

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 Tuesday, 20 June 2019 at 3.00pm

PRESENT

Councillor G. Castle
(Chair, in the Chair, items 25 - 27)

Councillor T. Thorne
(Planning Vice-chair, in the Chair, items 28 - 34)

MEMBERS

T. Clark
G. Hill
R. Moore
A. Murray

W. Pattison
G. Roughead
C. Seymour
J. Watson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

M. Bird
V. Cartmell
D. Hadden
J. Hitching
T. Lowe
G. Park
E. Sinnamon
C. Thompson

Senior Planning Officer
Principal Planning Officer
Lawyer
Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer
Senior Planning Officer
Environmental Health Officer
Senior Planning Manager
Principal Highways Development
Management Officer

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

(Councillor Castle in the chair)

25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bridgett, Lawrie and Renner-Thompson.

Ch.'s Initials.....

26. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of North Northumberland Local Area Council held on Thursday, 21 May 2019, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

27. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

- Councillor Pattison declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to application 19/01070/FUL and indicated that she would leave the room whilst the application was considered
- Councillor Moore declared a pecuniary, personal and prejudicial interest in relation to application 19/01070/FUL and indicated that he would leave the room whilst the application was considered
- Councillor Seymour declared that she would speak in the local member slot for application 19/01023/ADE then leave the meeting whilst the application was considered
- Councillor Murray declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to application 18/03177/REM and indicated that he would leave the room whilst the application was considered
- Councillor Roughead declared that he was present at the Berwick Town Council meeting which considered application 19/01023/ADE but he had not participated in the discussion, so he was able to consider it today.

(Councillor Thorne in the chair.)

28. 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.

29. 19/00278/FUL

**Construction of a new bin store to serve the already existing Maltings Development
Bolams Mill, Dispensary Lane, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1LN**

The Vice-chair (Planning) explained that the applicant had withdrawn this application.

(Councillors Moore and Pattison then left the meeting for whilst application 19/01070/FUL was considered.)

30. 19/01070/FUL

A) Change of use of part of farm yard and 2 buildings from agricultural use to mixed use agriculture/woodchip production, drying and storage facility (Retrospective); B) Change of use of land to mixed use agriculture/wood store (Retrospective); C) Erection of agricultural building and stackyard, formation of

**access tracks (Prospective); D) Use of stackyard and associated access tracks for mixed use agriculture/woodchip production (Prospective)
Rock Midstead Farm, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 2TH**

The Vice-chair (Planning) firstly referred to the site visit undertaken for this application on 17 June 2019. He expressed some concern that only three members had attended, but also acknowledged the reasons why including work and other commitments, but emphasised the importance of site visits in understanding applications better and encouraged attendance at them where possible. Another member added that there should be better use of technology to provide an overview of sites.

Senior Planning Officer Tony Lowe introduced the application by firstly providing a number of updates. Two documents had been added to the approved document list for condition 2, which should now read:

“The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise in accordance with the approved plans and documents. The approved plans and documents for this development are:-

- 1. Drawing number 1234/01 - Proposed Straw Cover Building;*
- 2. Drawing number 1379/02 - Proposed Site Plan - Western Portion;*
- 3. Drawing number 1379/03 - Proposed Site Plan - Eastern Portion;*
- 4. AECOM Highways Technical Note;*
- 5. Ward Hadaway Planning Design and Access Statement, March 2019, Rock Midstead Farm, Rock, Northumberland, NE66 2TH*

Reason: To ensure that the approved development is carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and documents.”

Condition 5 should now read:

“Not more than 55 lorries, associated with the use, shall enter and and not more than 55 lorries, associated with the use, shall leave the site per day between Monday and Friday. No other HGV deliveries or collection, associated with the use, shall take place on any other day or times.

Reason: To ensure local residential receptors are not unduly impacted by noise from additional HGV road traffic.”

