

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COUNCIL**

At the meeting of the **North Northumberland Local Area Council** held at Main Hall - St James's URC, Pottergate, Alnwick, NE66 1JW on Thursday, 22 December 2022 at Time Not Specified.

**PRESENT**

G Castle (Chair) (in the Chair)

**MEMBERS**

T Thorne  
W Pattison  
C Seymour  
C Hardy  
M Swinbank

G Hill  
G Renner-Thompson  
J Watson  
I Hunter

**OFFICERS**

M Bulman  
V Cartmell  
R Little  
D Love  
T Lowe  
C Simm

Solicitor  
Planning Area Manager  
Assistant Democratic Services Officer  
Senior Planning Officer  
Principal Planning Officer  
Planning Officer

Around 10 members of the press and public were present.

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

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

88 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Bridgett, Clark, and Mather.

89 **DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor Renner-Thompson declared that he was a Director of Advance Northumberland and would leave the meeting before item 10 was discussed.

Councillor Hill declared that she had a personal, but non-prejudicial interest in item 7 of the agenda.

Councillor Watson explained that he was no longer a member of Advance Northumberland and would be taking part in the discussion and subsequent vote for item 10.

90 **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.

Members were informed that items the following planning applications were withdrawn from the agenda:

- 21/02292/FUL  
Conversion of former community building to creature 9no. flats, with construction of 1no. new house and garage block to rear (as amended)  
5 Palace Street East, Berwick Upon Tweed, Northumberland, TD15 1HT
- 21/02293/LBC  
Listed Building Consent: Conversion of former community building to creature 9no. flats, with construction of 1no. new house and garage block to rear (as amended)  
5 Palace Street East, Berwick Upon Tweed, Northumberland, TD15 1HT

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

91 **21/04037/FUL**  
**Removal of existing reception building and associated structures; erection**

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**of new reception building with associated parking landscaping and infrastructure; relocated/enlarged play area; sitting of up to 23 static caravans with associated landscaping infrastructure; vehicular access routes and LPG compound; enlarged caravan display area.  
Land at South West of Elmbank Caravan Park, Cow Road, Spittal, Northumberland**

T. Lowe – Principal Planning Officer, introduced the application with a PowerPoint presentation and gave the following updates:

- In paragraph 2.4 of the report, it referred to Area A already being in operation. In hindsight the statement may have been ambiguous and while there was a reception building and parking in operation, the proposed development, as set out in the report, was intended to replace that.
- 2 additional objection letters had been received. Issues raised included use of Area B as a public amenity and impact on open space, proximity of caravans to existing housing, impact on views and highways impacts. The matters had been addressed within the report and members had already had the opportunity to view all objections.
- It was confirmed that the notification letters had been posted out on 13<sup>th</sup> December which was within the statutory timescale.

B. Gowthorpe spoke in objection to the application and gave the following information to the committee:

- The Berwick-Upon-Tweed Civic Society objected to the planning application.
- Any intensification of use on the caravan site would increase traffic on a narrow and bendy country road, originally used to drive cattle to high-level pastures and which was not well adapted to motor vehicles.
- There was no separate footpath or cycleway.
- The site was in the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- The site was extremely prominent on a sloping cliff-top site and was very visible from Spittal Promenade.
- The view was spoiled by the caravan site.

G. Davies spoke on behalf of Berwick Town Council and gave the committee the following information:

- Berwick Town Council were satisfied that the issues of pollution levels within the required drainage system, and foul drainage were no longer an issue.
- The issue of views being effected from within and adjacent to the site due to layout was an issue of amenity.
- The site was an urban location, with a former industrial site adjacent to social housing.
- There were concerns around the A1169 into Cow Road.
- The benefits of the development were overstated and therefore the balance should thereby be tilted towards respecting the amenity of residents.
- Berwick Town Council objected to the application.

M. Bonner spoke in support of the application and gave the committee the following information:

- The sustainable growth of tourism which protected key environmental and historic assets was a strategic objective of the Local Plan.

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- The proposals would contribute toward the objective within the boundary of the existing holiday park and was within the settlement boundary. It would provide access to shops and services, minimising the need for car travel, and avoid visual impacts on the AONB.
- The additional pitches could generate between £100,000 - £280,000 of visitor spend for the locality and wider county each year.
- The expanded park as a whole could equate to between £1,000,000 to £2,500,000 of spending per annum, depending on occupancy levels.
- The transport assessment and subsequent updates had demonstrated that Cow Road could accommodate additional traffic and that safe access could be achieved. Additional road markings would be provided.
- New pitches were situated an adequate distance from neighbouring properties and the implementation of existing site rules would ensure that there were no unacceptable impacts on amenity.
- Boundary landscaping would be maintained between 60-90cm to ensure planting did not grow too high.
- The proposals ensured that the LPG tanks were a stand-off distance of at least 11.5 metres, with existing dwellings located further away. The HSE only required a stand-off distance of 7.5 metres. There would be no risk of harm to neighbours and the park had a licence for their use.
- There had been objections to the erection of fencing around the site, however this was erected under permitted development rights to restrict access to private property and had no bearing on the use of any Public Right of Way.
- The applicants had offered to provide additional signage at the top of Cow Road.

