

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **North Northumberland Local Area Council** held at St. James's Church Centre (upstairs hall), Pottergate, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1JW on Thursday, 21 February 2019 at 3.00pm

PRESENT

Councillor G. Castle
(Chair, in the Chair, items 159 - 160, and 167 - 169)

Councillor T. Thorne
(Planning Vice-chair, in the Chair, items 161 - 166)

MEMBERS

S. Bridgett
T. Clark
G. Hill
R. Moore
A. Murray (part)

W. Pattison
G. Renner-Thompson
G. Routhead
C. Seymour
J. Watson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

J. Bellis
M. Bird
M. Bulman
C. McDonagh
H. Parkin

S. Robson
D. Rumney

J. Sanderson

J. Sharp
E. Sinnamon
C. Thompson

Senior Planning Officer
Senior Democratic Services Officer
Lawyer
Planning Officer
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk
Management Officer
Principal Planner - Planning Policy
Principal Programme Officer
(Highways Maintenance)
Senior Planning Manager - Planning
Policy
Planning Officer
Senior Planning Manager
Principal Highways Development
Management Officer

30 members of the public and one member of the press were also in attendance.

(Councillor Castle in the chair)

Ch.'s Initials.....

159. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lawrie.

160. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of North Northumberland Local Area Council held on Thursday, 24 January 2019, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

(Councillor Thorne in the chair)

161. 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 and applications enclosed with official minutes as Appendix A.)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

162. 18/02671/FUL

**Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 9 residential units with associated access (Amended Site Location Plan and Red Line Boundary, and Reduction in number of units in scheme 04.11.2018)
Westroad Garage, Rothbury Road, Longframlington, NE65 8HX**

The application was introduced by Senior Planning Officer James Bellis, who firstly provided a number of updates. The recommendations on page 21 of the report should be read as being subject to the same conditions as referred to on page 1. Condition 5 should refer to a linkage with condition 4, not condition 2. In paragraph 2.2, reference to access for three plots at the frontage only using one access was featured on an earlier version of the application; on the latest plan, there was not two accesses for plots 7 & 8, and plot 9 was accessed from Church Road and around the corner.

Six more objections had been received since the agenda for this meeting had been published; they concerned issues regarding land ownership, access, visitors' parking bays, vehicular access and impact on local amenity. Mr Bellis then continued introducing the application with the aid of a slides presentation. During this it was also clarified that the second photo shown was the listed building Rookwood House, and condition five should read "no building shall be brought into use" etc.

John McCutcheon then spoke in objection to the application, of which his key points were:

- the applicant did not own all of the land for the application, including land belonging to Rookwood House
- the committee report was contradictory compared with earlier plans regarding details of access to the sites

- the proposal was unsympathetic in its layout, design, appearance, high density, would not fit in with surrounding properties, and have an impact on privacy, quietness and outlook. It had implications for neighbours on Human Rights Act grounds; a neighbour would lose her peaceful enjoyment from the associated nuisance, noise and disturbance it would bring
- Rothbury Road residents were regularly impacted by congestion and speeding traffic along the A697
- Longframlington had unsustainably doubled in size within five years. More housing was not needed as the necessary supply had already been exceeded.

Councillor Graham Fremlin then spoke on behalf of Longframlington Parish Council, of which his key points were:

- Longframlington Parish Council accepted it was a brownfield site but there was no demonstrable need for this type of housing locally. Any new housing should fit in and not cause any harm locally. The height of the properties would be very prominent, it would overlook local bungalows and impact on the listed building. The number of houses proposed could not be justified
- the applicant had not consulted enough; the only change he had made in response to comments made was to reduce the number of properties by one. The applicant should return with more suitable plans after consultation with residents
- It was excessive to build four four-bedroomed houses and five five-bedroomed houses on the plot
- the route to the rear of the site was a narrow estate road
- the planning conditions needed to be stringent as there had been problems with other developments in Longframlington.

