

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

At the meeting of the **North Northumberland Local Area Planning Committee** held at Main Hall - St James's URC, Pottergate, Alnwick, NE66 1JW on Thursday, 19 October 2023 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT

C Hardy
(Vice-Chair) (in the Chair)

MEMBERS

T Clark
M Mather
G Renner-Thompson
M Swinbank

I Hunter
W Pattison
C Seymour
T Thorne

OFFICERS

M Bulman
V Cartmell
J Hudson
R Little
D Love
R Murfin
M Patrick
J Sharp

Solicitor
Planning Area Manager
Senior Planning Officer
Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Senior Planning Officer
Director of Housing & Planning
Highways Development Manager
Senior Planning Officer

Around 15 members of the press and public were present.

Ch.'s Initials.....

37 **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

In the absence of Councillors Castle (Chair) and Hill (Vice-Chair), the legal officer asked the committee for their nomination of the chair. Councillor Thorne nominated Councillor Hardy to Chair the meeting, this was seconded by Councillor Pattison and agreed by all members.

Councillor Hardy (Vice-Chair Planning), in the Chair.

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

RESOLVED that this was noted.

39 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Bridgett, Castle, Hill, and Watson.

40 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the North Northumberland Local Area Committee held on Thursday 21 September 2023, as circulated, were confirmed as a true record, and were signed by the Chair.

41 **DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor Hunter advised that she was Parish Clerk to East Ord Parish Council and had a personal but non-prejudicial interest in item 8 of the agenda.

Councillor Pattison advised that she had registered to speak in item 7 of the agenda and would not take part in any debate or vote in the application.

Councillor Swinbank noted that he had a personal and prejudicial interest in item 6 of the agenda and would leave the room while the application was discussed and voted upon.

RESOLVED that this was noted.

42 **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.

Ch.'s Initials.....

RESOLVED that this was noted.

Councillor Swinbank left the room at this point.

43 **22/04503/FUL**

**Residential development – 9no. affordable homes
Land South West of St Cuthbert Close, Main Street, North Sunderland,
Northumberland**

J Sharp – Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application with the aid of a presentation and gave the committee the following updates:

- An additional representation had been submitted in objection to the application claiming that the application did not meet the criteria for an exception site.
- Condition 4 was to be removed as the information had been provided in the report.

J Copeland spoke in objection to the application and gave the committee members the following information:

- The application was a reduced version of 22/00801/FUL for 20 houses.
- There was a need for affordable houses in the village however the site was not in the village.
- The site did not integrate well and was up to a mile from the primary school, shops, and surgery.
- There was no bus route passing the site.
- The proposed development was out of style and would clash within the area of North Sunderland.
- There was no pressing need for houses on the edge of the settlement site.
- 20 houses were not needed previously so therefore 9 was not needed now.
- The site was not an exceptional site and did not conserve or enhance the AONB.
- Concerns whether the application was a trojan horse with more applications to follow.

S Shepherdson also spoke in objection to the application and gave the following information:

- Concerns with the entrance road as it was between two sharp bends.
- The layout of the road was an issue.
- There was major safety concerns.

A Trotter spoke on behalf of North Sunderland Parish Council and gave the committee the following information:

- The Parish Council had lobbied for affordable housing in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Affordable housing was needed for homes of young families.
- The North Northumberland Coastal Area Housing Needs Survey 2023 showed that there was a net shortfall of 89 affordable houses in the area.
- Holiday lets and 2nd homes were an issue in North Sunderland.

Ch.'s Initials.....

- Young families were not able to afford the rent or house prices without the affordable homes.
- The Parish Council fully supported the application.

S Linnell spoke in support of the application and gave members the following information:

- The site was for 9 affordable homes.
- The principal of the development was policy compliant.
- 90 affordable homes were needed in the area according to the North Northumberland Coastal Area Housing Needs Survey 2023.
- The development was a low density site.
- The application site was in the least sensitive part of the area.
- Amendments had been made with the development in regards to type of unit, boundary treatments and roofing.
- There had been no objections from statutory consultees.
- The site would deliver needed affordable homes.

