

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ASHINGTON & BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the **Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council** held in Briardale Community Centre, Briardale Road, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 5AN on Wednesday, 11 July 2018 at 5:00 pm.

**PRESENT**

Councillor G Webb in the Chair for items 1 - 3 and 8 - 16  
Councillor Gallacher in the Chair for items 4 - 7

**MEMBERS**

D Campbell  
E Cartie  
G Davey  
S Davey  
J J Gobin  
K Nisbet

M Purvis  
J Reid  
L Rickerby  
E Simpson  
T S Wilson

**OFFICERS**

H Bowers  
U Filby  
G Horsman  
D Lally  
J Murphy  
J Sanderson  
  
E Sinnamon  
  
R Wealleans  
  
Mick Carle

Democratic Services Officer  
Solicitor, Regulation  
Senior Planning Officer  
Chief Executive  
Principal Planning Officer  
Senior Planning Manager - Planning  
Policy  
Senior Planning Manager -  
Development Management  
Neighbourhood Services Area  
Manager  
Neighbourhood Services Area  
Manager

**ALSO PRESENT**

Councillor G Sanderson (part)  
L Spark - Communications Support Assistant  
12 members of the public

### 13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Grimshaw

### 14. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council held on Wednesday, 16 May 2018, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### 15. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The report explained how the Local Area Council was asked to decide the planning applications attached to the agenda using the powers delegated to it. (Report enclosed with official minutes as Appendix A).

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

### 16. **17/04336/VARYCO - Variation of condition 1 (approved plans) of application 17/00889/VARYCO: Approval for as-built ticket kiosk, lighting box, dugout, stands and pitch perimeter fence. Approval for 101 car parking spaces. (Retrospective). South Newsham Recreation Ground, South Newsham Road, Blyth, Northumberland.**

Judith Murphy, Principal Planning Officer introduced the report and informed Members that the application sought to vary condition 1 of the original approved plans and continued introducing the application using a slide presentation.

Since the report had been written, there was one minor update to Condition 1 in relation to the pre-approved plans which should state P2.

Councillor Lesley Rickerby spoke as Ward Councillor on behalf of residents and withdrew from the committee for the determination of the application:-

- Northumberland County Council owned the land and the S106 monies had been used to develop the site to build the Pavilion and the birth of Blyth Town Football Club;
- Community Amateur Sporting Clubs (CASC) membership rules and regulations were such that if players were paid in excess of £10,000 then the club would lose CASC membership;
- Blyth Town Football Club did not need the developments as the league they were playing in did not require them and CASC membership would have to be rescinded if the Senior Team rose too high;
- There was no public open space available for wider usage;

- The club had scant regard for the non-football community;
- Residents experience the constant impact of noise, lighting and parking;
- The application was the fourth retrospective application;
- The site was overdeveloped;
- There were still drainage problems as the soil mounds were still in situ;
- If the alterations were carried it would have a negative impact on residents
- She was against the application

Members then asked questions to officers of which the key points from responses were:-

- The soil mounds were just one element of the site. There were still some outstanding issues which were being dealt with through the enforcement route and the site was being monitored in order to deliver the scheme;
- Members were asked to consider whether their concerns were based on planning material grounds. Officers were happy with the retrospective proposals to regularise the position and it was hoped the application would not go to appeal;

Councillor Purvis then moved Officer recommendation to grant the application which was seconded by Councillor Cartie.

Debate then followed of which the key points were:-

- Lack of public open space
- The kiosk and fences should not be there
- The club was meant for youth teams and not senior teams
- Concerns regarding the floodlights

On being put to the vote, the motion to grant the application failed by 5 votes against with 3 for and 3 abstentions.

The Senior Planning Manager advised Members of the need for material planning reasons to refuse the application. After some further debate, Councillor Campbell then moved the Officer recommendation to grant the application which was seconded by Councillor Purvis. On being put to the vote, the application was agreed by 6 votes in favour of approval with 1 against and 5 abstentions. It was therefore:-

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

Councillor Rickerby resumed her place on the committee.

**17. 17/02476/FUL - 3 storey side/rear extension with basement. Bayview, Beachway, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 3PG**

Geoff Horsman, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided an overview using a slide presentation. Prior to his introduction, Mr Horsman updated Members on the position of the sea wall. Planning permission had been granted in February last year to retain the existing house and neighbouring properties as part of the permission and improvements to the sea wall. A further application came before Members in February this year to allow more time for the sea wall works which was approved.