Brian Baxter then spoke in support of the application, of which his key points were:

- Tustain Motors owned four sites in Northumberland; they had never intended to relocate but the challenging nature of the sector meant they had to rationalise. They had moved this garage to Alnwick without losing any jobs
- they were not property developers. They had taken advice, including employing a heritage advisor to assess issues regarding the proximity to the neighbouring listed building. The south elevations of the development would now consist of stone to match the listed building; this change had been supported by the Building Conservation Officer
- the application ensured the necessary separation distances; he had responded positively to technical queries from the case officer and issues raised by Longframlington Parish Council
- the redevelopment would cause no problems with flooding or surface water
- the public benefit from such market housing would outweigh any harm. It would not result in any traffic increase as the site had previously been impacted by recovery trucks, noise and effluent from the workshop. The application met all planning and policy requirements.

Members then asked questions to which officers responded, of which the key details were:

- there were three categories regarding harm caused by development: no harm, less than substantial harm, and harm

- the application had been assessed against the Human Rights Act; it was a brownfield site and there could be less peaceful uses of the site, for example another industrial use; it was put to a proportionate test
- officers could not recall any examples of any applications being turned down in Northumberland on Human Rights Act grounds, but other related legislation had been used which can be better placed to deal with impact on neighbouring residential amenity. Consultation took place with Public Protection colleagues on such matters. Issues of noise, dirt and other environmental factors were often considered along with the Human Rights Act implications regarding the peaceful enjoyment of property
- the applications had reduced from 10 to nine for the site but the size of the site for the site remained the same
- officers had raised concerns with the applicant regarding the proposed materials. However a mixture of materials were used in local buildings, so it was difficult to require something substantially different to what was proposed
- the buildings' height was 9.5m at the ridge, including a third storey within the roof space. They were not however considered too different from other local properties
- the density complied with the maximum level of 31 dwellings per hectare; this application was not in the lower density level but neither in the highest level. It complied with density policy requirements
- anybody could apply for planning permission but if they did not own the land in question they would need the consent of the owner to actually implement a scheme. Applicants had to apply for either Certificate A, when the applicant owned all of the land, or Certificate B, if the applicant was applying for land that they shared or was owned by others. The applicant had declared that they owned all the land in question and land ownership was not an issue to be taken into consideration when determining planning applications
- applications needed to include contribution of affordable housing if they included 10 or more properties and/or the application site was over 0.5 hectares
- it was estimated that if built, during peak hours, there would be nine vehicular movements from nine dwellings. It would not result in increased traffic as its previous garage use involved vehicles visiting all day for deliveries and from customers and employees. Once completed, the resulting traffic was not sufficient to warrant refusal
- the parking provision was based on the number of bedrooms in properties; this application was adequate for the same. The Highways Authority had previously had concerns about the internal layout but now considered the scheme to be acceptable.

Councillor Thorne moved that the application be refused on the grounds of its design, height, massing and impact on the neighbouring listed building, Rookwood House. The garage was missed locally but this site provided an opportunity to improve the streetscape following the loss of an industrial building, however any new development needed to be of the best design and fit the location. The site looked across to the village green and the proposed housing was too dense. Longframlington was made up of bungalows, detached and terraced housing, not townhouses. Yellow sandstone was commonly used in local dwellings and would be preferential for this site rather than brick; the Conservation Officer had indicated that

they would prefer brick not to be used for this site. It was important to get the right development for the site.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Bridgett.

Discussion followed during which the key points from members were:

- some of the photos shown were not clear - could appropriate technology be used to provide better graphics in future?
- it was considered an overdevelopment of the site compared to the surrounding area
- members considered the site was suitable for development but this application did not suit the site and a better proposal could be possible.

The motion was put to the vote and supported unanimously, so it was thus:

RESOLVED that the application be REFUSED on the grounds of its design, height, massing and impact on the listed building.

