for the granting of permission or refusal of planning applications. The procedure at Planning Committees was appended for information.

Discussion followed regarding the changing of the format and the timing of the meeting to consider the planning applications. A Member stated that as a local area council, members should have the autonomy to decide the format and timing of the meetings. The Chair stated that this would be raised at the next Local Area Council Chairs' meeting.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

37. 17/02423/COU

Proposed change of use to ground floor space from library to retail use for either A1 or A3 use. As granted under application 16/04249/VARYCO 74-78 Front Street, Newbiggin by the Sea, Northumberland, NE64 6QD

The Principal Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation and explained the proposed layout. He informed Members that a further letter of objection had been received however, no new issues had been raised.

Ms Eva Hartley was in attendance and spoke in objection:-

- In 2015, the decision to demolish the Railway Inn and New Dolphin Inn had received 129 objections;
- The report considered the public benefit purpose building together with public toilet and affordable housing which outweighed significant harm;
- 7.12 - the demolition of the buildings could be accepted provided that the new replacement building was of high quality and provided significant public benefit which mitigated the harm that would be caused to the conservation area by the loss of the existing buildings;
- The application was granted and demolition began in November 2015, subsequently, the Council relocated the library to the Sports Centre 100m away. How did that happen? When, where and why was that decision made ?
- Following an FOI and the intervention by the Information Commissioner, no reason could be found as to why the decision had been withdrawn. There were no Committee records or Committee meeting papers;
- The library provision should remain as part of Front Street;

- Had the new public library provision not formed part of the application to demolish and rebuild, she did not believe that planning would have been granted. There was no recorded decision or statement why a new public library was not being provided as Newbiggin had been promised and requested that the change of use application be refused.

Ms Trish Hayes was in attendance and also spoke in objection:-

- The people of Newbiggin by the Sea had campaigned long and hard to save the iconic buildings, The Dolphin and The Railway Inn and the former library and Windsor First School from demolition;;
- The public had relented to the decisions regarding the Inns when a more persuasive argument was made of replacing them with a multi use site, library and toilets;
- The Council had reneged their decision and as a result the usage of the library had plummeted due to noise from dance lessons. A square and 6 bookshelves did not make a library;
- A proposal for change of use from library from ground floor space was placed in the newspaper in July and planning permission had not even been granted, allowing an appeal to be made to keep the original plan and provide Newbiggin by the Sea with the library it deserved

Following the presentation, the following information was provided in response to questions from Members:-

- Planning permission was for the change of use;
- Toilet provisions had been retained in the building;
- There was no subsequent permission to state that the building was to be retained as a library;
- The decision to abandon the library scheme was not a matter for consideration in the change of use;
- D1 covered many uses. There was no subsequent condition in the original permission which allowed to keep as use as a library. Once the building was in operation, certain building works and changes could be carried out under permitted development rights;
- The public benefits justified under paragraph 133 of the NPPF through the previous application to demolish and rebuild were not required to be demonstrated in this change of use proposal;

Councillor Simpson moved acceptance of the recommendation subject to the conditions in the report which was seconded by Councillor Wilson. On being put to the vote the motion to accept the application was agreed by a vote of 8 in favour with 1 abstention and it was therefore:

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** permission subject to the conditions and reasons in the report.

38. 17/02881/VARYCO
Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) relating to planning application
16/03930/FUL
Land west of Bebside North Farm, Bebside Road, Blyth, Northumberland

The Principal Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation and explained the proposed layout of the application.

Following the presentation, a Member referred to a previous query raised regarding street lighting near the cul-de-sac. The Principal Planning Officer advised that street lighting had been approved under a Section 38 Agreement which was separate to the planning application;

Councillor Webb moved acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application subject to the conditions in the report which was seconded by Councillor Parry and was unanimously agreed. It was therefore:

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** permission subject to the conditions and reasons in the report.

39. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 15 November 2017. Venue to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm

CHAIR.....

DATE.....