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

- The site was not in the AONB.
- There were existing passing places on Cow Road.
- The site had a license for 278 caravans and the site currently held 182.
- The lighting scheme was still to be proposed.
- There was a legal obligation for a financial contribution of £7,949.49 to the Coastal Mitigation Service.
- Issues with Cow Road had been looked at in detail by Highways and the Planning Officer, and the application was deemed acceptable.
- The caravans were to be occupied for holiday purposes only and would not be a person's sole, or main place of residence.
- There was no requirement for EV chargers.

Councillor Watson proposed to accept the officer's recommendation, this was seconded by Councillor Thorne.

Councillor Hill explained that there were 10 houses before the railway on Cow Road, and that she received a huge number of complaints about congestion. The addition of 23 more caravans would increase the problem and she would be voting against the motion.

Councillor Thorne and Councillor Watson stated that the site was already an established Caravan Park, it was a small extension of 23 caravans, and all

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authorities were consulted and agreed.

A vote was taken as follows: FOR; 6, AGAINST; 4, ABSTAIN; 0

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions in the report and a legal obligation for a financial contribution of £7,949.49 to the coastal mitigation service.

92

**22/02795/FUL**

**Demolish conservatory to the side and outbuildings to the near; construct new rear extension.**

**The Blink Bonny Hotel, Christon Bank, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 3ES**

D. Love – Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, there were no updates.

D. Cooper spoke on behalf of Embleton Parish Council and gave the committee the following information:

- The Blink Bonny was the only accessible community facility in the village.
- The Embleton Neighbourhood Plan Vision was “The rural parish of Embleton will continue to be a thriving and sustainable place to live, learn, work and visit.”
- Christon Bank was recognised in the Neighbourhood Plan as a “Local Needs Centre” with limited services and one of the priorities of the centre was to prioritise the satisfaction of resident needs.
- Embleton Parish Council strongly supported the planning application.
- The proposed change would provide extra employment opportunities within the parish whilst offering improved facilities for both tourists and local inhabitants.
- The proposed development at the Blink Bonny Hotel would protect and improve year-round community and recreational facilities for the benefits of residents and visitors.
- Provision of food and drink would enable the facility to cater for community activities, commercial lettings and local bookings.
- The Blink Bonny Public House formed part of the original infrastructure of the village and was a thriving social hub. The application aimed to maintain that appeal and add to its purpose and preserve the building and its social value.

T. Finch spoke in support of the application and gave the committee the following information:

- It was unlikely that the future of the business could be safeguarded without the development.
- There was strong support for the development with Christon Bank as well as the surrounding areas.
- There had been no objections.
- The proposed extension would assist in providing a community hub and would allow the business to be viable.
- The extended areas of the proposal would enable the business to provide quality food and 10 modern ensuite hotel rooms as well as a function room, which would be a valuable asset to the community.

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- The proposed development would create up to 20 new jobs, which would be a mix of full and part-time roles.
- The case officer agreed that the principle of the development was acceptable and that the developments accorded with the relevant economic development and tourism policies contained within the local plan.
- It was accepted that the proposed extension was large, but it was proportionate in the context of the overall proposals.
- The case officer had wrongly considered, in part, the acceptability of the development by applying part 2 of local plan policy HOU9 which was only relevant to householder proposals.

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

- There would be no harm to the setting of the listed building.
- The application was recommended for refusal due to it being unacceptable in terms of the design, in particular the scale and massing.
- The recommendation was an on-balance decision by the planning officer.
- There had been no financial information submitted by the applicant.

Councillor Pattison proposed to grant the application, contrary to the planning officer's recommendation, stating that since the Post Office closed and the bus service was withdrawn, the Blink Bonny Hotel was the only warm space for the community and stated that by virtue of its design, scale and massing, the proposed development was not considered to significantly detract from the character and distinctiveness of the existing building. The proposals were therefore considered to be acceptable and were in accordance with Policy QOP 1 of the Northumberland Local Plan and the NPPF, with conditions and a S106 Coastal Mitigation to be delegated to the planning officer in conjunction with the Planning Area Manager and the Chair of Planning. This was seconded by Councillor Castle.

Several Councillors agreed with Councillor Pattison's comments and that in the context of the plot, the extension was acceptable and that it would be good for Christon Bank.

A vote was taken as follows: FOR; 7, AGAINST; 3, ABSTAIN; 0

**RESOLVED** that the application was **GRANTED** with conditions and a S106 Coastal Mitigation to be delegated to the planning officer in conjunction with the Planning Area Manager and the Chair of Planning.

93      **22/00666/FUL**  
**New detached house for permanent residence**  
**Land West of Radcliffe Park, Radcliffe Park, Bamburgh, NE69 7AN**

C. Simm – Planning Officer, introduced the application with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, there were no updates.

