

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

### CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At the meeting of the **Castle Morpeth Local Area Council** held at Council Chamber - County Hall on Monday, 8 August 2022 at 3.00 pm.

#### PRESENT

J Foster (Vice-Chair Planning) (in the Chair)

#### MEMBERS

J Beynon  
S Dickinson  
L Dunn  
M Murphy  
R Wearmouth

L Darwin  
R Dodd  
V Jones  
D Towns

#### OFFICERS

T Crowe  
L Little  
S Milne  
J Murphy  
E Sinnamon  
T Wood

Solicitor  
Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Senior Planning Officer  
South East DM Area Manager  
Development Service Manager  
Principal Planning Officer

Around 14 members of the press and public were present.

#### 29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor D Bawn and G Sanderson.

#### 30 PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED AT PLANNING MEETINGS

Members were reminded of the procedure to be followed at the meeting.

#### 31 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Towns advised that he had a prejudicial interest in item 8, application 22/01537/FUL and item 9, application 22/01895/FUL as the applicant was a client of his company and would leave the chamber whilst the items were being discussed.

Councillor Beynon advised that he had an interest in item 9, application 22/01895/UL as he worked closely with the school and had previously provided funding to the school through his Members Small Schemes allocation and would leave the chamber whilst the item was being discussed.

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Councillor Dickinson advised that he had an interest in item 6, application 21/02485/FUL as he stored his caravan on another site owned by the applicants and would leave the chamber whilst the item was being discussed.

Councillor Darwin advised that he had a personal interest in item 10 as he was Chair of Governors at Kyloe House.

Councillor Foster advised that she had a personal and prejudicial interest in item 5, planning application 22/00075/FUL as a close personal friend lived in a property affected by this application and whilst the issue had not been discussed she felt it best to withdraw from the chamber for this item.

## 32 **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.

Councillor Foster left the Chamber at this point and Councillor Beynon took the Chair.

## 33 **22/00075/FUL** **Retrospective application for alteration/re profiling to land levels related to residential development.** **Hepscott Park, Stannington, Northumberland**

T Wood, Principal Planning Officer provided an introduction to the application with the aid of a power point presentation.

Mrs C Knowles addressed the Committee speaking in objection to the application. Her comments included the following:-

- She was concerned that the report focussed on the flooding issues within the nursery and her formal objection had been ignored.
- The land had been raised 1.25m alongside her property and previous to this there had been no issues with water retention on her property. The water now came off the higher levels and into her garden. There was no drainage at the lower end of the site.
- The raised level of the site now meant that the previous height of her fence of 1.8m was now reduced to 60cm allowing no privacy to her own and neighbouring properties when people were using the site to walk dogs etc.
- There was now a security issue as the land in question was not secured and allowed greater access to all the properties.

H Wafer, planning consultant addressed the Committee also speaking in objection to the application. Her comments included the following:-

- Her client was an adjacent landowner who had objected to the application.
- The works had created issues with drainage and increased flooding risks

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with flooding now being seen on previously agricultural land. There were still concerns that the additional information provided and works to be undertaken to address the problem were insufficient and would still not resolve the current issues being encountered.

- There should be a condition imposed which would allow the regular monitoring of the site over an 18 month period, provide additional security and allow defects to be rectified within a timely manner.

E Moon, addressed the Committee speaking in support of the application on behalf of the applicant, Bellway Homes. Her comments included the following:-