A S106 had also been completed and signed by the applicant which confirmed arrangements for the future maintenance of the sea wall, with maintenance and inspection required to take place every 2 years.

A further objection had been received since the report had been written which was similar to those objections already raised regarding the impact of the sea wall, over development and visual intrusion.

Key issues had been the scale of the extension. The view of officers was that this was acceptable and the extension was considered to be in keeping with materials, the existing property and neighbouring amenity and not considered to have any significant impacts on neighbouring properties. The sea wall design would accommodate the proposed extension.

No objections had been received from highways or ecology.

Amendment were to be made to Condition 6 which would read:-

*“Development shall not be undertaken above damp proof course level nor shall the basement area be occupied in respect of the extension hereby permitted unless and until improvement works to the adjacent sea wall have been undertaken in full accordance with the details approved by the local planning authority under planning reference 17/02838/DISCON and arrangements in respect of the long term maintenance of that improved sea wall have been secured in accordance with the requirements of planning application reference 17/04659/VARYCO”.*

An additional Condition 8 would be added:-

*“The extension hereby permitted shall be used only in association with the existing dwelling on the application site and shall not be occupied as a separate dwelling independent of the existing dwelling.*

It was therefore recommended that the application be approved subject to the amendments and conditions in the report.

At this point in the meeting Councillors Nisbet, Reid and Webb advised that although they were members of Blyth Town Council they had not been involved with the application.

Members then asked questions to officers of which the key points from responses were:-

- The detailed plans for the seawall had been approved and large boulders would be placed in front of the new and old seawall sections. The wall had undergone a vulnerability assessment and a briefing note had been circulated (attached the signed minutes) from the Flood and Structural Engineers had found the wall to be in good condition;
- The applicant owned the land, but the beach belonged to NCC
- The sea wall had been independently assessed by a Structural Engineer;
- A legal agreement was in place which required that wall repairs be carried out if the programmed inspections revealed problems.
- The breaking of waves over the wall onto the driveway was a matter beyond the scope of the planning application. More detailed structural assessment work would be undertaken as part of the Building Regulations;
- A lot of work had been carried out with the LLFA team regarding coastal erosion and it was hoped that the work to the sea wall should be underway by September;
- Condition 6 in the report stated that development should not be undertaken above the damp course until improvement works to the sea wall had been completed. This had been discussed with Legal Officers and the extension could not be constructed/occupied until the wall had been complete;
- The extension was not situated on a public right of way.

Councillor Purvis then moved the motion to approve the application which was seconded by Councillor Campbell.

Debate then followed of which key points were:-

- Officers to make sure that improvements to the sea wall to be carried out before the construction of the extension;

Councillor G Davey suggested an addition to condition 6 to state that improvements to the sea wall should be completed and the subsequent extension be constructed and a full inspection of the sea wall and extension to be carried out before occupation.

On being put to the vote, the motion to grant the application was agreed by 8 votes for with 2 against and 1 abstention. It was therefore:-

**RESOLVED** that the application be GRANTED permission subject to the amendment to condition 6, the addition of condition 8 and the reasons in the report.

## 18. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

The report was for members' information to report the progress of planning appeals.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

## OTHER LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

*Development control business concluded at 6.10 pm. Councillor Webb returned to the Chair and other local area business commenced at 6.11 pm.*

## 19. COMMUNITY CHEST AWARDS

A presentation of certificates was made to recipients of Community Chest Funding. Councillor Simpson presented a certificate to representatives of the following local organisations who had received funding from the community chest scheme:

- Ashington Hirst Running Club
- Newbiggin Heritage Partnership
- Ashington Karate Club Sponsors Group
- Cambois Rowing Club
- YMCA Northumberland
- Blyth Cricket Club

The Chair thanked the representatives for their hard work and the Committee gave them a round of applause in recognition of their efforts. The recipients and Councillor Simpson left the meeting in order for photographs to be taken.

## 20. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

**Peter Henderson, NE24 4AD** commended the flower display at Blyth Beach but was disappointed to note that there was a lack of planting at New Delaval Park. This had been reported to Parks and Gardens but nothing had been done.

The Neighbourhood Services Area Manager would refer this back to colleagues.

**Paul Taylor, NE24 3TQ** queried whether the new inner relief ring road was still going ahead.

Councillor Glen Sanderson advised that he could not give a definite answer at present.

