

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the **Castle Morpeth Local Area Council** held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF on Monday, 14 May 2018 at 4.00pm

**PRESENT**

Councillor S. Dickinson  
(Planning Vice-chair, in the Chair)

**COUNCILLORS**

Bawn, D.L	Jackson, P.A
Dodd, R.R	Ledger, D.
Dunn, L.	Sanderson, H.G.H (part)
Foster, J.D.	Towns, D. (part)

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Bird, M	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Filby, U	Solicitor
King, M.	Highways Delivery Area Manager
Laughton, R.	Planning Officer
Patrick, M.	Principal Highways Management Development Officer
Sinnamon, E.	Senior Planning Manager
Soulsby, R.	Planning Officer
Wardle, S	Neighbourhood Services Area Manager

B Dews - North East Ambulance Service  
Press (1)  
Public - 12 (from 4pm), 4 (from 6pm)

**01. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**RESOLVED** that the membership and terms of reference for the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council agreed by Council on 2 May 2018 be noted.

**02. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Armstrong, Beynon, Jones and Wearmouth (and from Councillor Towns for lateness).

**03. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council held on Monday, 9 April 2018 as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**04. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor Dodd declared an interest in relation to the ambulance performance standards item as he was a Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust governor.

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**

**05. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The attached report explained how the Local Area Council was asked to decide the planning applications attached to this agenda using the powers delegated to it, and included details of the public speaking arrangements. (Report attached to the signed minutes as Appendix A.)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted

**06. 18/00250/OUT**

**Outline Planning Permission with All Matters Reserved for four detached dwellings with associated garages, parking and garden areas  
Land At Tranwell Airfield , C153 At Gubeon Plantations, Tranwell Woods, NE61 3YJ**

(Councillors Jackson and Sanderson joined the meeting after the commencement of this item, so neither participated in the discussion or decision.)

Richard Laughton, Planning Officer, introduced the application with the aid of a slides presentation, and firstly corrected an error: details of reasons for refusal 3 & 6 had been repeated in the report; there were six reasons for refusal and not seven.

Councillor Susan Richardson, chair of Whalton Parish Council, then spoke about the application; she clarified that she was speaking on behalf of both Whalton Parish Council and Mitford Parish Council, who had made a joint response to the application:

- the application site was entirely within the Green Belt and did not meet any special exemptions as per paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to justify its release for development
- the site had been reclaimed in the 70 years since the Second World War; it was very open and any buildings would be extremely prominent and affect the openness of the Green Belt

- if agreed it could lead to urban sprawl; there was no shortage for housing on other sites. The site was not included in the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA); the nearby site 3105 had been considered but was also not available for development
- other concerns included restricted sewage connections, the local presence of protected species, and how the public right of way across the land had not been addressed.

Craig Ross then spoke in support of the application, of which his key points were:

- of the owners' 17 acres of land, this application covered three acres, for a site which could accommodate 200 houses. The application would make no provision for any further development on the site due to access
- four refusal reasons concerned lack of information provided; heritage, ecology and contamination reports could all be undertaken if the principle of development could be established
- the public right of way could be accommodated through the site, this was an outline application
- granting the application would halt local car boot sales at the site; complaints had been received about them regarding noise disturbance and traffic. It would also address concerns about trespassing
- the site did meet NPPF exceptions as it would result in the reuse, enhancement and management of the site. It should be agreed to delegate to officers or defer for a site visit.

In response to a member's question it was clarified that an original application for four dwellings on the site had been refused, then an application for three chalets had been submitted three years later.

Councillor Dodd then moved the officer recommendation to refuse the application for the reasons in the report. This was seconded by Councillor Ledger.

Debate followed of which the key points were:

- it was an important and historical site, and the archaeological work planned was welcomed
- sympathy was expressed for the applicants, but, on balance, the site was inappropriate for development
- it was a Green Belt site and there were no special circumstances justifying the application

It was then put to the vote, and agreed unanimously that it be:

**RESOLVED** that the application be REFUSED for the reasons in the report.

**07. 18/00317/FUL  
Construction of a detached two-storey dwelling and detached double garage  
Plot 4 Harrison Hall, The Avenue, Medburn, NE20 0JD**

Ryan Soulsby, Planning Officer, introduced the application with a Slides presentation.

Margaret Chaytor then spoke in objection to the application, of which her key points were:

- Medburn had been a hamlet of 70 houses, but recent applications had increased it by 150 dwellings; there had been no consideration to the viability or sustainability of this increase
- it was accessed from an unadopted single track road with blind bends which was regularly blocked with construction traffic. It was not safe for children to walk there, yet the Highways Authority had considered that because there had been no accidents, it showed a lack of identifiable harm?
- examples of errors in the handling of recent applications for Medburn, including poor enforcement
- 30 objections had been submitted, but no letters of support
- with the recent cooling in the housing market, Medburn could have 100 vacant executive houses.

