

**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, 13 February 2023 at 4.00 pm.

**PRESENT**

J Beynon (Chair) (in the Chair)

**MEMBERS**

S Dickinson  
J Foster  
M Murphy  
D Towns

R Dodd  
V Jones  
G Sanderson  
R Wearmouth

**OTHER COUNCILLORS**

**OFFICERS**

K Blyth	Development Management Area Manager (West)
M Bulman	Solicitor
D Laux	Head of Technical Services
L Little	Senior Democratic Services Officer
McKenzie	Senior Highways Officer, Highways Improvement
T Wood	Principal Planning Officer

Around 14 members of the press and public were present.

**83      PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED AT PLANNING MEETINGS**

J Foster, Vice-Chair Planning (in the Chair) advised those present of the procedure to be followed at the meeting.

**84      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bawn, Darwin, Dunn and Jackson.

**85      MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council held on Monday 9 January 2023, as circulated, be confirmed as a true

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record and be signed by the Chair.

## 86 **DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor Wearmouth advised that Cabinet had approved the finance for the solar car port, however this was normal Council business, he had not predetermined the application and therefore would take part in the application.

Councillor Dodd advised that he was a Member of Ponteland Town Council however he took no part in any planning discussions.

## 87 **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.

## 88 **22/00896/FUL**

**Change of use of existing portal frame shed from agricultural use to commercial mechanical workshop (use class B2) and construction of new store alongside for agricultural vehicles and equipment.  
Land Adjacent To 7 Jackson Avenue, Ponteland, Northumberland, NE20 9UY**

An introduction to the report was provided by T Wood, Principal Planning Officer with the aid of a power point presentation. An update to Condition 4 was provided as follows:-

The first sentence should be deleted and replaced with "The hereby approved Commercial Mechanical Workshop (use class B2) is not permitted to operate on Sundays or Bank Holidays, or outside the following times:"

Councillor K Overbury addressed the Committee speaking as a representative of Ponteland Town Council. Her comments included the following:-

- Ponteland was a small town which had separate areas for residential and industrial uses and generally welcomed businesses who created jobs within the town. However this business was not in the right place and was not an appropriate use within a residential area which had a large number of families and narrow roads which were not suitable for larger vehicles.
- The site had been used for business purposes for some years, however it had expanded and information on the type of business or opening times had not previously been available.
- The application was contrary to the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan (PNP)

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- policy PNP 2 as it did not make a positive contribution to the surroundings.
- Residents had serious concerns regarding the narrow road between residential properties which was used as an access for the site and also road safety concerns for families and school children in the area.
- It would have an adverse effect on the value of properties in the area.
- It did not accord with either the Northumberland Local Plan (NLP) or the PNP and therefore the Town Council objected to the application.

B Lomas, applicant, addressed the Committee speaking in support of the application. His comments included the following:-

- The work to be undertaken would be the repair and maintenance of vehicles and testing of components. If any of the work to be undertaken would cause a noise then the doors on the building would be closed.
- The vehicles to be maintained were Eco 5/6 vehicles which had little emissions and it was hoped to be able to target the business towards the maintenance of more electric vehicles and the maintenance of lithium batteries in the future.
- The level of traffic had already increased within the vicinity due to the high levels of home deliveries and whilst the applicant himself could not control the speed of vehicles, there were signs stating it was a 20 mph area.
- Work would be undertaken by appointment only and these could be arranged to avoid school times.
- Tractors had been entering the site since the 1950's and there had been no issues.
- He was the fourth generation of his family to live in the street and the sixth generation to live in Ponteland. His grandfather kept livestock on the land which was followed by greenhouses and a garden centre and his father had operated a wholesale business from the site donating plants to Ponteland Town Council. The business expanded and the greenhouses were removed in the 2000's.
- His interest in tractors developed from a young age and he had worked for Mercedes Benz for 15 years and his hope was to provide a good service for residents wishing to have their cars serviced.

Councillor Towns proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application as outlined in the report and with the amended condition which was seconded by Councillor Wearmouth.

Members considered that businesses were needed to bring people into towns and felt that the operating times were reasonable considering that the site was an agricultural one and could actually be worked 24 hours. It was not a through road and therefore speed should not be an issue.

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

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and conditions as outlined in the report with the amendment to condition 4 as outlined above.

**Resurfacing and realignment of the staff car park and associated areas. Construction of 800kW solar array supplying a 400kW battery energy storage system which will feed 120 electric car charging points. Construct a water attenuation system to improve drainage.**  
**Staff Car Park, County Hall, Loansdean, Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2EF**

T Wood, Principal Planning Officer provided an introduction to the report with the aid of a power point presentation. The following responses were provided to questions from Members of the Committee:

- The drainage problems at the front of the building were unconnected to the improvements which were to be made at the rear car park.
- There were to be 20 rapid chargers and 100 fast chargers provided.
- There were no plans at present to restrict non electric vehicles from using the 100 fast charging spaces at the current time, however this might change in the future when electric vehicles were more widely used. It was thought the 20 rapid chargers would be reserved for fleet use.
- Additional lighting columns were to be installed and therefore all spaces should be covered by lighting, however there was also a barrier which would prevent the area being used after the building closed.

Councillor Murphy proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application which was seconded by Councillor Dodd. A vote was taken and it was unanimously

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

## 90 **APPEALS UPDATE**

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

A short recess was held at this point to allow officers to join the meeting. Councillor Dodd left the meeting at this point and Councillor Beynon took the Chair when the meeting recommenced.

## 91 **LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME 2023-24**

D Laux provided an introduction to the report which set out the details of the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme for 2023-24 for consideration and comment by the Local Area Council. Final approval of the programme would be made by the Executive Director responsible for Local Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Local Services within the next two weeks. It was confirmed that a 30 mph speed limit was to be imposed at Fenwick. Councillor Murphy advised that it had been good to see a scheme come to fruition in her Ward which had reduced speeds and feedback from residents had been positive.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

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**CHAIR.....**

**DATE.....**

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