

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

### STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

At the meeting of the **Strategic Planning Committee** held in the Council Chamber - County Hall on Tuesday, 3 May 2022 at 4.00 pm.

#### PRESENT

T Thorne (Chair) (in the Chair)

#### MEMBERS

C Ball	L Darwin
R Dodd	B Flux
J Foster	G Hill
Jl Hutchinson	J Lang
M Robinson	G Stewart
M Swinbank	A Wallace

#### OFFICERS

M Bulman	Solicitor
C Harvey	Senior Planning Officer
L Little	Senior Democratic Services Officer
E Sinnamon	Development Service Manager

Around 2 members of the press and public were present.

#### 92 PROCEDURE AT PLANNING COMMITTEES

The Chair outlined the procedure to be followed at the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

#### 93 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Renner-Thompson and A Watson.

#### 94 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Dodd advised that he had a complete interest in planning application 15/04272/OUT and would leave the chamber whilst the application was being discussed. Councillors Hill, Hutchinson, Flux, Darwin and Stewart all also declared personal non prejudicial interests in application 15/04272/OUT.

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95 **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.

96 **15/04272/OUT**  
**To vary S106 Agreement to allow changes to Highway Obligation**  
**Park View Phase Three, Hadston Road, Hadston, Morpeth**  
**Northumberland**

An introduction to the report was provided by C Harvey, Senior Planning Officer with the aid of a power point presentation.

A statement from Councillor S Dickinson, Ward Councillor, who was unable to attend the meeting was read out by L Little, Senior Democratic Services Officer and included the following:

- Druridge Bay Country Park was one of the Jewels in Northumberland's Crown.
- For more than 6 years they had been campaigning for the crossing to be improved for locals who walked to the beautiful venue and all its facilities.
- Working with both East Chevington Parish Council and Highways, a solution had been put forward which met Highways legislation. It was not 100% ideal and was not what residents would like in totality, but it was a start, and a step in the right direction.
- He asked that the Committee supported the recommendations and allowed the improvement works, which could be added to in future years to make the crossing even safer, to commence.
- The Committee were thanked for taking the time to consider the application and he hoped that it would support them in starting to create what would be a safer passage for local people to the Country Parks.

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

- The Parish Council had been party to discussions on the amended proposals and were supportive.
- The proposals for a safer crossing point had been assessed as part of the original application when it was considered by Committee and had been deemed acceptable at that time. During the build out of the development and discussions on the technical issues, the Highways Technical Services Team had raised concerns on the proposed signalised crossing on highways safety grounds due to it being on a very fast straight stretch of road. Discussions were then undertaken with the Parish Council and Local Ward Member in order to agree a scheme which provided maximum safety for users.

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- The speed limit on the road would remain at 60 mph.

L Sinnamon, Development Service Manager advised that there was an amendment to the recommendation as outlined in the report which should read as follows:-

“A variation to the S106 agreement dated 21.2.2017 to remove the obligation for a signalised pedestrian crossing to be swapped for other highway safety measures to be varied in the manner as set out in the report”

Councillor Flux proposed acceptance of the revised recommendation as outlined above which was seconded by Councillor Stewart.

Members in discussing the proposed changes advised that whilst this was not a perfect solution it was better than the original proposal and did have the support of both the Parish Council and the Local Ward Member. In the long term it was suggested that the Local Ward Member could continue to work to reduce the speed limit on that stretch of road.

A vote was taken and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** that a variation to the S106 agreement dated 21.2.2017 to remove the obligation for a signalised pedestrian crossing to be swapped for other highway safety measures to be varied in the manner as set out in the report be **APPROVED**.

Councillor Dodd left the Chamber at this point.

97 **22/00939/FUL**  
**Installation of freestanding low level PV array to supply the adjacent property at Ogle Hill Head**  
**Ogle Hill Head, Belsay, Newcastle Upon Tyne, Northumberland**  
**NE20 0DR**

C Harvey, Senior Planning Officer, provided an introduction to the report with the aid of a power point presentation. Members were advised that an additional condition should be attached to any permission granted as follows:-

"Within two months of the hereby approved solar panel array no longer being used to generate energy for the dwelling currently known as Ogle Hill Head, the approved structure and panels shall be removed from the site.

Reason: To control the duration of the development and to ensure the remediability of the site, in the interest of preserving the openness of the Green Belt, in accordance with Policies STP7 and STP8 of the Northumberland Local Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework."

Rachel Dodd addressed the Committee speaking in support of the application. Her comments included the following:-

- As Members were aware there was currently an energy crisis, a climate

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emergency and rises to the cost of living.

- The property was currently reliant on oil and mains electricity and therefore heavily reliant on fossil fuels. The nature of the proposal for PV panels would assist the household to become more sustainable in terms of energy, environment and economy.
- During construction materials would be sustainable sourced where necessary and appropriate. This would include the recycling of railway sleepers and crushed railway ballast. As the PV panels were ground mounted, the equipment could be removed at any point if required.
- Due to the circumstances of the applicant being a County Councillor, this application had been brought to Committee however it would usually have been determined under delegated powers.
- Members were reminded that they should consider the application in the light of the Officer's report and recommendation for approval, given the wider environmental benefits of the proposal outweighed the degree of harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

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

- Whilst it was likely that if a similar application had been submitted from a member of the public it would be determined under delegated powers, this was not guaranteed as each individual application was assessed against the delegation scheme which determines if an application should be considered by members of the planning committee.
- There was no visual provided on what the panels would look like insitu, however the site was well screened from the road and Officers had been mindful of the wider landscape of agricultural fields when considering the application. Whilst the development would be seen, due to its height and scale it was considered appropriate in this instance. A similar development on other sites might have a larger impact.
- The panels were to be provided within the grounds of the dwelling and were to be used to provide energy to the property. The output was not known however it had to be assumed that it was sufficient for the property.
- There were a number of policies supporting small scheme renewable energy however the impact of amenity and visual impact must also be considered in assessing the application especially in view of the proposal being located in the Green Belt. That was the reason for requesting the additional condition to be added to any permission granted to remove the structure should it cease to be used.
- A lot of small scale renewable energy was provided by way of solar panels on the roof of properties which had permitted development rights, this application was of a larger scale and ground mounted which was why permission was required. It might be useful that future requests of this nature should include details of the gain.
- As the application site was within the curtilage of the property it would be deemed as a brown field site, however this did not mean that the site could be built on at a later date. Any future proposal would need to be assessed against relevant policy including greenbelt policies.
- There was a hedgerow on the southern boundary however this was broken up but due to the height of the proposed development it was deemed to be acceptable. Every application was considered on its own merits and

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- approving this application would not set a precedent.
- Due to the number of PV panels there would still be a requirement to apply for planning permission should they be placed on the roof of the property, however up to a certain amount of PV panels were within permitted development rights.

Councillor Robinson proposed acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application with the conditions in the report and with the additional condition outlined above, which was seconded by Councillor Darwin.

A vote was taken on the proposal and it was unanimously

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

98 **S106 AGREEMENTS UPDATE REPORT**

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

**CHAIR**.....

**DATE**.....

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