Condition 6 should now read:

“The premises shall not be used for woodchipping, on Sundays or Bank Holidays and outside of the following times:

- Monday to Friday 0800 to 1700*
- Saturday 0800 - 1200:*

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not prejudice the enjoyment of neighbouring occupiers of their properties and in accordance with local plan policy CD32 and the provisions and intentions of the NPPF.”

Copies of a late representation had been published on the Council’s website; copies

were provided at the meeting; time was allowed at the meeting for members to read it. Mr Lowe then continued introducing the application with a slides presentation.

A local objector then spoke in objection to the application, of which her key points were:

- there had been some noise from nearby operations at the farm during the first three years of her five years living at her property, but in summer 2017, without planning permission, current activities started. It was impossible to enjoy peace in her house, had suffered from stress and the noise was disruptive for her family
- footpaths by The Avenue were often made inaccessible due to the number of lorries accessing the site
- the Environmental Health Officer had recorded at the site visit on 17 June that a noise reading of 59 decibels had been recorded from one woodchipper, and often more than one woodchipper was operational at once
- it was worrying that current arrangements could continue. There was no guarantee that any hours agreed at this meeting would be adhered to. All too often operations had taken place outside of agreed hours.

Andrew Moss then spoke in support of the application, of which his key points were:

- this application represented a rural diversification project, which were recognised and given weight in planning terms
- it would create new employment: four new jobs directly and two more employed indirectly as drivers for the haulage company
- the product contributed to creating a lower carbon economy
- a number of objections had been received, not none from technical experts subject to the proposed conditions. The County Council could serve any breach of condition notices if any were found.

Members then asked questions; the key details of responses from officers were:

- the local approved timber haulage route could be used without restriction. Both the A1 and A697 were suitable for timber transport, and it would be unsustainable to object on the grounds of the timber transport route as it was currently considered acceptable
- the proposed restriction upon 55 vehicles was an amenity issue, not a highways matter
- the chipper would be based outside on the stockyard; the additional building proposed would be open fronted
- there were no plans currently for the road into the site other than routine maintenance. It would be inspected periodically. The road had been used for the current operation for 18 months, so it couldn't be proven or reasonable to require work to it as part of this application. Principal Highways Development Management Officer, Mr Thompson, would however pass on a member's concern about the condition of the road to officers in Technical Services who would be responsible for road maintenance requirements
- the planning system included a mechanism to submit retrospective applications, and should not be considered a material consideration to hold against applications
- the site benefitted from access straight from the A1
- noise levels had been assessed using different models. The structure would be a steel roofed building, 5m high on the south side up to the eaves, with 5-6

inch concrete walls; the main noise would be enclosed within the building. It was expected that the noise targets would be realistic and the structure help limit the noise at the nearest receptors. The noise had been measured when the main activities were operational on site, without the attenuation measures proposed by this application

- the noise assessment had been paid for by the applicant, and the Public Protection service then analysed it; it was the role of the statutory consultee to consider whether the information provided was accurate or not. All people involved were members of professional bodies; there would be repercussions in the event of any doubt about their judgement
- the proposed mitigation was supported as it placed the unit right next to a shielding wall. The Public Protection service were not happy with the current noise reading of 59 decibels; a maximum level of 50 was expected. However the application would reduce noise to ambient levels and meet guidance limits. If any complaints were received, the applicant would have to take action
- it would be difficult to arrange a further noise assessment in, as suggested by a member, six months time once planning permission had been granted. However any ongoing concerns about noise levels could be pursued through Public Protection using different mitigation measures.

Councillor Castle then moved that the application be granted subject to the conditions in the report and revised conditions provided at the meeting. He added that he understood the objections made but there were no valid objections on highways grounds and statutory consultees had given assurance about how the proposals would reduce noise levels to an acceptable level. This motion was seconded by Councillor Watson, who also requested, outside of this application, that the condition of the access road be given attention.