Councillor G Davey stated that he had received a number of emails from residents and asked the Chair whether these could be passed to Councillor Sanderson for a response. It was confirmed that these would be forwarded to Councillor Sanderson.

Some discussion took place regarding the future plans of Blyth Town Centre.

**Peter Henderson, NE24 4AD** referred to a plot of land at Newsham which had been cleaned up by NCC. The previous land owner had promised to develop the land if the fly tipping was removed by the Council but there had been no further development.

This would be reported back to the relevant officers.

## 21. PETITIONS

### (a) Receive any new petitions:

(i) An online petition had been received regarding the speeding of motorbikes and cars on Highfield Drive, Ashington and will be reported at the Ashington & Blyth LAC on Wednesday 14 November 2018.

(ii) A written petition was received regarding safety improvements to Plessey Road/Post Office area and a report would be submitted to a future meeting.

(iii) A written petition was submitted regarding in relation to parking issues on Bolam Place/Waverley Drive. This did not qualify as a petition as it did not contain the minimum number of signatures.

(iv) A written petition was submitted regarding nuisance by seagulls in Blyth. This also did not qualify as a petition as it did not contain the minimum number of signatures.

(b) **Consider reports on petitions previously received:** No reports were considered at the meeting.

(c) **Receive any updates on petitions for which a report was previously considered:** None

### Petition to support additional parking and road surface improvements in Moorland Villas, Bedlington and its neighbouring areas

Nicola Cram, Lead Petitioner referred to complaints previously submitted to Northumberland County Council and to the subsequent petition from residents of the Moorland neighbourhood.

Neil Snowdon, Principal Programme Officer advised that the Local Transport Plan (LTP) was agreed before the financial year in April and the road surface had not

been included in the priorities in the 2018/19 LTP Programme.

The request for additional parking and improvements to the road condition would be added to the Database of Requests and passed to the local councillor and parish council for their consideration in the next LTP Programme.

**RESOLVED** that:-

1. the issues raised in the petition be noted;
2. the request for additional parking and improvements to the road condition to be added to the Database of Requests and passed to the local councillor and parish council for their consideration in the next LTP Programme.

## **22. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES**

This item enabled Members to raise issues about services provided by the Local Services group with the area managers from Technical Services and Neighbourhood Services.

Members raised the following issues:

- (i) Weed spraying in Newbiggin;
- (ii) Whether weeds could be strimmed instead of poisoned and what was the programme for weed spraying ?
- (iii) A Member had emailed a query regarding Robert and William Street in Blyth but had not received a response;
- (iv) The digging of bottles in Ridley Park;
- (v) Update of planned routes and the use blue dye;
- (vi) Weed spraying in Chestnut Street, Ashington was not sufficient

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted and reported to the relevant Officer.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **23. NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL PLAN - REGULATION 18 DRAFT PLAN**

The Committee were provided with an update of the Northumberland Local Plan and details on the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan consultation.

A presentation was provided from Joan Sanderson to update Members on the Northumberland Local Plan and details of the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan



consultation. The presentation would cover progress to date, consultation and the next steps.

Following the withdrawal of the Core Strategy, the Council was preparing a new Local Plan with full coverage and the plan period would run to 2036. During the Spring consultation a draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report had been consulted upon. Work had also been undertaken with internal and external partners on evidence based studies and draft policies. A Working Group reviewed and inputted into the development of draft policies and work had been undertaken with Neighbourhood Plan Groups to ensure the draft Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan documents were consistent.

There had been a threat of Government Intervention, following a letter from the Secretary of State in November 2017. The Council had responded in January 2018 and since then the Secretary of State had confirmed that he did not intend to take further action. However, he did expect the Council to accelerate the plan preparation programme by up to 3 months, which had been undertaken with the details set out in the updated Local Development Scheme (April 2018).

The new Local Plan would:

- set the strategic planning policies of the Council
- set the general scale and distribution of new development to 2036
- provide the planning principles, including detailed development management policies to guide planning decisions
- show in details where new homes, workplaces and facilities would be located through allocations of land
- show key environmental designations and include site specific proposals for the conservation and enhancement of historic and natural assets
- cover the whole of Northumberland (except the National Park)
- replace all local plans and core strategies and run alongside recent and new Neighbourhood Plans.