- This application came about following discussions with the adjacent children's Nursey, which had been subject to historic surface water flooding. They approached Bellway Homes to seek to take advantage of the works being carried out on site to help alleviate this issue.
- The land was used as a compound during the construction of the new houses and during restoration the opportunity was taken, following discussions with the Nursery and the Council's Flood Officers, to create a flood alleviation scheme to help provide protection for the Nursery.
- The work resulted in a number of issues off-site as it was discovered that the existing culvert was blocked. This resulted in ponding on the site and impacted on a number of surrounding properties which gave rise to the objections. The problem was resolved as soon as possible with the use of pumps on site. While the temporary measures were in place a more permanent solution was discussed and agreed with the Council's Flood Officers including :
  - Creation of a new outfall into a low water flow channel 'swale'.
  - New 600mm deep drainage ditch and new connection to private drainage network via a silt trap along the northern boundary.
  - Additional field drainage along the southern boundary.This was fully in accordance with the Water policies in the Local Plan, specifically WAT3 and WAT4. The approach had been fully agreed with by the Flood Office and conditions proposed to require a verification report to be submitted to confirm that the work has been carried out.
- In addition, the need to update the approved landscaping plan provided an opportunity to create additional habitats on the site. In addition to the 10m landscaping buffer the site previously proposed, the swale and grassland were proposed to be planted with an appropriate wildflower mix to improve the biodiversity of the site, in accordance with Policy ENV2.
- In relation to the concerns about 'overlooking', there was no public access to the site and there were no formal or informal footpaths that would provide a vantage point for overlooking. The site has been profiled so that the ground level has been maintained where it meets the gardens so there are no security issues. Officers were thanked for working proactively with Bellway throughout the determination process and she respectfully requested that Members support the Officer's recommendation for approval, advising it was the intention that the additional flood alleviation measures would be carried out as soon as possible should permission be granted.

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

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- There was no information on the previous land levels, however the application had been considered by the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) who had requested condition 3 to be attached to any permission granted to ensure that the system had been constructed in line with the proposed scheme.
- The application allowed the LLFA to assess the approach to be undertaken to ensure that the flood risk was not increased elsewhere. Blockages had been found and the applicant had undertaken work to rectify this and introduce flood alleviation measures with the LLFA. A huge amount of work had been undertaken to get the application to this stage.
- The case officer had looked at the position of the bund and found it to be acceptable and it would be a decision for Members to take on whether they found it acceptable.
- Legislatively retrospective applications were allowed and Members were reminded that the fact that this was a retrospective application was not a material planning consideration.
- It was possible that additional landscaping could be provided to enhance the privacy of residents, however privacy in planning terms referred to the separation distances between habitable rooms and public footpaths at the rear of the property. A condition related to the boundary treatments to improve privacy to all the home owners adjacent to the bund could be included.
- If Members wished to change the wording of condition 3 then it was suggested that the application could be deferred to allow a LLFA Officer to attend a future meeting or that delegated authority could be given to the Director of Planning in conjunction with the Chair to agree the wording following consultation with the LLFA.
- It was clarified that whilst the verification report would most likely be provided by a suitably qualified drainage engineer employed by Bellway, this would be reviewed and agreed by the LLFA.

Councillor Wearmouth proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application with a revision to condition 3 to reflect a longer time period of 12 months for monitoring purposes and any remedial works necessary to be undertaken by Bellway, and an additional condition to be attached related to the privacy of residents along the southern boundary, with delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Chair and Vice-Chair Planning of this Committee to agree the wording. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Towns.

A vote was taken on the above proposal and it was unanimously:-

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and with the conditions outlined in the report with a revision to condition 3 to reflect a longer time period of 12 months for monitoring purposes and any remedial works necessary to be undertaken by Bellway, and an additional condition related to the privacy of residents along the southern boundary, with delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Chair and Vice-Chair Planning of this Committee to agree the wording.

Councillor Foster returned to the room and took the Chair and Councillor Dickinson left the meeting at this point.

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**21/02485/FUL**

**Change of use of agricultural land to touring caravan site for up to 40 touring caravans, conversion of existing stables to maintenance/storage sheds associated with caravan site use, erection of buildings comprising site amenities building, reception/warden accommodation building and electricity sub-station, refuse/gas storage/collection areas, hard surfaced areas for access, parking, storage & site servicing purposes and landscaping**

**Land At North Of Bewick Drift, Cresswell, Northumberland**

An introduction to the application was provided by J Murphy, Area Development Manager with the aid of a power point presentation. She advised that the application had been withdrawn from the June Committee in order to allow the applicant to provide additional information which had now been received.

