# NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

#### CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Castle Morpeth Local Area Council** held in the Council Chamber on Monday, 11 November 2019.

#### PRESENT

Councillor J. Beynon (Vice-Chair, in the Chair for item 87-94)

(Planning Vice-chair Councillor L. Dunn in the chair for items 74-86)

#### COUNCILLORS

Armstrong, E. Bawn, D.L. Dodd, R.R. Jackson, P.A. (part) Jones, V. Sanderson, H.G.H. (part) Towns, D.J. Wearmouth, R.

#### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

- Bennett, Mrs L.M. Hadden, D Jones, P. King, M. Laughton, R. Millar-McMeeken, E. Murphy, J. Palmer, T. Patrick, M.
- Peadon, A. Sinnamon, E. Soulsby, R. Walsh, N. Wardle, S.

Senior Democratic Services Officer Solicitor Service Director: Local Services Area Highways Manager **Planning Officer** Senior Planning Officer Principal Planning Officer Head of Procurement Principal Highways Development Manager Library Service Manager Senior Planning Manager Planning Officer Head of Cultural Services Neighbourhood Services Area Manager

# 74. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Dickinson, J.D. Foster and D. Ledger.

#### 75. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council held on Monday, 14 October 2019 as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

#### 76. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor D. Towns declared an interest in planning application no. 19/03670/FUL as his company worked for the applicant/agent. He left the Chamber and took no part in the discussion or decision.

Councillor R. Wearmouth declared an interest in planning application no. 19/02754/FUL as he knew the owner of the property. He did not feel that this represented a prejudicial interest.

# **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**

#### 77. 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

#### 78. 19/01918/FUL

Relocation of an oil tank and alterations to existing openings (Amended description 28/10/2019, Amended Plans received 25/10/2019 1 Fawdon House Farm, Longhirst, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 3LQ

This item was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

# 79. 19/01406/FUL

Change of use from Farmland to "D2 Assembly & Leisure" for the purposes of providing Junior Football facilities and associated access and parking (as amended 25.10.2019) Land South Of Selmon Park Sports Field, Heddon-On-The-Wall, Northumberland,

Richard Laughton, Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview. He informed Members that an additional letter of objection had been received from the Parish Council. Robert Young addressed the meeting speaking in objection to the application. His key points included the following:-

- He owned the land known as Selmon Park to the north and adjacent to site.
- He had given the original site to Heddon Parish for the use of residents and children of Heddon and the Parish Council had leased the Selmon Park Sports Field to the football club.
- Neither he nor local residents of East Heddon were against the football club.
- The access road was single track, not well maintained and over used. It was about half a mile long with a blind summit about 90m from the site entrance. There was only one passing place.
- Most matches and training sessions would be at set times leading to congestion. Some vehicles would have to reverse or wait on the slip road for the A69.
- The road led to 15 residential properties, five working farms, 13 non agricultural properties and two equestrian establishments.
- The road was used regularly by traffic from Stamfordham and Ponteland to reach the A69.
- The road was also used by horse riders daily and very popular with cyclists.
- The proposed increase in the number of teams would lead to additional traffic leading to safety issues and possible confrontations between drivers, horse riders and cyclists.
- The football club had outgrown the site and surely a more central venue could be found with benefits of safe and sustainable access routes.

Councillor Robert Young addressed the meeting speaking on behalf of Heddon on the Wall Parish Council. His key points included the following:-

- Heddon Parish Council's main concern was for the safety of the children as the road was not designed for the levels of traffic that would be using it.
- There was clear conflict with cars entering and leaving the site and some may have to reverse blind.
- There was potential for cars to have to stop on the A69 slip road.
- If all three pitches were in use at the same time there would be potentially 120 cars using the road.
- Heddon Parish Council had requested improvements to the road including additional passing places as part of the Local Transport Plan but had been unsuccessful.
- The site was outside the village and in the open countryside and Green Belt. The site would be clearly visible from the A69.
- Only 30% of the children in the club were from Heddon on the Wall.
- The site would never be suitable because of Green Belt issues and the dangerous road situation.
- The existing facilities were more than adequate for households in Heddon and another football field could not be justified.
- A speed survey, topographical survey, visibility splays and road safety audit should be carried out.
- If the proposal was approved, then there should be a condition to prevent the site expanding further unless the access road was widened to two lanes.