163. 18/03203/FUL

**Proposed camping pods, camping lodges and treehouse along with amenities and services (Amended 24th September 2018)
Acton Caravan Site, Felton, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9NS**

The application was introduced by Planning Officer Chris McDonagh who firstly updated by referring to the strengthening of conditions 4 and 5 to ensure that no lodge or camping pod could be used as a principal means of residence. Mr McDonagh then continued introducing the application with the aid of a slides presentation. Changes included removing the caravan touring pitches and replacing them with proposals for lodges and a tree house.

Councillor Thorne moved that the application be granted subject to the conditions in the report and the revised conditions 4 & 5. He referred to the site visit undertaken and the road safety, drainage and other improvements made. Acton Lane was now greatly improved for visibility and safety. This was seconded by Councillor Castle.

Points were made about the improvements made to the sight lines/access, which had been the main concern when the previous application had been considered. The site would be safer now that touring caravans could not stay there.

The motion was put to the vote and supported unanimously, so it was thus:

RESOLVED that the application be GRANTED subject to the conditions in the report and revised conditions 4 & 5.

164. 18/03290/FUL

**Change of Use of land to accommodate the siting of 5no glamping pods (as amended 17/09/18),
Link End Caravan Park, Alnmouth, Northumberland**

The application was introduced by Planning Officer Jon Sharp with the aid of a slides presentation.

Mr Sharp advised that the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership had expressed concern about the management of the facility and maintaining visual amenity at the site, so two additional conditions were proposed (copies of which were circulated at the meeting):

Condition 6

Prior to first occupation of the camping pods hereby approved, a site management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the site shall be operated in accordance with the approved management plan.

For the avoidance of doubt, the site management plan shall include details of camping pod servicing and maintenance, refuse disposal and the maintenance of the land between the huts.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with the NPPF.

Condition 7

Notwithstanding the approved plans, there shall be no external storage buildings or enclosures, decking, planters, lighting or other domestic paraphernalia within the site.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with the NPPF.

Steve Lockley then spoke in objection to the application, of which his key points were:

- the proposal would commercialise the AONB area and they objected to the intensification of the site which would increase vehicular traffic and be detrimental to the natural beauty of the area
- of the three routes to the service site, the track by St. Oswald's Way was mostly hidden, secondly another route ran alongside the golf club, or thirdly through Alnmouth Common, which was uneven with sharp bends with a natural stream down Bracken Hill. The third option, proposed in this application, would cause the most environmental impact on the AONB and affect the public, golfers and dog walkers
- as the pods were not currently in operation, few people stayed overnight, and the short term frequency of turnover lead to high levels of vehicular traffic
- the application would damage the environment and the viability of the golf club. If the application was not to be determined on the basis of commercial sustainability for the caravan site, then the same principle should apply to the golf club
- the AONB Partnership had identified the need to understand the impact on the site and thus a one year period for the proposed arrangements should be considered. The choice of route should consider the amenity of the community and ensure the minimum impact on the common.

Dale Maloney then spoke in support of the application, of which his key points were:

- the applicants had been awarded lawful development in 2016 and wished for the full 12 months operation, which would help employment, and they were already missing some possible footfall as the tourist season began from April

- the area had been heavily vandalised previously; the applicant had cleared the site of rubbish. Their local art gallery was nationally successful and contributed to arts and culture attractions in the area
- an ecological survey had been undertaken, advice had been sought from Natural England, and the application included a coastal mitigation contribution
- the local path was used daily by walkers and posed no health and safety concerns
- Alnmouth Parish Council had not objected. The application would vastly improve the location.

Members then asked questions to which officers responded, of which the key details were:

- there was no justification to require provision for parking for the additional proposed months of operation when parking was not required for the current hours of operation. The site was one kilometre from the nearest highway
- rights of way officers had been consulted about the application; they had expressed no objection subject to no action being taken to block the right of way. Their concern regarded the principle of the right of way remaining open, not regarding how many people used it
- regarding whether another application could then be submitted to change the use and build on the site, members could only consider the application presented. If another application was received in due course it would be assessed against planning policy. Previously such permissions could be allowed for 11 months to avoid continuous residence, but the proposed condition 5 would formally restrict their use. The applicant had to maintain an up to date register of its use
- it would be possible to instead grant a 12 month permission, but the new conditions did much to address the concerns of the AONB Partnership, who had not responded originally to the application, but additional conditions were now in place to address their concerns such as visual clutter and the servicing of the site. The AONB Partnership were happy with the conditions
- the pods met the legal definition of caravans but did not have the means of accessing local roads
- it would need to be queried whether the AONB Partnership would require the coastal mitigation contribution if the applicant was to only receive temporary permission. The applicant might consider it was not worth the cost of five pods if there was a risk of their permission ending in 12 months' time; the applicant would most likely have to reapply for new planning permission and pay the accompanying costs.