T Carter, agent on behalf of the applicant addressed the Committee speaking in support of the application. His comments included the following:-

- Planning officers were thanked for a professional, thorough and balanced appraisal of the application.
- The tourism enterprise has been made by a local business, who had contributed in the past and continued to contribute to the local area. This was a fantastic opportunity to put Lynemouth on the map through this welcomed tourism facility. The level of support the application has received confirmed this.
- Significant weight had been given to the economic benefits of the proposed development, which would result in economic effects absorbed at the local and district wide levels resulting from both direct and indirect job creation and associated economic benefits.
- It was expected that the proposal would create 4 jobs with a view to increasing employment opportunities as the site developed. Further to this, tourists would support nearby settlements of Lynemouth, Cresswell, Ellington and beyond.
- This touring caravan site would yield an average annual expenditure of over half a million pounds. This would be distributed across those directly involved with the site and those living in the local and wider area, supporting existing business in Lynemouth and Cresswell such as the retailers, takeaways and other local businesses etc.
- The Parish Council objected to the scheme in July last year. Since then, the applicant had worked with officers to address concerns, which centred on two main issues of highway safety and ecology, both of which had now been addressed. Ecologists and highways officers had accepted the proposals and had not raised objections. Further, the applicant would make a contribution of nearly £14000 towards the Coastal Mitigation Scheme.
- In terms of residential amenity, the site was not close to housing to impact amenity and there was no evidence to suggest that holiday use would increase the rise of crime with no objections raised from Northumbria Police on this matter.
- Although it was not anticipated that noise would be an issue, given the proposals were for a touring caravan site alone, and did not propose a

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clubhouse as such, the applicant had agreed to provide a noise management plan as requested by Environmental Health.

- It was acknowledged that there would be a slight increase in traffic to the site but as highways officers had recently confirmed, any potential inconvenience would not result in significant impact to the amenity for those using the highway network for a site of this nature and scale.
- A significant number of members of the public supported these proposals, stating amongst other benefits that they too find it encouraging that a business was willing to invest in the local economy and bring employment opportunities when so many tourism businesses had closed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- By bringing an unused parcel of land of low landscape value into use, which would see the provision of hedge and tree planting on the boundaries of the site, replacement of the industrial looking palisade fencing, planting of suitable tree species and shrubs in the grassed areas throughout the development, and the introduction of grassed mounds in this location, would be of a visual and ecological benefit to the area.
- Creswell and this part of the North East coast, had for some time been a tourist destination, people from all over the country visited the village and surrounding area, but had limited opportunities to stay there and spend their money at nearby businesses and facilities.
- The applicant had actively sought to address objections, and the proposals were totally policy compliant in both local and national terms. Whilst some objectors had identified potential issues regarding noise, and highway safety, planning officers, along with specialists had considered the proposals would not bring about any harm and he asked that Members agree the recommendation to approve the application.

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

- It was thought that the reception/warden services on the site would be provided by a shift pattern working and would not require specific accommodation to be provided.
- Highways had looked very closely at the proposals in relation to highway safety and it was considered the 3 sets of signage regarding the restrictions on the bridge into Lynemouth to deter usage would be sufficient.

Councillor Wearmouth proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application as outlined in the report which was seconded by Councillor Darwin.

In welcoming the application and the benefits that the proposals would bring to the area by expanding tourism areas down the coast, Members did highlight that the ability to regenerate the area would also depend on having the infrastructure in place to support this and improvements to the bridge in particular should be a goal.

A vote was taken on the proposal to approve the application and it was unanimously:

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**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and subject to the conditions as outlined in the report and a Unilateral Undertaking to secure a contribution to the Coastal Mitigation Scheme.

35 **21/00085/OUT**

**Outline application with all matters reserved for up to four residential dwellings (Resubmission of 18/04275/FUL) (amended description) Land To The Rear Of 51 Station Road, Station Road, Stannington, Northumberland**

T. Wood, Principal Planning Officer provided an introduction to the application with the aid of a power point presentation.