Liam Duffy addressed the meeting speaking in support of the application. His key points included the following:-

- The club had been formed in 2017 and there were now 150 players, male and female aged between 4 13 years.
- Many of the players lived in the village and attended the local school or lived within a radius of three miles of the village.
- The local MP supported the good work done by the club and benefits for the village and surrounding area.
- The sports field was no longer big enough for the club which had grown faster than anticipated
- The club was willing to work with experts to work out the best layout for car parking spaces, planting, access road etc. The timber huts would be relocated.
- All players would be encouraged to use recycling facilities in the village.
- The concerns regarding congestion on the access road were blown out of proportion. The club would manage traffic in-house by using traffic marshals.
- Start times of matches and training would be staggered to reduce traffic congestion.
- It was hoped that the proposal would be approved as it was beneficial to the health and wellbeing of the members.

In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:-

- The size of the development did not require a transport assessment and it was not considered a proportionate request.
- 50 car parking spaces would be provided on the site.
- The senior club would still use the Selmon Park site and this cumulative impact had been taken into consideration by the planning officers.
- The access to the site would be upgraded to a Type C access.
- If floodlighting was required it would have to be subject to a separate planning application.
- The number of parking spaces was considered adequate
- The access from the site onto the road had been assessed and the passing place was visible.
- Toilet facilities and running water were not being provided.
- The existing site would still be used but it was felt that the impact of this and the new site would not be severe.

Councillor P.A. Jackson proposed, seconded by Councillor H.G.H. Sanderson, that the application be refused for the following reasons:-

- Impact on the Green Belt this was a very sensitive site, which was close to and highly visible from the A69.
- The Green Belt had already been breached to the north.
- The Green Belt would be impacted by 50 parking spaces and the erection of changing cabins. The cabins shown in the plans were not of sufficient size.
- The changing cabins would be visible from the A69 and from a long distance. They were not suitable for use in the Green Belt

- Access and Safety the road was frequently used by horse riders and there was no room for a car to safely pass. The road would only get busier.
- There was a nearby dairy farm and the cows were walked to be milked twice a day.
- The effect on the A69 slip road was a major concern and it would be preferable if Highways England was consulted.
- Cumulative impact concern

Debate then followed and key points from members included:

- The access onto the A69 slip road was not safe as traffic would be travelling fast. The site could be clearly seen from the A69.
- There was a lack of detail in the report and details of traffic use and details about movements should have been provided. The access road was narrow and there was a blind spot.
- The proposals were wrong and inappropriate. It was very likely that this was just the start and there would be further requests in the future.
- It was very sad that young people would lose out if the proposals were rejected. However, parking and access were major concerns. Not enough consideration had been given to highway issues.
- Had consideration been given to buses bringing players for tournaments?
- The site seemed to be satisfactory and would not be so visible by traffic travelling at 70 mph on the A69.
- Deferral may be the better option to allow more information to be provided on traffic management.
- This was not just a weekend facility but would be used most evenings for training.
- The football club was also a commercial operation.

The Senior Planning Manager, advised that a deferral with the final decision coming back to Members or delegated to the Chair and Director of Planning, may be appropriate. This would allow for a traffic management plan to be provided. With regard to the suggestions reasons for refusal, she made the following comments:-

- The safeguarding of the Green Belt was very important but the NPPF made exceptions such as the case of agriculture and forestry applications and outdoor sport and recreation. It had to be accepted that this would require some form of limited development such as buildings and car parking. She cautioned against using the Green Belt as a reason for refusal.
- The site was too far away from the A69 slip road to require consultation with Highways England. The access had been looked at in detail and would be widened and would be a highways class access. If the matter was deferred then it would give an opportunity to consult with Highways England.
- It was not felt that the access road required the cost of a highways assessment.

Councillor P.A. Jackson agreed to withdraw his proposal for refusal and proposed, seconded by Councillor H.G.H. Sanderson, that the application be deferred to allow further information to be provided.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed by 9 votes for to 1 against with 0 abstentions, that it be **RESOLVED** that the application be **DEFERRED** to allow the following information to be provided:-

- Comments from Highways England
- Detailed Traffic Management Plan
- Traffic Survey on a match day
- Provision of toilets and running water
- Joint use of the site by two clubs
- Conditions regarding floodlighting

Councillor P.A. Jackson and Councillor H.G.H. Sanderson left the meeting at 5.10 pm.

# 80. 19/00956/FUL

# Change of use from private stable to commercial breeding stable Land South West Of Middle Coldcoats, Milbourne, Northumberland,

Ryan Soulsby, Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview. He explained that the access had been approved previously under another application and that this requirement had just recently been discharged. A handout (filed with the signed minutes) had been circulated prior to the meeting detailing revised conditions 4 and 5. It was also noted that informatives 3 and 5 should be removed.