Councillor Castle then moved that temporary permission be granted for 12 months. He added that no evidence could be provided from either party yet about the impact, and the AONB Partnership and golf club had concerns, so it could be re-evaluated after 12 months once evidence had been attained, but there was not sufficient grounds to currently refuse it. This was seconded by Councillor Hill.

After further consideration and advice, Councillor Castle withdrew his motion. He moved instead that consideration of the application should be deferred for a month to seek clarification about whether the coastal mitigation contribution would still be needed for a temporary permission. This was seconded by Councillor Thorne.

Members then debated the motion of which their key points were as follows:

- one condition should also specify that there should be no additional decking allowed, as some of the site might already have some decking
- why would the applicant risk the financial outlay required for the development if there was a risk that his permission would be temporary; this appeared unfair. The AONB Partnership and rights of way team were happy with the proposal with the conditions attached, but clarification could still be given to whether the coastal mitigation contribution was necessary should members subsequently prefer a temporary permission
- it was not right that the applicant could built the site then be told to remove it after a year; the application should be given permission
- another option would be to have a site visit.

Councillors Castle and Thorne then agreed that they would withdraw their motion to allow for a site visit.

Councillor Moore then moved that a site visit take place. This was seconded by Councillor Thorne. This would allow time for the queries to the AONB Partnership to be answered, and Principal Ecologist and AONB Officer David Feige would be requested to attend and answer questions at the Local Area Council's next meeting when it reconsidered the application.

The motion of deferral for a site visit was then put to the vote and supported by 11 members for and one against, so it was thus:

RESOLVED that the application be DEFERRED for a site visit.

(Councillor Bridgett left the meeting whilst the following application was considered.)

165. 18/04030/ADE

Advertisement Consent application for the erection of 1no. totem sign advertising housing development at Guilden Road Land South Of Morwick Road, Warkworth, Northumberland

The application was introduced by Senior Planning Officer James Bellis, with the aid of a slides presentation.

Members then asked questions to which officers responded, of which the key details were: the sign was two metres tall, one metre above the ground and one metre wide.

Councillor Watson considered that the application should be refused. He explained that the temporary sign had been for the purpose of advertising the housing directly behind the sign. However there was not a showhome anymore for which the sign referred to, but instead there was another different development 600m away. The sign was thus misleading, was in a conservation village and close to a listed building.

Members were further advised that there were three grounds for refusing advertisement consent: impact on visual amenity, an overly dominant appearance in its setting and impact on highway safety. The contents of the sign was not a material planning issue.

Councillor Watson then clarified that his motion was thus to move that the application be refused due to the impact on visual amenity. This was seconded by Councillor Moore. The motion was put to the vote and supported by 10 votes for an one against, so it was thus:

RESOLVED that the application be REFUSED for the detrimental impact on visual amenity.

166. Planning Appeals

Members received information about the progress of planning appeals.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

(The meeting then adjourned for a short break. Councillor Bridgett returned and Murray exited the meeting.)

167. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PLACE

Local Transport Plan Programme 2019-20

Members received detail of the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme for 2019-20 for consideration and comment by the Local Area Council prior to final approval of the programme. (Report enclosed with the official minutes as Appendix B.)