T. Hall addressed the Committee speaking in objection to the application on behalf of a group of residents. His comments included the following:-

- Between 2015 and 2018, 9 applications, 5 within the Green Belt had been approved for 73 houses which was an estimated 95% increased development rate which was excessive, disproportionate and unprecedented for a small village. This small application plus the remaining brownfield site would push that figure to 108%.
- He questioned how a planning department could approve a plan in the Green Belt which immediately created a critical situation within the Green Belt, advising that the site was outside the inset boundary which should have altered them.
- The last approval was August 2018 with all subsequent applications refused with NCC immediately and repeatedly acknowledging that development had reached a critical point with regard to the Green Belt.
- This was a clear example of over-development, it should not have occurred and it can only be critical because an optimal point at which appropriate action should have been taken was not.
- Contrary to the officer's report this application contravened the Northumberland Local Plan (NLP) STP19(d) which stated that "small villages will support a proportionate level of development". Apparently 10% had originally been suggested but at a later stage was replaced by proportionate. The structure of the NLP and social hierarchy clearly indicated that proportionate development would be significantly less than 108%. In terms of proportionality, 10% and 108% were irreconcilable. There was now a small village, not even in the social hierarchy, with the largest relative contribution to development that any other location in Northumberland.
- The officer's report attempted to address objectors' concerns of overdevelopment by stating that the inset boundary has defined the level of appropriate development, which was debatable as there was another version that the inset boundary was actually drawn around land sites that were mainly already approved prior to late 2016 and then around the Green Belt to be protected.
- This was effectively an admission of overdevelopment because two developed sites, 19/0131 and 18/01044 were outside the inset boundary and therefore must be inappropriate. If you used the boundary to define appropriate land areas for housing then you had already reached quota by developing twice outside the boundary which negated any future

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brownfield development. It was inconceivable that 108% would be considered appropriate when the 20 year target represented an increase of only 12% or 6% annually. Where was the justification for more houses in a small already overdeveloped village when NCC were already 4 years ahead of plan, several years of housing land supply and a 20 year target slashed.

- There was no supply/demand imperative and it appeared the application was being recommended for approval just because it was a brownfield site inside the inset boundary.
- There was a need to balance the benefits of the application and the situation which had resulted in Stanning Station seeing the small village increased by 95% and rising; a critical situation which could and should have been avoided, the effects of which were permanent; substantial loss of Green Belt which should have been protected; irreparable loss of amenity, community and village life and character; increased noise pollution, major traffic hazard at the level crossing and continuous construction disturbance; inadequate infrastructure causing blocked drains.
- This was a small rural community which had been bombarded with 23 building applications and 8 appeals within a few years and all within the distance of less than one mile. The residents of Stannington Station needed some positive action after the horrendous and unprecedented situation that had been inflicted on them over the past few years. No more development was the least that they deserved.

M Ketley, agent on behalf of the applicant addressed the Committee speaking in support of the application. His comments included the following:-

- Altoria Development Ltd was a Morpeth based company who specialised in building bungalows and had a proven track record of providing this type of housing for older persons to help address the shortage.
- Altoria had delivered two further developments in Stanning and one in Blyth, all built to the lifetime homes specification including smart technology providing monitoring services allowing people to live independently.
- Stannington Station had development over the last decade but the adoption of the NLP drew a line in the sand because of the Green Belt boundary providing certainty for the 20 – 30 years.
- This site was within the inset boundary of the Green Belt and was therefore acceptable for future development.
- This application was for outline permission with all matters reserved for 4 bungalows which would easily be accommodated and was good use of the site. The development was appropriate in principle and the site was proportionate for 4 bungalows.
- Work had been undertaken with officers to reduce the number of bungalows on the site to 4 and it was a sensitive scheme in a sustainable location with appropriate services and transport. The village had a shop, restaurant and farm shop and a new bus route had been introduced.
- He asked that Members endorse the officers recommendation and approve the application.