Councillor Susan Johnson addressed the meeting speaking on behalf of Ponteland Town Council. Her key points included the following:-

- Ponteland Town Council objected to the application on the grounds of highway and public safety.
- This was a notorious blackspot on the A696, where there had been three fatalities, five serious accidents and a number of minor incidents.
- Slow moving vehicles would make the junction much more hazardous.
- The area was already hazardous in all types of weather.

Mrs Franklin addressed the meeting speaking in support of the application. Her key points included the following:-

- She co-owned the property with her husband. It was currently a private stable and they intended to change it to a commercial breeding stable.
- They planned to have five brood mares and the mares would not leave the stables. Gestation period was 11 to 12 months.
- There would actually be a reduction in traffic and there was likely to be only five horseboxes entering/leaving the site within an 18 month period.

In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:-

• Approval for the access had been granted in 2018 as a condition on a planning application.

• The site had been visited and the number of incidents considered. A topographical survey had been done to ensure that visibility could still be achieved from the access.

Councillor D. Bawn proposed the officer recommendation to grant the application with the amended conditions 4 and 5 and removal of informatives 3 and 5. This was seconded by Councillor D. Towns.

Debate then followed and key points from members included:

- Whilst applauding the move of the access to A696, it was still not in the right place. The A696 was a dangerous road.
- If there had been another fatality on the road, then further improvements would have been required.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed by 6 votes for to 2 against with 0 abstentions, that it be

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and with the amended conditions 4 and 5 and removal of informatives 3 and 5 as outlined in the report.

# 81. 19/01309/CCD

Extension to existing cafe building, comprising a prefabricated portacabin unit and a link to the existing building.

Visitor Centre, Bolam Lake Country Park, Belsay, Northumberland, NE20 0HE

Euan Millar-McMeeken, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview.

There were no public speakers.

There were no questions from Members.

Councillor R. Wearmouth proposed the officer recommendation to grant the application. This was seconded by Councillor D. Bawn.

Debate then followed and key points from members included:

• The improvements to the facilities at Bolam Lake were welcomed and would enhance the enjoyment of the area by visitors.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed unanimously that

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report.

# 82. 19/02754/FUL

# Proposed new residential dwelling with associated parking. New access proposed off Ladywell Way (amended plans received 10/10/19) Land North Of 7 Ladywell Way, Ladywell Way, Ponteland, Northumberland

Ryan Soulsby, Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview. He informed Members that the Lead Local Flood Authority had raised no objections subject to an additional condition 17 and informative 6 (filed with the signed minutes).

Mrs Blackley addressed the meeting speaking in objection to the application. Her key points included the following:-

- She lived at Ladywell and represented the residents of Ladywell.
- Northumberland County Council had already exceeded the number of new houses required and there was sufficient new housing available at the Police HQ site in Ponteland and Medburn.
- The building line did not follow the curve of the road and all neighbouring houses were set back 8.5 metres from the curb.
- The proposed garden extended up to the curb, however, when Ladywell was first built it was intended for the footpath to be continuous.
- The report referred to two windows on the south facing side but this was incorrect as there were four, two on the ground floor and two on the first floor.
- The hedgerow should be retained as it provided a quality wildlife habitat.
- The three trees which were to be removed should be protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- There was not enough room for three new trees on the remainder of the site.
- The report concluded that there would be a net gain in terms of biodiversity, however, this did not take account of the loss of trees or hedgerow
- There were numerous conflicts with policies and the NPPF.

Mrs Kristina Donnelly addressed the meeting speaking in support of the application. Her key points included the following:-

- She and her husband had been residents of Ponteland all their lives.
- They understood the concerns raised by residents.
- The County Ecologist had not identified any species that would be threatened by the proposal.
- The proposed removal of the trees was unpopular but they were not protected by a TPO as they were not mature enough.
- The trees would be replanted elsewhere.
- Bird and bat boxes would be supplied
- Even with the loss of open space on the estate, there was still enough open space to satisfy the Open Spaces Officer who supported the proposals.
- There were a variety of house designs on the estate and many houses had been extended.
- They had tried to keep the design in keeping with the estate, had made amendments and it was now fully acceptable.

- The house was not in a flood zone.
- None of the statutory consultees had objected.

In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:-

- There were no outstanding statutory consultee responses.
- The Tree and Woodlands Officer had been asked to visit the site in view of the number of objections, and had raised objections to the removal of the trees. He had recommended that a Tree Preservation Order be made.
- The County Ecologist also had no objections subject to conditions.
- A request for a TPO had been made by a neighbouring property.

