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NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At the meeting of the **Castle Morpeth Local Area Council** held as a Remote Meeting on Monday, 8 February 2021 at 4.00 pm.

PRESENT

E Armstrong (Chair) (in the Chair)

MEMBERS

D Bawn	J Beynon
R Dodd	L Dunn
P Jackson	V Jones
G Sanderson	D Towns

OTHER COUNCILLORS

OFFICERS

L Dixon	Democratic Services Apprentice
D Hadden	Solicitor
P Jones	Service Director - Local Services
R Laughton	Planning Officer
L Little	Senior Democratic Services Officer
C Mead	Highways Development Manager
J Murphy	Planning Area Manager - Development Management
M Payne	Consultant Engineer
N Rolls	Ecologist
D Rumney	Principal Programme Officer (Highways Maintenance)
E Sinnamon	Development Service Manager
N Snowdon	Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement)
R Soulsby	Planning Officer
M Williams	Team Leader - ICT Practitioner SIFA
T Wood	Senior Planning Officer

192 PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED AT A VIRTUAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Vice-Chair (Planning) (in the Chair) outlined the procedure which would be followed at the virtual meeting and of the changes to the public speaking protocol.

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193 **ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dickinson, Foster, Ledger and Wearmouth.

194 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council held on Monday 11 January 2021, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

195 **DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillors Armstrong, Beynon, Dunn and Towns declared personal and prejudicial interests in application 20/02069/REM as they were Members of the Governing Body of Netherton Park and advised that they would leave the meeting during consideration of the application.

Councillor Bawn advised that he had a personal and prejudicial interest in application 20/00303/FUL as the applicant was a client of his Company and would withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item.

196 **DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The report requested the Committee 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.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

197 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

As both the Chair and Vice-Chair (Planning) were required to leave for the next application it was proposed and agreed that Councillor Bawn be nominated as Chair for the following item.

Councillors Armstrong, Beynon, Dunn and Towns left the meeting at this point and Councillor Bawn took the Chair.

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Reserved Matters relating to appearance, layout, landscaping and scale for the redevelopment of site for the erection of 85 no. dwellings (Use Class C3), multi-use games area, landscaping and associated engineering works pursuant to varied to outline planning permission 19/01241/VARYCO. Land North East Of Netherton Park, Netherton Park, Stannington, Northumberland

G Horsman, Principal Planning Officer introduced the application to the Committee with the aid of a Power Point presentation. Updates were provided as follows:-

- One letter of support had been received from Netherton Park Trustees (freehold owner of application site) on the grounds that development would deliver benefits locally and within the County.
- A Minor change to the wording of the recommendation regarding ecology coastal mitigation.
- One additional condition to be added regarding construction method statement matters to reflect statement received from Stannington Parish Council as follows:

“21. The Construction Method Statement to be submitted for approval under Condition 16 of outline planning permission 19/01241/VARYCO shall, in addition to the matters already referenced in that condition, also include details in respect of construction delivery vehicle and construction hours, construction vehicle routes to the site to and from the A1 and signage for construction vehicles.”

- The amended officer recommendation was now:

“That this application be granted subject to the conditions in the report and additional condition 21 and the applicant entering into Unilateral Undertaking regarding ecology coastal mitigation.”

A statement in objection to the application from Netherton Park Residents Association was read out to the Committee by R Laughton, Planning Officer. A copy would be filed with the signed minutes and would also be uploaded to the Council’s website.

A statement from Stannington Parish Council was read out to the Committee by L Little, Senior Democratic Services Officer. A copy would be filed with the signed minutes and would also be uploaded to the Council’s website.

A statement in support of the application from Bellway Homes was read out to the Committee by R Soulsby, Planning Officer. A copy would be filed with the signed minutes and would also be uploaded to the Council’s website.

A statement in support of the application from the Netherton Park Trustees was read out by T Wood, Senior Planning Officer. A copy would be filed with the

signed minutes and would also be uploaded to the Council's website.
There were no questions from Members of the Committee.

Councillor Dodd proposed acceptance of the revised recommendation as outlined above with the additional condition 21, which was seconded by Councillor Jones. A vote was taken and it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report and the additional condition 21 and the applicant entering into Unilateral Undertaking regarding ecology coastal mitigation.

Councillors Armstrong, Beynon, Dunn and Towns returned to the meeting at this point with Councillor Dunn returning to the Chair.

Councillor Bawn left the meeting at this point.