Councillor Katrina Woodrow then spoke on behalf of Ponteland Town Council, of which her key points were:

- Medburn was served by poor footpaths and a limited bus service
- construction traffic had decimated the local road surface
- concerns reported to the Environmental Health department had made little impact
- the C345 was only an access road and was not intended for this new volume of traffic
- Medburn had developed from a small hamlet to a large housing estate.

The Chair then confirmed that the agent had not been able to attend the meeting to speak in support, however he had submitted a letter in support of the application instead to all members of the Local Area Council. All members present confirmed they had seen the letter. (Copy attached to the official minutes.)

Members asked questions of which the key details of responses were:

- no viability and sustainability study had been submitted, however there was no expectation on the applicant to provide one. The cumulative effect was a policy consideration, whereas this application had to be considered as presented
- The Avenue was a private, unadopted road. The Highways Authority had to look at the impact on the nearest adopted highway
- the inspector had commented on highways concerns and considered that they would result in a modest increase in the context of recent and future developments. The inspector would have visited the site. Inspectors' views in such cases fluctuated very little
- it would not be reasonable to put conditions on the applicant to improve a private road; this would be unreasonable and appealable
- adopting highways depended on a number of factors including their width/drainage/strength. The landowners would need to propose the road for adoption. The applicant could not implement any conditions on a road which was not within his ownership.

Councillor Jackson then moved that the application be refused as it would have a significant detriment to the amenity of neighboring residents, and there was a lack of an access statement showing the site to be located in a reasonable place.

In response to a member's question about whether the refusal would be reasonable and proportionate, the Senior Planning Manager advised that it would be appealable and unreasonable based on a recent planning decision in Medburn.

In the absence of anybody seconding the proposal to refuse the application, the motion thus fell.

Councillor Dodd then moved the recommendation to grant the application; he added that he did so reluctantly and sympathised with Councillor Jackson's concerns but it was one of several applications that could be lost on appeal. He added that some review of local development in Medburn should be considered. Councillor Ledger seconded this, agreeing that the situation should be assessed as the village had grown out of proportion very quickly.

Debate followed of which the key points were:

- a traffic study should be considered to attain evidence of the impact upon Medburn
- it was concerning that safety concerns could not be discussed due to road ownership factors
- some arrangements needed to be organised to support local residents' concerns
- members had repeatedly raised concerns about development in Medburn.

The motion to grant was then put to the vote, and agreed by five votes in support, two against and one abstention, and it was:

**RESOLVED** that the application be GRANTED subject to the conditions in the report, and:

- officers arrange for further consideration to be given to concerns about highways safety and access for Medburn, to include the local member, and report back to the Local Area Council.

**08. 18/00638/FUL**

**Resubmission: Erection of two dwellings**

**Land North Of Burnlea, The Avenue, Medburn, NE20 0JD**

Ryan Soulsby, Planning Officer, introduced the application with a Slides presentation.

Robert Elliott then spoke in objection to the application, of which his key points were:

- the new dwellings would have a severe and permanent intrusion on his privacy and residential amenity by directly overlooking his home; the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan stated that new dwellings should not have an unacceptable impact; this was neither an infill site or a brownfield plot
- the application proposed the removal of trees which had Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on, which currently enhanced their residential amenity

- the application was on a small plot, the properties would not respect the character of the site with their height, size, scale and materials; many other local properties were bungalows built in the 1930s
- The Avenue was constantly blocked and access was from a tight bend
- the plot was subject to flooding.

Councillor Katrina Woodrow then spoke on behalf of Ponteland Town Council, of which her key points were:

- construction traffic had destroyed the road, yet residents paid for it
- it would have an impact on protected species
- complaints had been repeatedly made to Environmental Health about the times of construction
- it went against paragraph 11 of the NPPF as it would not enhance the local environment nor contribute to the local landscape
- it would immeasurably damage local amenity
- concerns about the inspector's decision on the previous application.

Applicant Paul Fairly then spoke in support of the application, of which his key points were:

- the application was a resubmission of a scheme that already had planning permission
- the case officer confirmed that the application accorded with all local and national policy
- it would result in a reduction in volume, maintain local high standards, ensure privacy aspects, and had a similar density to and use similar materials to other local properties
- the Tree and Woodlands Officer had no comments; new trees were proposed by the boundary, forming a convenient screen
- the Highways Authority had raised no issues; the vehicle movements from this application would be negligible and there was no evidence of any highway impact resulting from it.

