

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At the meeting of the **North Northumberland Local Area Council** held in the Meeting Space - Block 1, Floor 2 - County Hall on Thursday, 24 March 2022 at 2:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Cllr S. Bridgett
Vice-Chair – In the Chair

MEMBERS

G. Hill
I. Hunter
M. Mather
W. Pattison

G. Renner-Thompson
S. Swinbank
T. Thorne
J. Watson

OFFICERS

G. Bucknall
M. Bulman
V. Cartmel
A. Deary-Francis
D. Francis
R. Johnstone
J. Hitching
B. Hogson
S. Imrie
R. Little
T. Lowe
G. Park
L. Sinnamon

Lead Highways Delivery Manager
Solicitor
Planning Area Manager
Ecologist
Lead Office – Wellbeing
Deputy Lead Officer - Wellbeing
Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer
Neighbourhood Services Area Manager
Principal Highways Development Officer
Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Principal Planning Officer
Environmental Health Officer
Development Service Manager

There were 7 members of the press and public present.

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116 **PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED AT A PLANNING COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that this was noted.

117 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Castle, Clark, Hardy and Seymour

118 **DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor Hunter explained that she had a personal and prejudicial interest on item 7 of the agenda and would be speaking as the local member in the public speaking slot but would take no part in the debate or vote.

119 **MINUTES**

Councillor Hunter advised that there was an error with the name Scremerston.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the North Northumberland Local Area Council held on Monday, 24 January 2022 as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and be signed by the Chair with the above amendment noted

Councillor Bridgett proposed that Councillor Thorne chair the planning section in the absence of the planning chair, seconded by Councillor Hill, this was unanimously agreed.

Councillor Thorne then took the Chair

120 **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 this was noted.

121 **19/01687/FUL**

T. Lowe – Principle Planning Officer, introduced the application and gave the following updates:

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- There was an error on condition 2 where it referred to Plans, the Planting Strategy drawing and should read P07 and not P06.
- In paragraph 8.75 and in the recommendation in paragraph 9.1, the Coastal Mitigation service should read £10,080 and not £10,040.
- 3 late representations had been received and had been circulated to members

Following a PowerPoint presentation, Councillor Thorne introduced the public speaking section.

J. Stent spoke in objection to the application and gave the following information:

- There was no restaurant, church or pub in Swarland and the full-time shop and post office had closed several years ago.
- No public transport.
- It was stated in the report that the development was self-contained within the existing golf course and holiday park, however the proposed site was not near the other caravans and lodges already on site but on the periphery of the golf course.
- Proposed screening on the eastern boundary was indistinct and non-existent on the southern side of the boundary.
- There was no information regarding the supply of the caravans or the design, shape, size or how environmentally friendly the caravans would be.
- There were issues regarding drainage, sewerage, and flooding in the area with no consideration to a long-term solution.

S. Stanley spoke on behalf of Newton on the Moor and Swarland Parish Council and gave the following information:

- The proposed site would be immediately outside the new Northumberland Local Plan's settlement boundary for Swarland.
- The development would intrude on the existing long-established community and merged holiday accommodation with regular housing.
- The planned site would be a higher density than the rest of the holiday park.
- The inappropriateness of 60 holiday lets so close to existing and planned housing.
- The parish council questioned the need for further such developments in Swarland and had no confidence in the proposed arrangements for foul and surface water.

H. Elms spoke in support of the application and gave the following information:

- The application had been submitted for over two years, and there had been a series of meetings with the Parish Council, residents, and the adjacent land owner.
- The drainage scheme within the application provided localised betterment in terms of drainage into the network, confirmed by Northumbrian Water and the Flood Authority.

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- Highways had withdrawn their concerns and the entrance to the extension would be through the main gates.
- The issues around ecology had been accepted and would be controlled by planning conditions.
- There was no reserved matters application so far.

Following members questions to the planning officers, the following information was provided:

- There were plans to enlarge the existing ditch's width from 1m-1.5m to 5m-7m
- With the mitigation measures in the application, the risk of flooding from surface water drainage would be reduced.
- The drainage officer was content with the mitigation and stated that the measures put forward would not increase the risk of flooding.
- There were no Great Crested Newt breeding ponds affected by the development, but they were present on the site. There was a requirement for a Natural England licence for works to terrestrial habitat and all works must be supervised by an ecologist.
- There was no restriction with length of stay at the site.
- The caravans would rest against the wooded area and screening would affect the visual amenity along with boundary screening.
- The planning officers were not aware of any EV charging points to be implemented with the development.
- There had been no objection from Northumbrian Water.