Councillor D. Towns proposed the officer recommendation to grant the application subject to the additional condition and informative. This was seconded by Councillor D. Bawn.

Debate then followed and key points from members included:

- Whilst not being against development, it had to be in the right place and this application could not be supported.
- The estate was 60 years old and had a lot of open spaces and land owned by the Town Council. The Town Council had repeatedly refused to sell land on the estate.
- There should be a condition to replace the trees that would be lost.
- There were no grounds to refuse the application.
- It was not necessary to build on open space when there was more than enough new build in Ponteland and the surrounding area.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed by 4 votes for to 3 against with 1 abstention, that it be

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons as outlined in the report and with the amended conditions and informative.

# 83. 19/03670/FUL

Demolition of existing bungalow "Fourwinds" to create 2 private dwellings, retaining existing access and internal driveway together with retention of all trees and hedges to external boundaries (as amended 29.10.2019) Four Winds, Hepscott, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 6LH

Richard Laughton, Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview.

Councillor Cowans addressed the meeting speaking on behalf of Hepscott Parish Council. His key points included the following:-

• The Parish Council objected as it was felt to be against the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan.

- The building had been brought forward by 10 metres and so increased the massing and scale.
- The height of the building was greater than neighbouring houses and the impact would be significant.
- The development should respect the density of and separation between neighbouring properties.
- The footprint of the two proposed houses was over three times that of the existing property including the garages.
- There were concerns regarding flooding at times of heavy rainfall.
- The proposal would adversely affect the amenity of local residents and the village.
- The site only had a narrow footpath making it difficult for pedestrians.
- The area was already on Hepscott Parish Council's Local Transport Plan Programme.

In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:-

• There had only been one formal letter of objection

Councillor E. Armstrong proposed the officer recommendation to grant the application subject to a S106 agreement in relation to a contribution to the Coastal Mitigation scheme and the conditions outlined in the report. This was seconded by Councillor V. Jones.

Debate followed and the following comment was made:

• There was no viable reason to refuse this application.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed unanimously, that it be

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** subject to a S106 agreement in relation to a contribution to the Coastal Mitigation scheme and for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report.

# 84. 19/03725/FUL

Removal of an existing 15 metre-high telecommunications monopole and associated ground-based equipment and fenced compound. Installation of a 20 metre-high monopole and associated ground-based equipment within a fenced compound.

Land South West Of Airport Roundabout, Ponteland, Northumberland,

Judith Murphy, Principal Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview. She added that since the report was written a further five letters of objection have been received, all from the same person. It should also be noted that of the three objectors listed in the report, one of those had submitted repeated objections.

John Blundell addressed the meeting speaking in objection to the application. His key points included the following:-

- There was an international appeal signed by signatories from 208 nations and an appeal by 252 radiation scientists to halt 5G.
- The technology was unproven and dangerous and the Precautionary Principle should be used to avoid catastrophic decisions leading to unnecessary health hazard issues.
- 5G technology required booster array antenna in every street. The planning application did not address the full scope of the proposals including the loss of thousands of trees to improve reception.
- No research evidence had been provided regarding the health hazard issues.
- Fibre Optics was a safer option.
- Health data for temporal and frontal lobe brain cancer had doubled in the period 1995-2015 with links to mobile phones and 3/4G radiation.
- International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection guidelines were now out dated.
- There was a health hazard from lower levels of exposure as resonance biological impact.
- Pulse-like exposures and booster arrays would significantly increase exposure and intensity.
- All research clearly shows that mobile phone technology has a significant health impact by biological means.

Ian McLean addressed the meeting speaking in objection to the application. His key points included the following:-

- There was clear evidence that this could cause cancer, DNA defects, neurological problems, fertility issues and hormone disruption
- There were over 200 papers from leading scientists to this effect.

Councillor Alan Hall addressed the meeting speaking on behalf of Ponteland Town Council. His key points included the following:-

- Ponteland Town Council objected on health and safety grounds.
- They were aware of information suggesting that there was a danger with 5G
- Paragraph 11 of the NPPF required consideration of the adverse impacts of proposals as well as the benefits.
- The application should be deferred to allow for further research on the potential dangers to the public.

In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:-

- No trees would be cut down and there would be no offsite infrastructure.
- There was no knowledge of a health impact assessment.
- Public Protection did not believe there would be any significant impact and had made no objection.
- The planning application had to be decided purely on its planning merits.
- There was not a policy position to take into account public health.
- Chapter 10 of the NPFF supported high quality communication.