Debate followed of which the key details of members' comments and officers' responses were as follows:

The £5,000 allocated for the proposed Victoria Terrace safe crossing in Alnwick would cover the cost of a desktop study; there would be further cost for any scheme that might follow afterwards. A member stressed that this was a long term aim and hoped that it could be treated as a first priority as both he and Alnwick Town Council expected a scheme to be delivered during 2019/20. Principal Programme Officer (Highways Maintenance) Dale Rumney would report this back to Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement) Neil Snowdon and see if there was the possibility of delivering the scheme during 2019/20.

The work at Steppey Lane in Lesbury for disabled access to the footbridge was also a £5,000 desktop study. Members were advised that they could contribute some of their Members' Local Improvement Scheme funding towards such developments as they were capital projects.

A total of £200,000 had been allocated to the resetting of The Cobbles in Alnwick, including £20,000 from this LTP programme.

£7.7m was due to be spent by the end of March 2019, however it was likely that some schemes in this programme would need to run into the next financial year.

Regarding work planned for the C182 and whether it included work to Cinders Bank,

members were advised that the scope of the project was being assessed to see whether the work being undertaken could be extended.

Mr Rumney would arrange for more details of the 17 locations on the A697 identified to receive £330,000 in funding to implement road safety schemes to be provided.

Following a member's query about why some requests for double yellow lines in locations in his electoral division had not been included, particular details should be referred to Mr Rumney or Mr Snowdon to see any respective consultation had been undertaken. Members' Local Improvement Scheme funding could also be used for such projects.

Any possible schemes to be funded from for a share of the £30,000 allocation for various general countywide public transport infrastructure projects would be subject to criteria to assess their eligibility.

Work to Longframlington/Newton on the Moor was part of a £380,000 project funded by the separate £7.7m central government funding and due within the 2018/19 financial year. Officers would be meeting the chair of Longframlington Parish Council to discuss drainage improvements and possible resurfacing work in Longframlington.

In response to a member's question about new road surface improvement work and the public right of way programme in Berwick, Mr Rumney would clarify after the meeting what work was proposed for the £20,000 allocated in the programme.

A member welcomed the improvements made to roads in the Longhoughton electoral division, but raised Newton by the Sea Parish Council's request for work to Brunton Village and improvements needed for Stamford Farm Road end to Embleton. Members were advised that these would be considered amongst other priorities.

Regarding concerns about speeding and road safety on the A1068 from Percy Drive roundabout, Amble. Members were advised that officers could not comment on traffic calming matters in that instance; however any improvements should be considered and coordinated with pending road repairs on the A1068 funded by UK Coal.

Members were encouraged to continue effectively communicating requirements to officers to make them aware of what requirements existed. Members agreed that the standard of repairs continued to increase and thanks were expressed to the Cabinet member for Local Services for his high responsiveness to issues raised. Mr Rumney was thanked for his attendance and it was then:

RESOLVED that members' comments be considered during the finalisation of the LTP programme for 2019-20.

168. Northumberland Local Plan - Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19)

Members received a presentation on the Northumberland Local Plan, which provided information on the progress to date on the Local Plan and details on the Publication Draft Local Plan. The presentation also covered the next steps in the Local Plan

process as well as providing advice on how to submit formal representations on the Publication Draft Plan.

The presentation included details of settlement specific policies for:

- Main towns: Alnwick, Amble and Berwick
- Service centres: Belford, Rothbury, Seahouses/North Sunderland
- Service villages: Broomhill/Togston, Felton, Lesbury/Hipsburn/Bilton/Alnmouth, Embleton, Longframlington, Longhoughton, Lowick, Norham, Warkworth
- Other settlements: Acklington, Newton on the Moor, Craster, Dunstan, Holy Island, Rennington and Thropton.

(Copy of presentation attached to the official minutes of the meeting.)

Detailed discussion took place during which the key details from members' questions and officers' responses were as follows:

Members noted that a gypsy and traveller site was being proposed for south east Northumberland and a further pitch might be needed in north Northumberland in the future based on evidence of need and projections; this was being kept constantly under review.

Reference was made to employment sites in the plan; an enterprise zone was included in the Ramparts site in Berwick.