A. Bardgett spoke on behalf of Bamburgh Parish Council and gave the committee the following information:

- Bamburgh Parish Council supported the application.

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- The house would integrate into the existing highways.
- The AONB Officers had supported the application.
- Bamburgh Parish Council believed there was no harm to visual amenity.

S. Cole spoke in support of the application and gave the committee the following information:

- The applicant was happy to enter into a Section 106 Agreement for a Coastal Mitigation payment.
- The STP 1 policy allowed the application if it was supported by the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 50% of the plot would be a paddock and wildflower meadow.
- There had been no objections from consultees apart from Highways.
- The application was supported by Bamburgh Parish Council.

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

- The application was in contrary to the new Northumberland Local Plan.

Councillor Renner-Thompson proposed to grant the application, contrary to the planning officer's recommendation, for the following reasons:

1. The site was located in a sustainable location, on the edge of the settlement of Bamburgh and would not be visible from the surrounding area. The site was bounded on two sides by development and would result in a much needed principal occupancy dwelling which would support the village of Bamburgh in accordance with Paragraph 5.45 of The North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Development Plan which stated that "Settlement boundaries have been created in the Plan having regard to the planning principles established in NPPF. In particular, they have been defined to ensure recognition of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside in the Neighbourhood Area. The settlement boundaries are not intended to stifle development which could still make a positive contribution to sustainable communities in the Neighbourhood Area".
2. By virtue of its design, scale, location and density, the proposed development would not be out of character with and would not have a detrimental visual impact upon the surrounding landscape. As such the proposal would accord with the National Design Guide, Policy QOP1 and QOP2 of the Northumberland Local Plan, Policy 5 of the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan and Paragraphs 126 and 127 of the NPPF.
3. This development fell within the 'zone of influence' for coastal sites designated at a national and international level as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Special Protection Areas/ Special Areas of Conservation/ Ramsar sites and, as such, coastal mitigation measures are required. The applicant had agreed to enter into a legal agreement under Reg 63 (5) of the Habitats Regs 2017. The development would therefore accord with policy ENV2 of the Northumberland Local Plan and the NPPF.
4. The applicant had agreed to enter into a Section 106 Agreement to secure principal occupancy which was considered necessary in order to ensure that new dwellings are occupied only as a Principal Residence. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy 14 of the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan.

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This was seconded by Councillor Thorne.

A vote was taken as follows: FOR; 5, AGAINST; 3, ABSTAIN; 2

**RESOLVED** that the application was GRANTED with a S106 to include Coastal Mitigation contribution and principal occupancy requirement and necessary conditions to be delegated to the planning officer in conjunction with the Planning Area Manager and the Chair of Planning.

*Councillor Renner-Thompson and Councillor Pattison left the meeting.*

94 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS?**

As the meeting approached the 3 hour limit Members were asked if they wished to suspend standing orders in order to continue the meeting. Upon being put to the vote it was:

**RESOLVED** that in accordance with the Council's constitution, standing orders be suspended and the meeting continue over the 3 hour limit.

95 **21/03911/FUL**

**Construction of 12 new Dwellings  
Land Northeast of 49 Hedgehope Drive, Hedgehope Drive, Kingsmead,  
Wooler, Northumberland**

D. Love – Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application with a PowerPoint presentation and gave the following updates:

- Proposed deletion of conditions 3,4,5,7 & 8 as they were covered by the updated wording under conditions 9, 11, 17, 25 and 26.

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

- There was no policy requirement for an affordable housing contribution.
- There was an error in paragraph 2.1 of the report, and it should have read “The application seeks to provide phase two of the wider Kingsmead development with twelve homes.”
- Phase 1 of the development had at least 15% of affordable housing.
- The flood authority were content that the degree of flood risk was acceptable with the SUDs scheme in place.
- The Woodroad bridge was not within the remit of the application.
- There was no requirement to notify neighbours as there was no houses within 20 metres.
- A site notice was put up on Weet Road.
- Phase 1 over provided for affordable homes.

Councillor Thorne proposed to accept the officers recommendation, stating that he fully supported the development and that it fit in with the Northumberland Local Plan. This was seconded by Councillor Castle.

A vote was taken as follows: FOR; 7, AGAINST; 1, ABSTAIN; 0

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**RESOLVED** that the application was **GRANTED** with the conditions set out in the report and delegated authority over the s106 agreement to secure planning obligation towards health (£8,700) and open space (24,548.50) provision.

96 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the North Northumberland Local Area Council was scheduled for Thursday, 19 January 2023 at St James URC, Pottergate, Alnwick, NE66 1JW

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

97 **URGENT BUSINESS**

Councillor Castle explained that Councillor Watson had stepped down from the Amble Development Trust and that the committee was required to appoint a member in his place.

Councillor Watson suggested to members that they should leave the position vacant and follow up in the new year. This was agreed by members of the committee.

**CHAIR**.....

**DATE**.....

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