Committee members were then invited to ask the planning officers questions on the application at hand. The following information was then provided:

- Following initial concerns from planning officers, the applicant introduced a footpath into the application.
- The S106 agreement had been negotiated with the applicant.
- 70% of the development was for affordable rent, 30% was for affordable home ownership.
- An exception site would be up to 9 houses and was under a different planning test, policies would not support 9 units in open countryside.
- Maintenance of the site would fall on the land owner.
- Primary occupancy of the affordable homes had been secured by the S106 agreement.
- The LLFA did initially object to the proposals but withdrew their objections following further consultation.
- A Construction Method Statement had to be submitted and approved by the Planning Authority before development of the site started.

Councillor Renner-Thompson proposed to accept the officer's recommendation to approve the application with the conditions outlined in the report with the removal of Condition 4, and a S106 legal agreement securing Affordable Housing, Primary Occupancy, and a financial contribution of £5,535 towards Coastal Mitigation. This was seconded by Councillor Thorne.

A vote was taken, and it was FOR; 7, AGAINST; 1, ABSTAIN; 0.

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions outlined in the report with the removal of Condition 4, and a S106 legal agreement securing Affordable Housing, Primary Occupancy, and a financial contribution of £5,535 towards Coastal Mitigation.

Councillor Swinbank returned to the meeting at this point.

Removal of condition 18 (street lighting) on approved application 20/03446/VARYCO to allow streetlights to be turned off or removed. Farm Buildings East of North Farm, Rennington Village, Rennington, Northumberland

D Love – Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application with the aid of a presentation and gave committee members the following update:

- An additional representation had been received supporting the application.

Councillor Pattison spoke as the Local Member and gave the committee the following information:

- The site was a peaceful, quiet, rural area and there had been several harsh and bright streetlights installed.
- Concerns with light pollution.
- The residents cherished the dark sky environment.
- LED lights reduced insect population by 50%.
- The streetlights should be removed or turned off.

S Baggot spoke in support of the application and provided members with the following information:

- Rennington was a small village.
- There was originally two streetlights however after the development had completed there was seven.
- Streetlights were not appropriate for a rural village.
- The Parish Council were informed that streetlights were required for highways safety however the main road was a 30mph limit with no records of any incidents.
- There had been no road safety audit completed.
- Ballard lighting would be more appropriate.
- There had been 19 comments on the application and 18 of those comments were in support of the application.
- Dark skies were a special quality and had a positive impact.
- The Parish Council supports biodiversity and wished to promote the ecosystem.

Following public speaking, committee members were invited to ask questions of the planning officers. The following information was then provided:

- The village was adjacent to the Dark Skies area.
- The street lighting team would normally request street lighting.
- The route from the newer houses to the former bus stop was lit, however it was not clear if there was a footpath all the way.
- The Planning Authority could not compel the developer to remove the streetlights and the site had not been adopted by the Local Authority.
- The lighting was considered “not damaging” in terms of ecology.

Councillor Renner-Thompson proposed to grant the application, against officer recommendation with all conditions to be delegated to Planning Officers, which was seconded by Councillor Thorne.

Councillor Mather and Swinbank voiced concerns regarding the safety of residents if the streetlights were to be removed, they encouraged members to

Ch.'s Initials.....

vote against the motion and press for continued dialogue between the Parish Council and Highways Officers to reach an agreement on alternative lighting provisions.

A vote was taken, and it was FOR; 3, AGAINST; 5, ABSTAIN; 0.

The motion failed and Councillor Mather proposed to accept the officer's recommendation to refuse the application, which was seconded by Councillor Thorne.

A vote was taken, and it was FOR; 6, AGAINST; 1, ABSTAIN; 1.

RESOLVED that the application was **REFUSED** in accordance with the officer's reason of "The proposal seeks to remove the streetlights from the residential development at North Farm, Rennington. The lights are required because of highways adoption approach, separate from planning policy, and safety. The proposal to remove the lights would result in a potential highway safety concern and thus is not consistent with TRA 1 as it would not result in an effective and safe access to the existing transport network."

A short comfort break was announced.