Members asked questions of which the key details of responses were:

- the height of the hedges were to be restricted to assist highway safety
- it would assist in future if a wider range of photographs were provided of such sites
- the previously agreed application included two houses of a larger scale, whereas this application proposed smaller versions
- the plot was considered suitable for building two dwellings - nearby Burn Lea was a similar scale and size
- there was a 30m separation between the front of the first and second dwellings from Crest View. Castle Morpeth Local Plan policy H15 recommended a minimum separation of 20m
- it was not frequent that an application for one house on a plot was succeeded by one for two houses, but the principle of development had been established for the site, which could accommodate two dwellings.

Councillor Dickinson then moved the officer recommendation to grant the application. This was seconded by Councillor Bawn.

Debate followed during which concern was expressed about the process through which applications were agreed then succeeded in future by revised ones. It was suggested that the removal of permitted development rights be added as a condition, which would require a further application to allow any other changes.

Councillors Dickinson and Bawn both agreed to include the condition to remove permitted development rights in their motion. The amended motion was then put to the vote and agreed by six votes in support, one against and one abstention and it was:

**RESOLVED** that the application be GRANTED subject to the conditions in the report and a further condition to remove permitted development rights.

## 09. APPEAL UPDATE

Members received information on the progress of planning appeals. (Report attached to the official minutes as Appendix A.)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

*(5.15pm: the meeting then adjourned until 6.00pm. Councillor Towns then arrived at the meeting.)*

## OTHER LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

### 10. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

This item was to reply to any questions received from members of the public, which could be received in writing in advance or asked at the meeting. Questions could be asked about issues for which the Council had a responsibility.

**Councillor Alan Sambrook, Pegswood Parish Council** referred to proposals for signs for variable road speeds outside of schools, as no details of timings had been included, nor when they would be introduced and was Pegswood Parish Council required to clarify all the affected side roads affected?

Cabinet member for Local Services Councillor Sanderson responded that the proposals were at a very early stage and various options would be considered. A careful approach would be taken to their installation as they were expensive and had not been effective in all examples of their introduction elsewhere. Contact would be made with all town/parish councils before any proposals went ahead.

**Local resident Ed Brown** queried the originally proposed timescale of six to nine months for the revised Core Strategy, and could an update on the process be provided?

Councillor Jackson responded that the original timetable proposed would have required a refresh, and the period had been extended to include a plan for 20 years

rather than 13. The process was being dealt with in a shortened timescale. The Core Strategy would have taken two years to complete, whereas a detailed Local Plan was being done straightaway. The draft Local Plan would be published for consultation in Autumn, which would have weight in planning decisions; it would include more evidence, based on the latest evidence. This process had been ongoing for seven years now.

## 11. PETITIONS

It was noted that a petition had been received regarding concerns with Riversdale House Flats, Stakeford. A provisional response had been provided for the lead petitioner in the meantime as the officer report was not yet ready.

Councillor Foster, as local member for Stakeford, expressed concern that this issue had been ongoing for 30 years. She suggested that other options should be included in the report when it was presented in July. The provisional response had not supported the petition's requests for either Compulsory Purchase Order or selective licensing, but Councillor Foster supported them as ways forward. There continued to be many problems at the location and a serious assault had recently taken place.

It was confirmed that a full report would be submitted to the July meeting, and comments made would be reported back to officers.

Further to this, it was confirmed that there were no reports on petitions previously received or updates on any petitions that were previously considered.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted and a report be considered at July's meeting.

*(Councillor Sanderson then exited the meeting.)*

## DISCUSSION ITEMS - CORPORATE

### 12. NORTHUMBERLAND EAST AMBULANCE SERVICE UPDATE

A presentation was provided from Barry Dews of the North East Ambulance Service about ambulance performance standards (copy attached to the official minutes). Key details included:

- details of the 14 ambulance stations in Northumberland
- the categorisation of response time standards up until 30 October 2018 (Red 1 - 2 and Green 1 - 4)
- the need to change the standards due to increased demand, time frames over-ruling patient care, the high volume of crews diverted between cases, and Rapid Response on the scene for longer periods for a conveying resource; a decade old system would be replaced to meet modern needs
- ambulance call volumes 2005/06 to 2016/17
- details of the new standards, Categories 1 - 4, and specialist responses
- ambulance response objectives: a timely response to patients with life-threatening conditions; having the right clinical resources to meet the



needs of patients; reducing multiple dispatches; reducing the diversion of resources; increasing hear and treat and increasing see and treat

- details for the ambulance response benchmark with other areas for categories 1 - 4 as of April 2018.