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

- The application had been assessed as an application for market housing

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- and not as a not for profit scheme.
- The newly adopted NLP included a map and had a definitive area indicated.
  - As places developed then the way in which they would be described in the plan would change. Stannington Station was described at the current time as a small settlement in accordance with the plan.
  - The applicant agent in his speech said that the site was being promoted as bungalows and that this was the applicants unique selling point with the product being marketed for a particular demographic, however single storey bungalows were delivered on many other sites across the County. The applicant was not the only provider but it would appear that there was a market for this type of property.
  - The 436 bus service now ran through the village every 2 hours and there was a bus stop at the eastern end of the village which was used by a greater number of buses.

Councillor Beynon proposed refusal of the application as it would be an overdevelopment of the area, and this was seconded by Councillor Darwin who advised that the speed limit reduction from 40 mph to 30 mph had still not happened, there was no shortage of bungalows along Station Road and he also considered it overdevelopment.

Members in debating the proposal to refuse the application highlighted that the application site was not within Green Belt, the type of development was very land intensive and was not as profitable as putting 4/5 bedroomed detached houses on the plot and this type of development should be encouraged. The site was set back from the road and would not block any views. The site had been looked at by a Planning Inspector very recently who had commented that this particular site would be suitable for development and this would carry great weight at any future appeal. The objectors had made good points, but it was considered that any appeal would be lost and could in fact have costs awarded against the Council if the inspector thought that the decision was unreasonable. The application met policy requirements, however there would be very few sites within Stannington Station left on which any future development would be allowed.

A vote was taken on the proposal to refuse the application as follows: FOR 3; AGAINST 6; ABSTAIN 0. The motion failed.

Councillor Towns proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application as detailed in the report which was seconded by Councillor Wearmouth. The development was sustainable with a shop, restaurant and farm shop nearby and the bungalows would meet an identified need, were sympathetic with the area and did not constitute overdevelopment.

A vote was taken on the proposal to approve the application as follows:- FOR 6; AGAINST 3; ABSTAIN 0.

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

Councillor Towns left the meeting at this point.

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36 **22/01537/FUL**

**Installation of additional fencing for the purpose of maintaining security  
King Edward Vi School , Cottingwood Lane, Morpeth, Northumberland  
NE61 1DN**

J Murphy, Area Development Manager provided an introduction to the report with the aid of a power point presentation, advising that the application had come to Committee for transparency reasons as it was a school application.

Councillor Wearmouth proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application as outlined in the report which was seconded by Councillor Darwin and following a vote it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and subject to the conditions as outlined in the report.

Councillor Beynon left the meeting at this point.

37 **22/01895/FUL**

**Erection of timber frame building to form performing arts hub within school grounds to facilitate both school activities and wider community external groups, to include drama, dance and music, along with external toddler groups  
Morpeth Stobhillgate First School, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2HA**

J Murphy, Area Development Manager provided an introduction to the report with the aid of a power point presentation. The update from Highways Development Management as outlined in paragraph 7.10 had been received and two further conditions were required to be added to any permission granted as follows:-

“The development to which this permission relates shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan(s) referenced G700 Construction Phase Plan and Additional Information (Construction Method Statement) received on 21st July.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning, and in order to achieve a satisfactory form of development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies TRA1, TRA2 and TRA4 of the Northumberland Local Plan.”

“The development shall not be brought into final use until the proposed car parking bays indicated on the approved plans have been implemented in accordance with the approved plans. Thereafter, the car parking bays shall be retained in accordance with the approved plans and shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles associated with the development

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy TRA4 of the Northumberland Local Plan.”

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Councillor Wearmouth proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application with the conditions as outlined in the report and additional conditions as above, which was seconded by Councillor Darwin and following a vote it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and subject to the conditions as outlined in the report and additional conditions as above.

- 38 **22/01227/FUL**  
**Construction of single storey extension and perimeter walls to courtyards**  
**Kyloe House, Nethererton Park, Stannington, Morpeth**  
**Northumberland**  
**NE61 6EF**

S Milne, Senior Planning Officer provided an introduction to the application with the aid of a power point presentation.

Councillor Darwin proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application as outlined in the report which was seconded by Councillor Wearmouth and following a vote it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and subject to the conditions outlined in the report.

- 39 **APPEALS UPDATE**

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

**CHAIR**.....

**DATE**.....

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