The objectives in the draft plan were:

- to grow and diversify the Northumberland economy
- extend housing choice
- conserve and enhance the environment and environmental assets
- improve connectivity and movement
- support healthy, sustainable communities by responding to service needs
- Mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change
- prudent use of natural resources
- ensure high quality design of buildings and spaces

In order to deliver the vision, the plan needed to define level and distribution of development and include specific policies to deliver the vision. Provide an ambitious growth scenario for employment, aligned with the SEP, North of Tyne and Borderlands Initiative and include a spatial guide to the location of

development in main towns for development; service centres and smaller scale development in other service villages and cluster of smaller settlements.

The Strategy for the economy aimed to deliver up to 15,000 new jobs and development proposals would seek to deliver sufficient land and premises. Green Belt deletions for employment land were proposed at Hexham, Ponteland and Prudhoe. Town centres would be supported as a location for employment and business. Rural enterprise and tourism would be supported and a policy on hot food takeaways.

The plan proposed to make best use of existing housing stock. The housing requirement of 17,700 dwellings was an average of 885 per annum. There were a significant number of housing schemes already approved, therefore there was no need to allocate a large number of new housing sites. Housing site allocations were in Newbiggin, Seghill, Seaton Delaval, Hexham, Prudhoe, Riding Mill, Berwick, Seahouses, Norham, Haltwhistle, Haydon Bridge, Bellingham, Ward and West Woodburn. No Green Belt deletions for housing were being proposed. The issue of second homes and need for primary occupancy was recognised. A minimum of 20% affordable housing to be split 50:50 rent/home and policies to meet the needs of older and more vulnerable people.

The plan supported the re-opening of the Northumberland Railway Line and safeguarded rail facilities; improvements to key routes, such as the A1 and the A69 and the role of Newcastle Airport.

Other policy areas included managing natural resources. The plan included policies on minerals, waste and renewable energy. Preferred areas for sand and gravel and crushed rock were identified.

#### Settlement Specific Policies

Ashington - identified as a main town. The main focus was for employment, housing, retail and services. A Settlement boundary was proposed. One additional employment site had been allocated in the north of the town. An indicative housing requirement of 1600 houses were proposed during the plan period. The re-introduction of passenger rail service on the Northumberland Line was supported and site for stations safeguarded at Woodhorn and Ashington.

Blyth - identified as a main town. The main focus was for employment, housing retail and services. A settlement boundary was proposed. The Blyth Estuary Strategic Employment Area offered upward of 200 hectares of interconnected sites for anticipated growth in strategic sectors. An indicative housing requirement of 1800 houses were proposed during the plan period. The re-introduction of the Northumberland Line was supported and sites for stations safeguarded at Bebside and South Newsham. Also land safeguarded to support progression of Blyth link road and development at Blyth Port was supported.

Bedlington/Bedlington Station was included as part of the area fell within the area covered by the Local Area Council. The main focus for employment, housing,

retail and services. No additional employment land proposed. An indicative housing requirement of 840 houses were proposed during the plan period. The re-introduction of passenger rail services supported and site for station safeguarded at Bedlington Station.

Newbiggin - identified as a Service Centre. Will accommodate development that maintains and strengthens its role. No new employment land allocation. An indicative housing requirement of 300 houses were proposed during the plan period. Several new housing sites proposed in the plan, totally between 176 to 194 dwellings depending on the density. Land safeguarded to support progression of Newbiggin/Ashington link road.

Smaller settlements - a number of smaller settlements where settlement boundaries or Green Belt inset boundaries had been defined - these included Bothal, Cambois, East Sleekburn, North Blyth and Woodhorn..

The Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation commenced on 4 July 2018 and would run for 6 weeks ending on 15 August 2018. 23 drop in events would take place around the county and responses would be fed into the preparation of the Regulation 19 Plan. It was hoped that responses would be submitted on-line.

Following the presentation, Members then asked questions to officers of which the key points from responses were:-

- In relation to town boundaries, it was advised that the plan had very limited weight at present;
- The five year housing land supply set out the housing figure and was updated every year.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

## **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### **24. MEMBERS LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES**

Members received an update as of July 2018.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

### **25. LOCAL AREA WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received the latest version of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings (attached to the official minutes as Appendix E).

**RESOLVED** that the work programme be noted.

**26. FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday, 15 August 2018 at Northumberland YMCA, Ashington.

**27. URGENT BUSINESS**

Outside Bodies

A Member was required for the Mediation and Industrial Communities Alliance and it was suggested that an email be circulated to Members for an appointment to the organisation.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.56 pm

**CHAIR**.....

**DATE**.....