45

23/00583/FUL

**Change of use of existing public house (Sui Generis) to provide 3no. residential apartments (Use Class C3) and erection of 4no. dwellings (Use Class C3) to rear, utilising existing access off E Ord Road, with associated parking, hard and soft landscaping.
The Salmon Inn, East Ord, Berwick Upon Tweed, Northumberland, TD15 2NS**

J Hudson – Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application with the aid of a presentation, there were no updates since the report was published.

J Boshier spoke in support of the application and gave committee members the following information:

- The application would retain the Salmon Inn building and convert the inside into flats.
- The proposed new dwellings followed the local characteristics and urban grain of East Ord.
- The applicant had worked with NCC Planners to resolve all outstanding material considerations including all concerns with flooding and Highways.
- The application plans complied with Nationally Described Space Standards and were designed to a high quality, with appropriate outdoor amenity space, and suitable distances to existing neighbours to protect privacy.
- The proposal provided two car parking spaces for every proposed dwelling of two bedrooms or more, and one car parking space per one-bedroom apartment, plus two visitors spaces, in line with Policy TRA 4.
- The Salmon Inn was nominated as an Asset of Community Value, but after further consideration, it did not qualify as a community asset and the listing was withdrawn.

Ch.'s Initials.....

- A full Marketing and Viability report had been produced.
- The Salmon Inn had been marketed since 23 May 2022 without a significant offer to retain the property as a public house, the majority of interest was for residential conversion.

Following public speaking, members of the committee were invited to ask questions of the planning officer, which the following information was then provided:

- There was a typo in the report in paragraph 7.23 and Glensdale Park should have read Glenside Park.
- The application site met separation distance in accordance with the NPPF.
- The informal crossing on the site would be, dropped curbs in an appropriate location, to be determined.
- The application would not be out of character for the area.
- There was sufficient amenity space.
- East Ord was a village in character but is in the settlement boundary of Berwick Upon Tweed.
- The application was below the threshold for a S106 agreement.
- The Salmon Inn was incorrectly listed as an asset of community value however it did not meet the criteria to be listed.
- The Salmon Inn was marketed for 8 months before the application was submitted, which was policy compliant.

Councillor Hunter proposed to refuse the application based on overdevelopment of a site, loss of public amenity and detrimental impact on Highways. This was seconded by Councillor Seymour.

A vote was taken, and it was FOR; 6, AGAINST; 3, ABSTAIN; 0.

RESOLVED that the application was **REFUSED** on overdevelopment of the site, loss of impact of amenity and detrimental impact on Highways.

46 **TREE PRESERVATION ORDER
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
Northumberland County Council
Land at St Peters Close, Glanton, Northumberland
Tree Preservation Order 2023
No. 3 of 2023**

V. Cartmell – Planning Area Manager, introduced the Tree Preservation Order with the aid of a presentation and gave the following updates:

- Paragraph 3.1 starting “This application was reported to the Virtual Strategic Committee on August 2020” and paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 were to be omitted and replaced with “The Parish Council made the request for the TPO on the basis that the trees were an integral part of the street scene and were at risk of removal because of the approved development. Also, several trees had been lost either through works or storm damage since the application was first submitted and the Parish Council were keen to see the remained protected.”
- The reason for making the TPO as modified was “In accordance with the Town and County Planning (Tree Preservation) Regulations 2012 and

Ch.’s Initials.....

Section 198 (1) of the Town and County Planning Act 1990, the 7 trees (T1-T7) are deemed suitable for protection through a TPO by virtue of their appearance, condition, and position within the street scene. The trees are open to clear public view and make a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the street scene and are integral to the street scape.

Councillor Swinbank proposed to confirm the modified Tree Prevention Order, which was seconded by Councillor Pattison.

A vote was taken and was unanimous.

RESOLVED that the modified Tree Preservation Order was **CONFIRMED**.

47 **APPEALS UPDATE**

RESOLVED that this was noted.

48 **S106 UPDATE**

RESOLVED that this was noted.

49 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the North Northumberland Local Area Planning Committee was scheduled for Thursday, 23 November 2023.

RESOLVED that this was noted.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

Ch.'s Initials.....