199 **20/00303/FUL**
Proposed 4no holiday chalets and food takeaway unit with extended wildlife area (as amended 16/11/2020)
Land South East Of The Drift, Cresswell, Northumberland

There were no questions in relation to the site visit video.

R Soulsby, Planning Officer introduced the report to the Committee with the aid of a Power Point presentation. Updates were provided as follows:-

- Conditions 16 and 17 as outlined in the officer report had been addressed by the applicant in correspondence with the Coal Authority therefore these conditions no longer apply and should be removed.
- It was also requested that amendments to condition 15 be dealt with under delegated powers as the applicant has provided additional information to possibly satisfy this condition or alter the wording.
- A further objection had been received from a resident following publication of the report regarding the applicant starting works on site. The statement was read out to Committee and was available on the Planning Portal. Members were advised that the works undertaken on site related to a clearance of the site, introduction of hardstanding and the introduction of services. No built form has been constructed on site following a site visit by the Planning Officer last week.

A statement in objection to the application from Dr P Kirkwood was read out to the Committee by G Horsman, Principal Planning Officer. A copy would be filed with the signed minutes and would also be uploaded to the Council's website.

A statement in support of the application from Mr D Lawrence, applicant, was read out to the Committee by L Little, Senior Democratic Services Officer. A copy would be filed with the signed minutes and would also be uploaded to the Council's website.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the following information was noted:-

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- The prevention of parking on the verges would be secured through a condition imposed from Highways allowing control to be maintained and enforcement action to be taken if necessary.
- Parking for two cars at each of the proposed chalets would be provided and there would be an upgrade to the existing car park to utilise the space available.
- Conditions 6 and 7 would prevent both the chalets and take-away facility being brought into use prior to the car parking being marked out in bays and implemented. The formalisation of the existing car park would allow the space to be utilised more efficiently and would provide sufficient spaces for both the existing and takeaway facility. The parking management strategy would seek to provide on-street parking restrictions outside the frontage of the development.
- There was nothing proposed as part of this application in connection with providing public toilets. It had been mentioned as part of the applicant's statement to Committee, however this had not been assessed as part of the application and Members were advised that any decision taken should be on the basis that toilets would not be provided.

Councillor Dodd proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application subject to the conditions set out in the report with conditions 16 and 17 removed and delegated authority be provided to the Director of Planning in relation to the wording of Condition 15 and subject to a s106 agreement in relation to a contribution to the Coastal Mitigation scheme, which was seconded by Councillor Jackson. A vote was taken on the proposal and it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** permission for the reasons and with the conditions as set out in the report and amended above with delegated authority provided to the Director of Planning in relation to the wording of Condition 15 and subject to a s106 agreement in relation to a contribution to the Coastal Mitigation scheme.

Councillor Bawn returned to the meeting at this point.

200

20/03738/VARYCO

**Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) and 7 (catchment area) pursuant to planning permission 19/03768/FUL (approved under appeal reference APP/P2935/W/20/3252959) to alter parking arrangements on site and extend catchment area to include the Northumberland County Council area first and then Tyne and Wear Conurbation (Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Sunderland, County Durham and Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council)
East Farm Cottage, Guide Post, Choppington, Northumberland
NE62 5PS**

There were no questions in relation to the site visit videos.

R Laughton, Planning Officer introduced the application to the Committee with the aid of a Power Point presentation. He advised that the proposed site plan number referenced in paragraph 2.9 and Condition 02 should read 300-02 Rev 07.

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A letter in objection to the application from the East Farm Park residents was read to the Committee by R Soulsby, Planning Officer. A copy would be filed with the signed minutes and be uploaded to the Council's website.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the following information was noted:-

- There was already provision for car parking, however this was to be extended into the garden. The need to double park cars would remain but the wall would no longer be removed.
- This was an application to vary two conditions attached to a permission already granted at Appeal and whilst Members could request slight changes to the wording, a hybrid decision could not be made and Committee would need to either refuse or approve the application as submitted.
- The application had been brought to the Committee for a decision following consideration through the virtual delegation scheme with part of the consideration being the history of the site and the level of interest. Given the wider public interest the Director and Chairs had determined it should be considered by Committee. Members were advised that should this be refused the applicant could still implement the previously agreed permission.
- A lot of weight was always placed on Planning Inspector's decisions by LPAs, however conditions imposed by a Planning Inspector were not sacrosanct and if there was a good reason these could be varied. Applications must be considered with an open mind and following the responses from the various consultees Officers had considered the request acceptable.

