

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

ASHINGTON & BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council** held in the Collingwood Suite, Newbiggin Sports and Community Centre, Woodhorn Road, Newbiggin by the Sea, NE64 6HG on Wednesday, 13 March 2019 at 5:15 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor E Simpson
(Vice Chair, in the Chair, for items 85-87 and 92-97)

Councillor B Gallacher
(Planning Vice-Chair, in the Chair, for items 88-91)

MEMBERS

E Cartie
G Davey
S Davey
L Grimshaw
K Parry

M Purvis
J Reid
L J Rickerby
T Wilson

OFFICERS

M Carle
D Hadden
J Murphy
K Norris
P Soderquest

R Wealleans
C Willis

Highways Delivery Area Manager
Lawyer
Principal Planning Officer
Democratic Services Officer
Head of Housing and Public
Protection
Neighbourhood Services Area
Manager
Planning Technician

ALSO PRESENT

Press: 1
Public: 7

85. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nisbet, Gobin and Webb.

86. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Ashington & Blyth Local Area Council held on Wednesday, 13 February 2019, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

In response to comments about Minute No. 83, third bullet point, regarding the request for costs incurred on the whole process from when the previous Core Strategy version had been withdrawn in July 2017 to the end of the current consultation, it was noted that the Senior Planning Manager, Planning Policy was aware of this but information could not be provided until after the consultation process had closed and would be provided in due course.

87. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Parry declared a personal interest in item 5 application 18/03390/FUL as he used to work with the applicant and would take no part in the discussion or the voting thereon.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Councillor Simpson then vacated the Chair, for Planning Vice-Chair Councillor Gallacher to chair the development control section of the agenda, as was the arrangement for all Local Area Councils.

88. 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.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

89. 18/03390/FUL - Construction of new Two Storey Dwelling with Detached Garage, Land to the South of Berristock, Cambois, Northumberland

Connor Willis, Planning Technician, introduced the above application and summarised details set out in the report.

Reference was made to paragraph 7.5 of the officer report relating to settlement boundaries and it was stated that officers did not consider this criteria had been met.

Public Protection had objected to the proposal on the grounds of contaminated land so if the proposal was to be considered further a Phase 1 desktop assessment and Phase

2 intrusive investigation would need to be undertaken and a remediation statement submitted, if required. Similarly concerns from the County Ecologist would need to be addressed by way of a s106 obligation to provide a coastal mitigation contribution.

Officers recommended that the application be refused for the reasons provided in the report.

Judith Murphy, Principal Planning Officer, then read out a statement from the Ward Member, Councillor Gobin, who had registered to speak in support of the application but was unable to attend the meeting.

Councillor Gobin's comments were as follows:

If I could draw members' attention to 2.6 which states the site is located between two existing dwellings, Debdon House and Berristoc.

7.7 states Policy H3 of the WDLP contains provisions for assessing proposals. This site is a brownfield site as it makes use of previously developed land well within the settlement of previously developed land well within the settlement of Cambois. It was formerly known as Foster Terrace.

7.8 - It follows as this is on previously developed land it is compliant with the Emerging Development Plan as outlined in STP1.

Planning permission was granted by Wansbeck District Council on Friday, 11 October 1996 to build Berristoc and the application clearly stated the address as Foster Terrace. Both previous refusals to this application were made by NCC and refused quoting policies GP1 and H3. Unfortunately it was never contested that this site had been previously developed and as such was Greenfield and in the open countryside.

I would argue this is brownfield building on a site that was occupied from roughly the lifetime of Cambois Colliery until demolition in the early 80's. It therefore follows it is also a windfall and should be given permission.

I would add that the applicant will comply with any conditions determined by this committee.

Members' Questions

In response to questions, the following information was provided:

- With regard to contaminated land, if members were minded to approve the application, investigations in the form of a phase 1 desktop assessment would need to be carried out to clarify the exact level of contamination on the site. A subsequent phase 2 intrusive investigation and a remediation statement, if required would also need to be submitted to the local planning authority for the Public Protection Officers to agree, prior to permission being granted.
- Although the Wansbeck District Local Plan was a dated document it was still the starting point within the adopted Development Plan for considering the application. In that document this site was not factored in the settlement boundary for the development of housing.