Key details of ensuing discussion included:

- in response to a question, members were advised that NHS England had stipulated to Ambulance Services that as a result of the new changes, localised data would not be available until September 2018
- the whole service had been modelled to focus on how to meet the demand, including changes to staff rotas. Of the 100 extra paramedics identified as needed for the whole Trust, clarification could be provided after the meeting about how many were expected to be Northumberland based
- many paramedics had been recruited from overseas, but the Trust also developed their own, included apprenticeships, but they were also required to undertake a university course
- members stressed that the targets were easier to meet in some areas than others, and agreed that recruitment was a significant issue. The 100 paramedics required were not just front line but also to assist in control rooms. Many paramedics had been lost to the private sector in recent years. Rural areas did pose challenges to targets and additional investment was needed. The service aimed to always improve
- regarding the possible impact of Brexit, members were advised that 35 additional people were due to finish their studies and qualify as paramedics shortly. Some staff had left but more were now being trained.

Mr Dews was thanked for his attendance and it was:

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

### 13. **OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members were asked to make appointments to outside body organisations within the Local Area Council's remit. A list of outside bodies was attached to the agenda for consideration. (Attached as Appendix F to the official minutes, and revised list also attached.)

It was agreed to reappoint the following:

- Choppington Education Foundation - D Ledger
- Druridge Bay Regeneration Partnership - S Dickinson
- Friends of Morpeth Museum - D Bawn
- Greater Morpeth Development Trust - R Wearmouth
- Linton Miners Welfare Management Committee - L Dunn
- Lynemouth Welfare Management Committee - L Dunn
- Morpeth Markets Advisory Group - J Beynon
- Stakeford/Bomarsund Social Welfare Centre - J Foster and D Ledger

It was clarified that due to changes in the Trust's Constitution, no further County Council representative was required to be appointed to the Mary Hollon Annuity and Relief in Need Trust.

It was also confirmed that this Local Area Council needed to appoint a member to the Industrial Communities Alliance, in addition to the two members appointed by the Ashington/Blyth Local Area Council and one member by the Cramlington/Bedlington/Seaton Valley Local Area Council. It was agreed to appoint Councillor Ledger.

**RESOLVED** that the list of appointments be agreed, subject to the changes highlighted.

#### 14. **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LOCAL SERVICES**

##### **Timed 20mph speed limits near schools**

A report was presented, for information, about the introduction of timed temporary 20mph zones near schools, indicated by flashing amber lights. (Report attached to the official minutes as Appendix G.)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

#### 15. **LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES**

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

Key details were as follows:

Neighbourhood Services:

- significant investment in new equipment included 29 ride on mowers, at a cost of £600,000
- an £8.6m programme over three years would provide 50 new large refuse vehicles, assisting with increased household numbers in the county
- there had been a delay in grass cutting resulting from the volume of rain early in the season, but the new machines were providing an excellent cut
- weed control operations were now being delivered inhouse. Blue dye was being used this year so the public could see which areas had been treated. The dye posed no risks to animals. It would be undertaken on a ward by ward basis.

In response to a question, data and a cost sheet about the blue dye could be provided shortly. A recognised supplier had been engaged. A member thanked Mr Wardle personally for his work and dealing with issues very quickly and efficiently.

Technical Services (Highways): regarding the LTP and capital programme, much work had been programmed prior to 'The Beast from the East' and some work was being reviewed to identify any problems and provide the right treatment. The Castle Morpeth area had been badly affected by the extreme weather and much work took place to respond to reactive calls. Work ensured that the network was safe, within the available resources.

Mr Wardle and Mr King were thanked for their updates and it was:

**RESOLVED** that the updates be noted.

**16. Consultation on the Refreshed Functional Hierarchy and Resilient Road Network**

The purpose of the report was to inform the Local Area Council about the consultation that was taking place with county councillors, town and parish councils and other key stakeholders on a periodic review of the Council's functional road hierarchy. (Report attached to the official minutes as Appendix H.)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**17. Verge Litter Picking Programme/Plans**

Members had received a letter from the Head of Neighbourhood Services on scheduled verge litter picking programme/plans over Spring, which was in response to a letter received from Alnwick Alnwick Friends of the Earth. (Copy of letter and original letter from Alnwick Friends of the Earth attached to the official minutes of the meeting.)

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**18. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

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

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

**19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday, 11 June 2018 at 4.00pm in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth.

**CHAIR** .....

**DATE** .....