Councillor Beynon proposed refusal of the application as he considered it was totally the wrong location and did not agree that Children from out of the County should be brought into the area. This was seconded by Councillor Towns who stated that the proposals for the parking addressed that issue but considered that the Planning Inspector's condition outlined in paragraph 7.12 of the report to restrict the age range and for children to be housed from the Northumberland area should stand and highlighted the reason provided for the imposition of the condition as outlined in the report. In discussing the exact reasons for refusal, Councillor Beynon advised that he still had concerns regarding the car parking as he felt that due to the way in which vehicles would need to be parked within the car park that vehicles would be parked on the highway.

The Development Services Manager questioned if the reasons for refusal were:-

1. The proposed wording regarding the region was imprecise and unenforceable.
2. Based on the evidence of the Designing Out Crime Officer that it was important that children were not remote from family and friends.
3. Concerns regarding the car park and highway safety.

In discussing the reasons, Councillor Bawn suggested that the highways safety concerns would be indefensible, but the catchment argument was very pertinent

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as outlined by the Planning Inspector. The Development Services Manager advised that whilst Councillor Beynon had concerns regarding highway safety, the revised application did provide an improvement to the already agreed permission. In terms of the wording relating to the region being imprecise and unenforceable, there was now a clear catchment area being imposed. She advised that it would be better to refuse the application for one strong reason rather than to bolster it with two or three reasons.

Following a further discussion the following reason for refusal was proposed by Councillor Beynon and seconded by Councillor Towns:

“It was important to the operation of the site that children were not remote from family and friends and were from the local area. This was necessary to minimise the intensity of the use and protect the amenity of neighbours.”

Councillor Dodd questioned what was considered local, was it Northumberland or the North East. Northumberland was a vast County and some areas within Tyne and Wear and Durham were actually closer to this site than some areas of Northumberland. The Development Services Manager advised that this was highlighted in paragraph 7.20 of the report with no concerns being raised by the Police, Public Protection or Children’s Services.

A vote was taken on the proposal to refuse the application as outlined in bold above as follows: FOR; 4; AGAINST 5; ABSTENSIONS 0; and therefore the motion failed.

Councillor Dunn proposed acceptance of the Officer’s recommendation to approve the application as outlined in the report with the amendment to Condition 02, which was seconded by Councillor Dodd.

Councillor Towns and Beynon reminded Members that the Planning Inspector had said the condition was necessary and Members had a duty to consider the neighbours to the application site. Members had found the arguments persuasive when they had previously refused the application and this was going against the Planning Inspector. Councillor Dunn highlighted that the condition imposed by the Planning Inspector could be changed and whilst she had some sympathy with the neighbours, considered that the three placements would be manageable.

A vote was taken on the proposal to accept the Officer’s recommendation with the change to Condition 02 as follows:- FOR 5; AGAINST 4; ABSTENTIONS 0.

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report and the amendment to Condition 02.

201 **APPEALS UPDATE**

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

Councillor Armstrong returned to the Chair at this point and announced that a five minute break would be held. Councillors Dodd, Jones and Sanderson left the meeting.

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202 **LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME 2021-22 AND HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE INVESTMENT IN U AND C ROADS AND FOOTWAYS PROGRAMME 2021-22**

P Jones, Service Director – Local Services provided a comprehensive introduction to the report advising that the Local Transport Plan (LTP) of just over £19m had been developed following dialogue with Town and Parish Councils along with Local Ward Members. The proposed expenditure across the four key areas was as set out in the report and the highlights brought to the Members attention.

Councillor Jackson advised of the importance of maintaining and improving both roads and footpaths within the County especially with the level of rain during the last few weeks and welcomed the further investment. In drawing attention to the rising number of potholes which had appeared during the recent bad weather he recognised that it would remain a challenging situation. He thanked and complimented the Highways Team for the work undertaken during the last three to four years and highlighted the success of the micro surfacing schemes in rural areas. The Service Director advised that micro surfacing was widely used and offered a great deal of improvement in relation to the investment, however it was seasonal work and depended very much on the weather.

In response to a question on which areas warranted investment, the Service Director advised that decisions were based on feedback from Councillors, Town and Parish Councils as well as Highway Inspectors. Priorities were based on where the biggest and best results would be gained and schemes were designed based on need.

Councillor Towns highlighted that Members could contribute their own small schemes funding to expand schemes within their own areas.

The Officers were thanked for the report and their attendance.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

203 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Monday 8 March 2021 with the time to be confirmed.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

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