- Reference was made to a previous application which was approved approximately 8 or 9 years ago. In response it was pointed out that the application had consisted of more than housing, and had been described as an 'eco town'. When assessing that application it had been decided that, on balance, the benefits of that proposal had outweighed the harm but in this instance there was only one dwelling and there were no such benefits.
- The Council had more than a 5 year housing land supply, it could demonstrate a 12.1 years supply and, as such, the presumption in favour of sustainable development did not apply.
- If this application was being considered under the emerging Northumberland Local Plan, the site would still be outside of the settlement boundary.
- In response to comments that the site was not in the open countryside, it was stated that, because the site was not within the settlement boundary, it was classed as being in open countryside by default.
- Required housing numbers had been included in the emerging Northumberland Local Plan and officers had to comply with policies giving careful consideration to where housing could be built.
- The Chair said this was a large site between two houses with the railway line to the rear. It was an infill site which would be improved by this development but a line was being drawn in the middle of a settlement. It was queried how to request that the boundary be redrawn to make it more acceptable to members and the people of Cambois. In response the Principal Planning Officer said that could have been done through the Call for Sites process of the Local Plan but she would need to clarify if that part of the process had now closed.

Councillor Grimshaw moved that members be minded to grant permission, subject to concerns about land contamination being addressed to the satisfaction of Public Protection and subject to conditions and a s106 obligation to deal with concerns from the County Ecologist being addressed regarding coastal mitigation, which was seconded by Councillor Reid, for the following reasons:

- The land did not appear to be in the open countryside;
- They believed the land to be brownfield land;
- The site was between two houses and had been split into two settlements.

A member said he would be extremely surprised if there was any contamination other than fly-tipping as there had previously been housing on the site.

In response to a question the Principal Planning Officer said that if members were minded to approve the application, legally conditions could be decided by delegated authority but in more recent times the Interim Director of Planning had advised that they come back to committee for approval.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was unanimously agreed and it was therefore:

RESOLVED that

1. Members be minded to grant planning permission for the reasons stated above as follows:

- The land did not appear to be in the open countryside;
 - They believed the land to be brownfield land;
 - The site was between two houses and had been split into two settlements.
2. Approval be subject to appropriate conditions to be compiled and referred back to Members for approval.
 3. Approval subject to concerns about land contamination being addressed to the satisfaction of Public Protection.
 4. Approval be subject to concerns regarding coastal mitigation being addressed to the satisfaction of the County Ecologist and secured through a S106 agreement.

90. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

Members received information on the progress of planning appeals.

A member requested that information be provided to the Local Area Council regarding the cost of planning appeals incurred by:

- 1) the Council overall
- 2) each of the five Local Area Councils.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Planning Services be asked to follow up the request.

91. URGENT BUSINESS

With the agreement of the Chair, urgent business was brought forward on the agenda.

A member referred to planning application 17/04659/VARYCO - Variation of Condition 1 pursuant to planning permission 16/02735/FUL, in order to extend the time frame for seawall works. She stated that she was aware there had been issues of confidentiality which had prevented update reports being provided but requested that information be brought to the next meeting to inform all Councillors about the next steps.

RESOLVED that Planning Services be asked to follow up the request.

On the conclusion of the development control business, the meeting adjourned for 5 minutes. The remainder of the agenda consisted of other Local Area Council business which commenced at 6:05 pm.

OTHER LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

92. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

David Mallen referred to car parking at hospitals and asked if the Council had any jurisdiction over it. In response it was stated that this was not in Local Authority control and the NHS had jurisdiction.

93. PETITIONS

- (a) No new petitions were received.
- (b) Traffic Calming in Latimer Way, Newbiggin by the Sea

Neil Snowdon, Principal Programme Officer, introduced the above report. It was recommended that speed surveys be carried out in order to assess the speed of vehicles and upon completion, when the relevant data was available, an update be provided.

Clarification was given that this was not a one way system.

During the discussion a member said he had not received a response to an issue he had previously raised about double yellow lines at the Park School in Ashington. The Principal Programme Officer stated this was currently with the legal section and he would contact the member as soon as possible with further information.

RESOLVED that, when available, an update be forwarded to the lead petitioner, the local Ward Member and Parish Council for information and further discussion if necessary.

- (c) There were no updates on petitions previously considered.

94. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

Members received a verbal update from the Area Managers of Technical Services and Neighbourhood Services who were in attendance to discuss recent, ongoing and/or future planned Local Services work for the attention of members of the Local Area Council.