A settlement boundary took effect for a Neighbourhood Plan once the respective plan was made. Proposed boundaries could however be given some weight once the respective developing plan was at the submission stage. Some settlement boundaries were confirmed through a local Neighbourhood Plan, and others would be confirmed through the overall Local Plan. It was not expected that any boundaries could change once plans were beyond the submission stage. An interactive map with details of areas was provided on the Council's website.

At this point, as the meeting was approaching three hours in length it was RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue beyond three hours in duration.

A member welcomed the work undertaken on settlement boundaries and queried whether any development outside of them was limited to rural exception sites? Members were advised that development was not limited to rural exception sites, but the plan proposed a general presumption against development outside of settlement boundaries, but applications would be considered on their individual merits. Policy STP1 Criteria G stipulated that some development could be supported in the countryside if it related to associated employment. Affordable housing schemes could possibly be permitted under rural exception site criteria. National guidance provided for some provision for market housing on rural exception sites.

A member referred to issues with affordable housing allocations within local areas, as for example allocations for Byrness and Rochester were listed as allocations within his local area yet were not in his electoral division. He also questioned whether the split in affordable housing between the share to buy of 66.6% and the share to rent at

33.3% should be reversed based on up to date levels of demand. Members were advised that national policy required that 10% of all homes should be affordable housing for purchase. The percentage for Rothbury within the emerging policy was 15%.

A member welcomed the design statement in the plan, which would assist members when determining standards required within planning applications.

Regarding why 17,700 houses were needed when the required numbers had already exceeded 20,000, some of the agreed housing was not within areas where a need for new housing had been identified and 17,700 was the minimum level in the plan.

Regarding stipulations on wind turbines to a maximum of 40m in height compared to the levels permitted for commercial developments, work had taken place regarding the impact on the landscape, which took into account current commercial wind turbines and their effect. Other factors had been considered including proximity to residential developments to protect residential amenity and proximity to the highway. The map detailed possible suitable areas for possible wind turbines, but such development also required community backing and also needed to be assessed against a range of planning impacts.

A member questioned whether it would be excessive to place a second home limit on smaller parishes as it was easy to meet the minimum numbers in small villages. Members were advised that the statistics had been based on the 2011 census but the latest census had also been taken into account. There was no differentiation between houses that were either empty or second homes. It was not anticipated that the 20% limit on second homes for new developments would have a high impact.

Parish Council Questions:

Councillor Carole Green of Longhoughton Parish Council then queried how 'adequate' services were defined and how could it be ensured that they would be provided. People's expectations might not be met, for example could enough GPs be attracted to work in local areas to meet the necessary ratio of each GP per local head of population. It was important to manage people's perceptions about what was realistic and also be clear about goals and how targets would be measured. Members were advised that the infrastructure delivery plan set out the requirements for contributions to infrastructure, roads, education and healthcare requirements. Consultation took place with officers for each about what contributions were needed for developments and the amounts were determined on an evidential basis. Consultation took place with the Clinical Commissioning Group regarding the health contributions required for any schemes that included more than 30 dwellings.

Councillor Graham Fremlin of Longframlington Parish Council referred to their intention to develop a Neighbourhood Plan and sought clarification about whether they could amend any boundary set by the Local Plan in due course if it was adopted first? Members were advised that this would be clarified and if they pursued a Neighbourhood Plan, they would be assigned a support officer who could provide advice on such matters.

Councillor Geoffrey Stewart, North Sunderland Parish Council asked about the level

and limits on development in their parish and referred to the limits for land with permission for caravans and the limitations provided by the football field. Members were advised that 80 - 100 dwellings were proposed for that location and the numbers also included anything built since 2016 and anything that currently had planning permission. Members were advised that the caravans and football field had been taken into account regarding the land available for development, and this would be clarified after the meeting.

Ms Sanderson and Mr Robson were thanked for their attendance and it was:

RESOLVED that the information be noted and members' comments considered as part of the consultation.

169. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on Thursday, 21 March 2019 in Berwick at North View, which had previously been known as the Jubilee Club.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....