

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CRAMLINGTON, BEDLINGTON AND SEATON VALLEY LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley Local Area Council** held in Netherton Social Club, 1a Netherton Lane, Bedlington, NE22 6DP on Tuesday, 20 February 2018 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor C Dunbar
(Chair in the Chair for agenda items 71, 72 and 76)

Councillor B Pidcock
(Planning Vice-Chair in the Chair for agenda items 73 - 75)

MEMBERS

B Crosby
B M Flux
A Hepple

M Robinson
M D Swinburn
R Wallace

OFFICERS

H Bowers
U Filby
E Harwood-Scorer
P Jones
R McKenzie

Democratic Services Officer
Solicitor, Regulation
Student Planning Officer
Service Director - Local Services
Senior Programme Officer
(Highways Improvement)

J Murphy
Mark Ketley

Principal Planning Officer
Head of Planning Service

ALSO PRESENT

M Black - Head of Investments, Arch
R Schofield - Head of Project Management, Arch

Press: 1
Public: 40

Chair's initials

71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Daley, Dungworth and Swithenbank.

72. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley Local Area Council held on Wednesday, 17 January 2018, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

73. 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.

74. 17/04061/FUL - New timber fence to top existing stone wall to provide additional security to the house, the fence will also provide a much needed buffer between the house and the main road to reduce both road noise and pollution entering the property, 8 St Mary's Wynd, Seaton Sluice, NE26 4RU.

Ed Harwood-Scorer, Student Planning Officer introduced the above application with the aid of a slide presentation. Members were reminded that the application had been considered at a previous planning committee where it had been refused on unsuitable design.

Councillor Les Bowman, Seaton Valley Parish Council was in attendance and raised the following points:-

- The previous application was refused on the grounds that it would not be in keeping with the visual aspect of the building and would destroy the open aspect of the entrance of the estate
- The fence would not be in keeping with the area
- When the estate had originally been built, the stone boundary wall was integral to the development and in keeping with the local architecture with the Beresford Lodge and Delaval Arms public house
- The proposed fence would impede the sight lines for motorists and increase the risk to pedestrians and cyclists using the cycle path which formed part of the National Cycle Route
- The cycle track had no definite lines and should be looked at by Highways
- The fence would destroy the aspect of the small close
- If Members were minded to refuse the application, the applicant should restore the stone wall to its original state

Peter Deverell, Agent was in attendance and spoke on the following:-

- With regard to the suggestion that the fence would impede the existing symmetry of the junction, there was no existing symmetry to affect because of the hedge in front of the other property
- The applicant worked from home and the fence would help with background noise and pollution
- The type of colour of the fence has been chosen to match the fence which was obscured
- The applicant decided to have a fence erected rather than a hedge which would require lower maintenance and would be aesthetic to the house in the long term

Members' Questions

In response to members' questions the following information was provided:

- If the application was refused, it would not be a pre-requisite that the wall would be restored to its original state
- The wall originally had been over 2 m high but had been reduced to 2.02m high
- The applicant had given assurance at a recent site visit that the the wall would be constructed of a more sturdy nature
- Although the fence sat adjacent to the highway, the Highways Department concluded that no health and safety issues would arise considering the significant separation distance from the fence

Councillor Flux moved approval in line with officer recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Robinson.

Upon being put to the vote it was unanimously agreed that it was:

RESOLVED that the applicant be **GRANTED** planning permission subject to the conditions with reasons as set out the report.

75. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

A report was received which provided an update on the progress of planning appeals received for the Cramlington/Bedlington/Seaton Valley area. (A copy of the report is enclosed with the minutes as Appendix B).

The report included decisions made and appeals lodged from 1 January 2018. It was intended that a planning appeals update report would be submitted on a regular basis to future meetings. It was noted that no planning appeals had been allowed, five appeals had been upheld and no appeals had been lost. The report was positive which demonstrated that the decision making process was robust and sound.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

OTHER LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

On the conclusion of the development control business at 5.55 pm the meeting adjourned as the remainder of the agenda consisted of other Local Area Council business scheduled to begin at 6.00 pm. Councillor Dunbar returned to the Chair and continued the meeting at 6.00 pm.

DISCUSSION ITEMS - CORPORATE

76. Community Chest Awards

Councillor Dunbar, Chair of the Cramlington, Bedlington & Seaton Valley Community Chest Panel welcomed recipients of Community Chest awards to the meeting and commented that it was pleasing to be able to recognise the contribution that the voluntary groups made to the lives of residents around the county. Certificates were presented to representatives from:

- Cramlington Voluntary Youth Project
- Seaton Sluice Public Access Defibrillator Support Group
- Bates Cottages Cricket Club
- Friends of Holywell Dene
- Seghill Colliery Institute
- Bedlington Football Club
- Cramlington Community Arts Project
- The Seaton Sluice First School - Parent, Teachers and Friends Association
- 4th Cramlington Scout Group

77. REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - LOCAL SERVICES

LTP Programme 2018/19

The Local Area Council received a report which set out the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme for 2018-19 for consideration and comment prior to final approval of the programme. (A copy of the report is enclosed with the minutes as Appendix C).