Debate then followed of which the key points raised by members were:

- a member had no confidence in the noise or road being addressed and expected that residents would continue to complain, so would vote against it
- the chipper would be located further away from residents than currently and the noise attenuation measures would make improvements to the current operation; the application could only improve the situation
- the application did propose a more industrial use of a farm, and members needed to ensure that the level of harm to amenity was at an acceptable level for local people, but the application was in the open countryside
- road maintenance was a County Council responsibility; Councillor Watson's concerns about the road's condition needed attention. Such roads linking to the established haulage route should be well maintained
- the proposed building included a solid wall that would attenuate noise. Residents would let the Council know if any noise limits were broken in future
- as long as any complaints arising about noise were dealt with as they arose, a member said he'd support the application
- the risks weren't being ignored; they were a price for diversification. It would be helpful to know in the future how effective the attenuation means were, and to ensure the applicant stuck to noise limits and any enforcement organised against any breaches.

The motion to grant was then put to the vote, and agreed by five in favour to three against so it was thus:

RESOLVED that the application be GRANTED subject to the conditions in the report and revised/additional conditions provided at the meeting.

(Councillors Moore and Pattison then returned to the meeting, and Councillor Murray left the meeting for the consideration of application 18/03177/REM.)

31. 18/03177/REM

**Reserved Matters application relating to outline approval 13/01665/OUT :
Submission of detailed information in respect of site layout, landscaping,
boundary treatments, access, drainage strategy and house types detail, scale,
massing and finishing materials
Land North East Of 3 Weetwood Road, Wooler, Northumberland, NE71 6AE**

Mr Lowe introduced the application by firstly providing two updates, to correct two conditions:

- Condition 1: line 1 “shall be occupied” changed to read “shall not be occupied”
- Condition 10: line 2 “have been submitted” changed to read “shall be submitted.”

Mr Lowe continued introducing the application with the aid of a slide presentation.

At the Chair’s discretion, a late registration for public speaking had been permitted. Ronnie Baird spoke in support of the application, of which his key points were:

- the development would provide many benefits, including housing for young families and retired couples, 11 affordable houses to be operated by the Glendale Trust, plus provide jobs and apprenticeships, helping the sustainability of local schools and businesses and keep Wooler thriving
- the development would generate additional funding from Council Tax receipts and the New Homes Bonus
- the development complied with all relevant planning policies. The original application had received no objections and 12 letters of support. No objections had been received to this reserved matters application from either local residents or statutory consultees.
- it included 37 bungalows - more than 50% of all properties proposed in the development
- the 11 affordable houses would be the first properties to be built on site. The developer confirmed that these would be completed within the first year, and was ready to begin building in July 2019.

Members then asked questions to which the key responses from officers were:

- the 72 houses proposed was welcomed; the market housing proposed would also help fund affordable housing share
- no specific speed restrictions were proposed in the site, but the Highways Authority had made points during the design stage about preventing speeding. The original plans for the site had included a straight road through the development, but this had been amended so that the main road now bent and twisted, which would help slow down vehicles
- the S106 agreement requirements had been met by the share of 11 affordable housing in the development; two thirds of them would be for rent and one third for shared ownership or purchase

- there was no amenity space within the development but it included excellent access to nearby green space including a public park
- there had been no further direct contact with or any further requirements requested by Wooler Parish Council.

Councillor Watson then moved that the application be granted subject to the conditions in the report and amendments to the conditions listed by the officer. He welcomed the application, which had a suitable amount of affordable housing and was of a good size on a good site. This motion was seconded by Councillor Moore. The motion to grant was then put to the vote, agreed unanimously so it was thus:

RESOLVED that the application be GRANTED subject to the conditions in the report and the revised conditions as detailed at the meeting.

(Councillor Murray then returned to the meeting.)

32. 19/01023/ADE

Advertisement consent for 1no non-illuminated fascia sign along Marygate in Berwick upon Tweed

90-92 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland, TD15 1BA

Principal Planning Officer Vivienne Cartmell introduced the application with the aid of a slides presentation.