Councillor Hill proposed to defer the application to allow for further mitigation saying that there could be further consultation carried out and to allow more conditions to be added to the application. There was no seconder and the motion failed.

Councillor Thorne proposed to refuse the application and explained the reasons, including; adverse visual impact and cumulative impact in that adding another 60 caravans would take the site to over 400 caravans total, the site was not well landscaped, there was issues around draining and flooding, there was no local amenities close by with no public transport, and the application had not specified the type of caravans which would be on the site. Councillor Bridgett seconded the motion, stating that he disagreed with the comment from Northumbrian Water and that in the past they had been fined by the environmental agency at peak times.

L. Sinnamon gave advice regarding the proposed reasons for refusal and addressed the committee in respect of policies relevant to the application.

Councillor Thorne agreed for the exact wording of the reasons for refusal be delegated to the Director of Planning in conjunction with the chair.

A vote was taken as follows: FOR 7; AGAINST 0, ABSTAIN 2.

RESOLVED that the application be **REFUSED** for adverse visual impact and cumulative impact in that adding another 60 caravans would take the site to over 400 caravans total, with the exact wording delegated to the Director of Planning in

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conjunction with the chair.

122 **21/02169/REM**

Councillors Bridgett, Renner-Thompson and Watson declared an interest in the application as they are directors of Advance Northumberland and left the meeting.

V. Cartmell – Planning Area Manager, introduced the application with a PowerPoint presentation and gave the following updates:

- In condition 5, the Bat and Bird nesting features at a ratio of one per dwelling would be a total of 30.

Councillor Hunter spoke as the local member on this application and gave the following information:

- The application should be considered against the NPPF and emerging Northumberland Local Plan.
- Ord Parish Council would welcome the 15% affordable housing but were concerned that these would still be unaffordable to local families.
- There were concerns around the speed limit on the entrance to the development and Ord Parish Council had requested if the speed could be reduced.
- Concerns over a popular Public Right of Way along the edge of the A698
- Concerns with water supply into Berwick and surrounding areas and issues with new developments.

Councillor Hunter took no further part in the application.

Lee Fulcher spoke on behalf of the applicant and in support of the application and gave the following information:

- The application would assist with a range of local needs.
- There were 5 affordable houses with 70% Open Market Value which was required by Northumberland County Councils Affordable Housing Officer
- As part of the proposal, the applicant would upgrade the Public Right of Way, to a standard suitable for increased use and shared with cyclists. Including lighting and the removal of the access gate to promote accessibility.
- EV charger points would be provided in accordance with Northumberland County Council Sustainability Policies.
- The application would provide 30 Bird and Bat box nests, gaps in fences for small wildlife and wildflower meadows.

Following questions from Members to the Planning Officers, the following information was provided:

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- The application was a reserved matters application, therefore Members could not discuss speed limits.
- The management company would be in charge of dealing with the communal land in terms of grass cutting.

Councillor Pattison proposed to grant planning permission with the conditions set out in the report, this was seconded by Councillor Hill.

Councillor Mather supported the application but mentioned that the speed limit needed to be re-evaluated and reduced to 30mph with the covering costs funded by the applicant.

A vote was taken, and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** permission with the conditions outlined in the report.

Councillor Bridgett and Councillor Renner-Thompson returned to the meeting.

123 **APPEALS UPDATE**

Resolved that this was noted.

124 **SECTION 106**

RESOLVED that this was noted.

A comfort break took place at this point.

Councillor Bridgett returned to the Chair.

125 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions had been received.

126 **PETITIONS**

(a) There had been two new petitions received:

- To declare Berwick-Upon-Tweed a smoke control area to help mitigate against emissions
- Extend 20 mph speed limit areas in Berwick to help combat air pollution and increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

(b) There were no petition reports for the committee to consider.

(c) There were no updates from previous petitions.