Councillor Sanderson, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Local Services was in attendance at the meeting and gave an overview of the changes to the process which had included input from Town and Parish Councils and County Councillors to identify priorities for local areas. Funding had been allocated following analysis of road condition surveys and the list of local priorities.

He assured Members that the process was fair and transparent and highlighted the following points:

- The amount for safety schemes had been increased from £220,000 to £330,000

- The fund for rural roads had been increased by 10%
- An extra £200,000 had been allocated to the local area Highways managers, primarily to address drainage problems and the damage caused to road surface arising from frozen water
- An additional £420,000 had been allocated to address the recent significant increase in potholes. This was in addition to an additional £930,000 received from the Government and would permit the acquisition of extra machinery and staff time. It was also intended that with the exception of repairs which were required to be made within 24 hours, other repairs would be cut out and filled with a more durable material so that the repair would last and not reappear within a short period of time

In response to a question regarding integrated traffic in the town, it was advised that a holistic approach was being taken for parking provision in schools, 20 mph zones and parking regulation orders.

78. BEDLINGTON REGENERATION

Michael Black, Head of Investments and Richard Schofield, Head of Project Management, Arch were in attendance and provided an update on the Bedlington Town Centre Regeneration.

Michael Black, Head of Investments gave an update on the progress since outline planning consent had been secured in June 2017. Since then discussions had taken place with prospective tenants.

Richard Schofield, Head of Project Management informed Members that certain planning conditions needed to be discharged before work could commence on the site.

(Councillor Flux left the meeting at 6.26 pm).

Invitations to tender to five shortlisted main contractors would be issued in March and Board approvals would be needed to secure an anchor store and terms agreed with supporting retailers. Contractor tender returns would be received and evaluated in May with the anticipated start date on the site being August with the estimate construction programme being 12-18 months.

The proposed uses of the scheme was 20,000 sq ft of food store, 55,000 sq ft of new retail, four 2/3 bedroom apartments and approximately 220 car parking spaces.

Interest had been expressed by certain corporate retailers which informed and guided the site layout and design. Engagement had taken place with occupiers and retailers regarding the scheme layout and spaces were designed to meet investors needs. The larger units would be pre-let with commitment from tenants prior to being built.

Members' Questions

In response to members' questions the following information was provided:

- In response to timescales it was reported that Arch were committed to the scheme and completion dates were realistic
- The pub operator hoped for a more advanced development and different dynamic which would be a feature phase
- In respect of parking, if a retailer owned the site they would normally allow the car park to be used, unless there was any unsociable behaviour or problems. Some retailers may put enforce time limits
- There had been no instruction from the Council regarding the library
- Arch would not necessarily make a profit from the development. The regeneration scheme was about delivery. A vast amount of time and effort had been put into the design
- The aim was to deliver a development that would be commercially viable but not the same extent to which a commercial developer would require in terms of return. The scheme was subject to a full viability appraisal which would be constantly reviewed and monitored.
- It was important Bedlington got the town centre it needed
- The project would need the approval of the Board and a third party economic analysis for final design
- The food retailer would acquire land and build their own store. Corporate occupiers on leases were usually for a 15 year term and a small business lease, 3 years

Public Questions

Brian Oliver, Bedlington Forum

In the absence of a pub, could the land be turned into a car park?

It was advised that the current proposal did not just assume rental, but land sales. Technical assessments submitted as part of the outline planning application confirmed that the new car parking provision was appropriate for the proposed development.

Keith Dalton, Bedlington Resident

The car parking was obscure and he was concerned that parking would have an affect on businesses, the law courts and the police station. In addition, the old Lidl's and Morrisons car parks were used by the law courts at present.

Mr Schofield reported that car parking provisions that had been considered through a transport assessment which was submitted as part of the outline planning application.

Bedlington Resident

What were the breakdown of figures. Did the proposed retailer profiles reflect the town?

It was advised that the pre-tender estimate for the construction was circa £6 million.

Often retailers identified which towns they wanted to be in and were very particular about the number of towns they would like to occupy. The retail line-up reflected the market.

Bedlington Resident

She had been involved with architects and there could be changes to the plans. At the first meeting, a lot of people had wanted facilities for the community which had been forgotten about. There was still no leisure proposed. What was going to be factored in?

It was reported that there had been minor tweaks by retailers' requirements and the overall design layout had not been changed.

There was still scope for an element for community use should there be demand and a viable case made for it. Workshops generally were a positive part of a scheme, were occupier lead and always encouraged. It was hoped for a lively animated space.

In response to a comment regarding assurances, it was advised that subject to retailers completing agreements, the scheme would be delivered.

The officers were thanked for their presentation.

RESOLVED that the presentation be welcomed and noted.

79. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, 21 March 2018 at Concordia Leisure Centre, Cramlington (time to be confirmed).

CHAIR _____

DATE _____