Neighbourhood Services update:

Ray Wealleans, Neighbourhood Services Area Manager, stated that the winter programme had concluded in Ashington, Blyth and Newbiggin. Grass cutting had commenced early and would be carried out throughout the whole of the Local Council area. A more detailed update would be provided at May's meeting.

A member referred to cycle paths at Blyth beach being in a poor state of repair. Discussion ensued and comments were made that £50,000 had been reserved in the capital programme for the maintenance of cycle paths and that Sustrans had built the cycle paths at Blyth beach. The Area Manager advised that inspections of cycle paths were due to be carried out the following week and he would follow up the comments made with the Green Spaces and Countryside Manager.

Councillor Grimshaw expressed her thanks to the Neighbourhood Services team for all of their hard work and asked that her thanks also be conveyed to the Refuse Collection team who were doing a fantastic job.

Technical Services update:

Michael Carle, Highways Delivery Area Manager, stated that the winter services programme was coming to an end. Work on the salt barn at Cowley Road Depot, Blyth was almost finished, maintenance work was ongoing and 1800 square metres of tarmac patching had been done in Ashington and Blyth with work due to commence at Remscheid Way and the A189, East Sleekburn.

Details of completed drainage repairs and upcoming work were provided.

In response to comments it was stated:

- Roads in need of repair, which were not listed on the LTP programme, would be picked up for structuralised patching by inspectors on their monthly inspections. It was noted there were roads in the West end of Ashington in need of repair which were not on the programme.
- Plastic filler was an element which could be used in tarmac, this had been used on a section of road in Longhirst and results would be monitored over the next 52 weeks.
- There was money available in the budget for repairs to the spine road.
- Station Road, Ashington (work commencing the following day and completing by 22 March) would be cleaned and sealed.
- Concerns about NCC operatives leaving materials in the car park at Stakeford Bridge were acknowledged and that disposal of such materials should be done in a safe and correct manner. Agreement to have a gate had been made that day.
- Some infills could be done without tar, an aggregate fill resistance could be used in some locations and these would be looked at individually.
- With regard to micro asphaltting, officers visited sites with the contractor to determine the suitability of the site and to identify issues.
- The Highways Delivery Area Manager would contact Russell Mason, Highways Maintenance Senior Team Leader, about an area of patching marked out on Milburn Road and provide an update to Councillor Purvis.
- The Highways Delivery Manager would follow up and clarify the position with Dale Rumney, Principal Programme Officer (Highways Maintenance) regarding Monkseaton Terrace - concrete road.

RESOLVED that the information be noted and issues raised be followed up.

(a) Environmental Enforcement and Environmental Campaigns Update

Members received a report on dog control enforcement and the Green Dog Walkers' Campaign in September 2018. The report provided an update on environmental enforcement and the Council's environmental campaigns (copy attached to the signed Minutes as Appendix E).

Members raised the following issues:

- A number of residents had requested dog waste disposal bags but had not received any. Others had received some but they were very thin and not the same quality as those previously issued.
- A request had been made for a yellow sprayed stencil dog, with appropriate wording to pick up dog waste, outside of new schools but this had not been done.
- Town/Parish Councils were employing their own staff to carry out enforcement as it was a problem which needed to be tackled. Whilst it was acknowledged that offenders could not be named, it was suggested that notices could be displayed to show how many people had been fined in each Ward.
- Some issues raised on social media were down to public perception and were not always accurate.
- The number of fly tipping incidents was listed as 0.7. It was queried if that outweighed the cost of employing officers to pick items up and if the cost per item was lowered, how would that compare?

RESOLVED that

- 1) the information in the report be noted;
- 2) The Head of Housing and Public Protection follow up the issues raised.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

95. MEMBERS' LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES 2018/19

Members received a progress report. (Copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix F.)

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

96. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

Members received the latest version of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings (any suggestions for new agenda items would require confirmation by the Business Chair after the meeting). (Copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix G.)

A member requested that an update be brought to the next meeting about the Blyth relief road.

RESOLVED that

1. that the information be noted.
2. A request be made to officers and the Business Chair about an item being included on the next agenda about the Blyth relief road.

97. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council would take place on Wednesday, 10 April 2019 at Blyth Civic Centre - time to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 6:34 pm

Chair _____

Date _____