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Highways

G. Bucknall – Lead Highways Delivery Manager provided a verbal update on North area highways. The update and subsequent questions included information on the following:

- 30 out of 31 major resurfacing schemes had been completed, Swansfield Park Road footpath would be the last scheme to be completed.
- 2022-23 surfacing schemes were due to start with Swansfield Park Road carriageway.
- Since the last meeting, resurfacing had been carried out at Rennington, Embleton and Sunnyside – Berwick.
- Berwick Leisure Centre had been completed.
- Beadnell, Bambrough and The Braid car parks were taking part in the Motorhome pilot scheme.
- Highways inspectors had been out completing routine maintenance and addressing complaints.
- Storm Arwen & Malek recovery was ongoing.
- Winter Services had ended and had gone well in the mild Winter.
- Northumberland County Council had still not received new Gully Wagons, as these were currently in Stakeford being set up.
- The new bus shelter at Shilbottle had been vandalised

Councillor Mather queried if Northumberland County Council could complete a press-release to educate land owners of their responsibilities regarding fallen trees, leaning trees, hedges, and debris from Storm Arwen.

Councillors thanked Graham and the team for their ongoing hard work.

Neighbourhood Services

B. Hodgson - Neighbourhood Services Area Manager provided a verbal update on North area neighbourhood issues. The update and subsequent questions included the following information:

- Ground teams had recovered slightly from Storm Arwen and Malek due to milder weather and were on target with scheduled Winter Works.
- The teams were on the final stages of preparation for grass cutting, with all the equipment serviced.
- There had been changes to routes in Alnwick, Berwick and outlying areas to increase efficiency.
- The final stages of seasonal recruitment for grounds maintenance positions were underway.
- Weed control would be taken by Northumberland County Council for the upcoming Summer due to the success of previous years and teams would be using the blue dye again following positive feedback pre-pandemic.

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- Two small new sweepers had been purchased for gully cleaning.
- Two additional waste collection vehicles would be received due to an increase of funding.

Councillors thanked Bob and the team for their ongoing hard work.

128 **MUSIC PARTNERSHIP NORTH**

D. Francis and R. Johnstone introduced themselves to the committee and gave a brief presentation on the Music Partnership North.

D. Francis explained the purpose and mission of the Music Partnership North was to support children learning about music and unlocking potential and the commitment to enrich the lives of all children and young people in Northumberland and Newcastle through engagement and participation in quality music activities and explained that inclusion was incredibly important part to the scheme.

The funding for the Music Partnership was from the Department for Education through the Arts Council.

The core and extension roles of the Music Partnership were:

- Ensure that every child aged 5-18 has the opportunity to learn a musical instrument through whole-class ensemble teaching programmes for ideally a year of weekly tuition on the same instrument.
- Provide opportunities to play in ensembles and to perform from an early stage.
- Ensure that clear progression routes were available and affordable to all young people.
- Develop a singing strategy to ensure that every pupil sings regularly and that choirs and other vocal ensembles were available in the area.
- Offer CPD to school staff, particularly in supporting schools to deliver music in the curriculum.
- Provide an instrument loan service, with discounts or free provision for those on low incomes.
- Provide access to large scale and/or high-quality music experiences for pupils, working with professional musicians and/or venues. This may include undertaking work to publicise the opportunities available to schools, parents/carers, and students.

Covid-19 had been a huge challenge to the partnership, from which the scheme had to adapt and move to an online for a period of time, with support from Northumberland County Council and had gained positive feedback from parents and students who were home-schooling during lockdown around wellbeing and mental health.

The next steps for the Music Partnership were to reach out to non-engaged schools, review progression, develop SEND provision and develop an online or

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hybrid offer to overcome geographical difficulties.

A large-scale concert had been discussed with members and the difficulties with organising such an event, including finding venues that were large enough to cater for all the students from different schools as well as high costs of transportation from schools closer to Berwick. The Music Partnership has had an online event for the past few years known as the “Big Gig” which schools joined in virtually but were currently looking at doing smaller concerts in areas of Northumberland and had previously used venues such as Concordia Leisure Centre – Cramlington and Alnwick Garden and Alnwick Playhouse.

Councillors thanked D. Francis and R. Johnstone for their work with the Music Partnership.

129 MEMBERS LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

RESOLVED that this was noted.

130 LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that this was noted.

131 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that this was noted.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

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