Councillor D. Bawn proposed the officer recommendation to grant the application. This was seconded by Councillor R. Wearmouth.

Debate followed and key points from members included:

- No planning reasons to refuse had been heard. The principal objections had little to do with what members were being asked to consider.
- A moral judgement on the merits of the application could not be made here.
- The claim that many trees would be lost was untrue.
- The site in question was well away from residential areas. No objection had been received from the airport authorities.
- Local people wanted better telecommunications.
- The application was not actually new as it was replacing an existing mast albeit in a slightly different position.
- The objections raised were a matter for the government.
- A vast amount of comments had been made in objection but were without providence.
- Comments about Councillors' personal liability were not relevant to their role in determining planning applications.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed unanimously, that it be

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report.

# 85. 19/03931/FUL

# Construction of single storey rear lean-to extension and proposed new fence line 1 Chathill Close, Stobhill Farm, Morpeth, NE61 2TH

Judith Murphy, Principal Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview.

Andrew Sparks addressed the meeting speaking in support of the application. His key points included the following:-

- The reason for the application was to maximise the amount of the garden.
- Their garden was smaller than that of most of their neighbours.
- Morpeth Town Council had objected on the grounds that the proposal would change the character of the area. However, the surrounding area would remain unchanged and the proposed fence line would extend to the north east boundary of the site.
- He did not believe that a precedent would be set as there were only two other properties on a similar site to them.
- All the land involved belonged to them.
- Only one tree would need to be removed as it was not possible to build the fence around it. No other trees would be removed unless absolutely necessary,

In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:-

- The boundary would match the existing hedge line.
- The fence height would be the same as the hedge, approximately 2m.

The Chair proposed the officer recommendation to grant the application. This was seconded by Councillor E. Armstrong

There was no debate.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed unanimously that it be

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report.

# 86. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

Members received a report updating them on the progress of planning appeals. (Report attached to the signed minutes as Appendix B)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

# OTHER LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

# 87. PETITIONS

Members were informed that, since the previous meeting, no new petitions had been received, there were no reports due on petitions previously received. A brief update was received on a petition for which a report had previously been considered

# Speeding through Ellington Village from A1068 roundabout

Councillor L. Dunn expressed disappointment that it had taken so long for any progress to be made. She had been promised that a feasibility study would be available in the next few weeks.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

# 88. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

Members received a verbal update from the Area Managers with the opportunity for members to ask questions afterwards.

# Neighbourhood Services

• Grass cutting had been challenging this year but 14 cuts had been completed.

- Street sweeping was concentrating on leaf hotspot areas and in an effort to prevent future flooding.
- The new street sweeper was able to travel greater distances and so had a more capacity to help.
- There had been a few minor breakdowns of waste collection vehicles.
- Garden waste collections would cease for most by the end of November.
- All war memorials had been brought up to a high standard prior to Armistice Day.
- There had been local success in the Britain in Bloom competition with Morpeth town centre and Carlisle park receiving gold awards.

# Highways

- A short handout was circulated to members at the meeting. (A copy is filed with the signed minutes.)
- Grit bins were being filled up.
- The gully tanker was in full use and had been in operation recently to deal with major issues in the Stamfordham area.
- Any areas suffering from surface water ingress were being prioritised.
- Main strategic routes were also being prioritised rather than housing estates.
- Members expressed their thanks for the speedy road closure in Stamfordham recently and for the quality of the road repair near Whalton.

# **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

# 89. NORTHUMBERLAND LOTTERY

Members received a presentation providing an overview and understanding of the operation of the Northumberland Lottery. (A copy of the presentation is filed with the signed minutes.)

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be received.

# 90. RESPONSE TO CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION

Members received an update of the actions taken, progress made, the future measures and areas of focus in the Council's response to a climate emergency declaration. (A copy of the presentation is filed with the signed minutes.)

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be received.

# 91. LIBRARY SERVICE CONSULTATION UPDATE

Members received information regarding the Library Services consultation that would commence during November. (A copy of the presentation is filed with the signed minutes.)

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be received.

# **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

# 92. MEMBERS' LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES - PROGRESS REPORT

Members received the Members' Local Improvement Scheme Progress Report. (A copy of the report is filed with the signed minutes as **Appendix D**)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

# 93. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

Members received the latest version of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings. (A copy of the report is filed with the signed minutes as **Appendix E**)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

# 94. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 9 December 2019, at 4.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth.

This meeting would deal with planning matters only.

CHAIRMAN .....

DATE .....