Marion Mead then spoke in objection to the application on behalf of the Berwick Conservation Advisory Group, of which her key points were:

- 90-92 Marygate was a late Victorian building within the Berwick Conservation Area with large signage; it was an impressive building that could be seen when coming in to Berwick from the south. However, seeing a building with large six metre long lettering including 'Tweedmouth' would be confusing for visitors and annoying for residents when they were entering Berwick from Tweedmouth
- they were not against the new use of the building, but the lettering was too large; funding was being spent on Berwick's identity, and a sign with Tweedmouth on would not aid this
- Berwick already had three dentistry practices, each just had signage in their windows.

Councillor Catherine Seymour then spoke in the local member slot, of which her key points were:

- she wished to object; the building had a historical association with the newspaper and was in the conservation area. She welcomed that the 'Berwick Advertiser' signage above was being retained but this proposal was misleading, confusing and not in keeping with the local heritage
- it was a prominent Victorian building at the gateway to the town centre and traffic would be confused by the signage, which replaced the Berwickshire News signage dating back to 1869, and the Berwick Advertiser signage above dated from 1809. It would lose signage of cultural and historical significance
- building conservation requirements sought to enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas, but this proposal was out of place and nor would it enhance the local heritage. Appropriate signage could be put by the

entrance doorway, and advertising dental services was not necessary. Agreeing the application could set a precedent for signage on Berwick's many heritage assets.

(Councillor Seymour then left the room for the remainder of the consideration of the application.)

James Burnell then spoke in support of the application, of which his key points were:

- the lettering style of the existing sign would be retained. The proposal appreciated the heritage value and met the material, colour, scale and font of the original font of the signage
- concerns about the change had to be balanced against the building being brought back into use; the previous occupier was the Berwick Advertiser, but they had since moved premises. The new business should be able to have the right to advertise their service
- the character of the sign would be maintained, the building given a new lease whilst also retaining as much of the character of the original as possible.

Members then asked questions to which the key responses from officers were:

- to clarify the rules about advertising, particularly as many dentistry practices only advertised in their premises' front window, members were advised that advertisement consent applications could only be considered on the grounds of amenity and public safety, such as the impact on the highway. It would be unreasonable to refuse the application for the content of the sign's wording
- some historical towns had design codes for advertising on buildings, but there was no such policy in Berwick about what constituted good signage or not. Another local example of the merits of a sign in Berwick included the application considered about the sign for the Pets at Home building
- the building conservation considered that the application would cause less than substantial harm to any cultural and historical elements. The same issue could arise if a future applicant tried to rename the building again in the future
- it was considered of public benefit as it was a new business at the premises, and it was reasonable to allow the owner to advertise their service.

Councillor Watson then moved that the application be granted subject to the conditions in the report. He considered that the applicant should be entitled to advertise their service and welcomed the retention of the Berwick Advertiser sign above. This was seconded by Councillor Clark, who supported the design.

Members then debated the application, of which their key points were:

- it was not misleading to have 'Tweedmouth Dental Surgery' on the sign as that was the company's name
- the applicant was doing the right thing and the proposal was worthwhile and acceptable
- it was not misleading for the wording to include 'Tweedmouth'; it was just as misleading to still state 'Berwickshire News' when the newspaper was no longer there. The same reasoning of some of the objections could be applied to when entering Alnwick and seeing 'Glendale Paints'. Also, when coming in from the south from the A1, signage said 'Welcome to Berwick', not Tweedmouth. Even if the inclusion of 'Tweedmouth' in the wording was not ideal, there were no planning grounds to object to the application

- a member did not agree with the necessity of the new sign and would not support the proposal
- although expressing some sympathy about its part in Berwick’s history, the application did seek to blend new with old. The new use was thus saving the building and also saving half of the signage
- it could be considered unfair to say that dentists could not advertise like this.

The motion to grant was then put to the vote, and agreed by eight votes in support to one against, so it was thus:

RESOLVED that the application be GRANTED subject to the conditions in the report.

33. Planning Appeals

Members received information about the progress of planning appeals.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

34. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would now take place on the revised date of Tuesday, 16 July 2019 at Northern View Limited, Spittal, Berwick upon Tweed.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....