

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the **Tynedale Local Area Council** held at Hexham House, Gilesgate, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3NH on Tuesday, 9 May 2023 at 4.00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Councillor T Cessford  
(Chair, in the Chair)

**MEMBERS**

A Dale (136 - 144)	N Morphet
SH Fairless-Aitken (130-141)	N Oliver
C Horncastle (130-138)	JR Riddle (130-138)
I Hutchinson	A Sharp
D Kennedy	G Stewart

**OFFICERS**

K Blyth	Development Management Area Manager (West)
T Crowe	Solicitor
R Campbell	Senior Planning Officer
A Fisher	Construction Manager - Highways
D Hunt	Neighbourhood Services Area Manager
A Lambert	Learning and Development Coordinator
J Lewis	Planning Officer
N Turnbull	Democratic Services Officer
A Windle	Planning Office

**ALSO PRESENT**

12 members of the public and 1 member of the press.

**130. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Scott and Waddell.

Ch.'s Initials.....

### 131. MINUTES

Minute No. 125b)

Petitions

Request to Impose a Speed Limit on a Section of the C234 Between Warden Bridge and Fourstones

It was confirmed that the 6<sup>th</sup> bullet point on page 7 of the papers should read:

“The policy for the introduction of a 30mph speed limit required a minimum of continuous frontage development of 600 metres of **20** or more houses, which was in line with national guidance issued by the Department of Transport. Implementation of a 40mph speed limit would be considered.”

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the following meetings of the Tynedale Local Area Council, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair, subject to the above amendment:

- a) 14 March 2023
- b) 28 March 2023
- c) 11 April 2023

### 132. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Stewart reported that as the local member on planning application 22/02902/FUL he had been sent emails by various parties however he intended to participate and had not predetermined the matter.

### DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

### 133. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED AT MEETINGS

The Chair advised members of the procedure which would be followed at the meeting.

### 134. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The committee was requested 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.

**135. 22/02902/FUL**

**Retrospective: Use of riding arena for business use for individual training, riding and boarding of horses and erection of timber store (as amended)**

**Land to South West of The Old Stables, Durham Riding, Prudhoe, Northumberland, NE42 5NX**

There were no questions arising from the site visit videos which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Development Management Area Manager (West) reported that an email regarding compliance with previous planning application conditions had been received shortly before the meeting had commenced. The officers were satisfied that the issues raised did not prevent determination of the current application and would be investigated following the meeting.

The Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation.

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

- Highways had confirmed that any issues regarding ownership and maintenance of the access track were a civil matter and not a material planning consideration.
- The Local Planning Authority could not include any conditions regarding maintenance of the access track due to it being in private ownership.
- The use of the facilities was not expected to impact on the safety of the highway network and therefore Highways Development Management had not objected to the planning application. There was sufficient parking for the number of vehicles expected to use the facilities and a condition had been requested to ensure that the area was retained for this purpose.
- The applicant had supplied the information about the number of anticipated vehicles visiting each week which would mainly be for individual training sessions. It was not anticipated that there would be a significant number of vehicles visiting the site at any one time.

Councillor Hutchinson proposed proposed acceptance of the of the officer's recommendation to approve the application which was seconded by Councillor Oliver.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously agreed.

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

**136. 23/00645/FUL**

**Change of use of dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a residential institution (Use Class C2)**

**Oakwood Bank Cottage, Oakwood Bank, Oakwood, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 4LA**

There were no questions arising from the site visit videos which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation and confirmed that there were no updates.

Simon Barton, Associate Director of Operations for A Wilderness Way, the applicant, spoke in support of the application. He explained that:

- A Wilderness Way, had been formed nearly 16 years previously. The focus of the company was to better the lives of children, many of whom were considered to be amongst the most vulnerable children in the UK. Many of them had suffered adverse childhood experiences and exposed to abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- They provided clinically informed therapeutic care and support for a relatively short period of time with the intention for the child to return to family or a suitable alternative at the earliest opportunity.
- The natural and peaceful surroundings provided an opportunity to help children feel safe, loved and nurtured, the first time for many.
- They believed passionately about what they did using the transformative power of outdoor adventure. They utilised the countryside locations of their homes to provide children with outdoor activities and experiences which were life changing.
- They had 42 properties in the Northwest of England and Southwest Scotland. All except 3 of the properties provided accommodation to one child at a time. Given the nature of the work that was undertaken and intensity of support available, placements generally ran for between 17-22 weeks. This allowed the children to be at the centre of everything that was done, reducing external distractions and potential for 'sibling type' rivalry and conflict that was sometimes experienced in more standard residential settings. Oakwood Bank would be a single occupancy home.
- Different communities responded in different ways to their homes. In the majority of cases, they fit into the community with people recognising the significant social benefits that were provided. If this was not the case at the beginning, once people knew who they were and the unique way they operated, they were able to establish good communication links with the wider community. This enabled them to co-exist and in most cases become active participants in community life.
- They had held a meeting with interested parties on 26 April 2023 in response to the local objections to address and responded to many of the concerns raised. It was hoped that having provide greater context around their work and having shown neighbours around the property, they had made progress.

Daniel Addis, planning consultant for the applicant, also spoke in support of the application. He highlighted the following:

- The application sought to change the use of the property to allow it to be used as a home for a child in care. Having read the objections, they appeared to be based on a 'fear of the unknown' rather than the facts of the proposal. It was hoped that the previous speaker had provided a bit more depth regarding the company and how it functioned.
- The application was purely for the change of use of the building with no internal or external alterations proposed. Whilst the use class was different, Class C3 to Class C2, the nature of the use was very similar.
- Movements to and from the house during the day would be similar to any home, including parking and turning. There may be a child playing in the garden on some days, but for most of the time everyone would be indoors.
- The impact of the change of use would almost be unnoticeable. The benefits of the change of use would be immediate and far-reaching, particularly for a child living in the house.
- There was clear in-principle support for the proposal through the adopted development plan, as set out in the report. All site specific issues had been assessed and either found to be acceptable or acceptable subject to conditions.
- It was hoped that members of the committee could support the application in accordance with the officer's recommendation to approve subject to conditions.

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

- A certificate of Lawfulness application had been refused as officers had concluded that planning permission was required for the change of use. Although the changes would be imperceptible from the outside, officers had considered the logistics of the operations at the premises with staff arriving and departing.
- It was necessary to consider whether it would be reasonable to add a condition regarding children being accompanied on external trips and whether it could be enforced. The latter was probably not achievable. From the information given by the speakers, it was expected that the children would be accompanied.
- Condition no. 3 addressed retention of the 6 car parking spaces for the lifetime of the development, although they were not required to be formally laid out.
- An informative could be included that the access lane between the house and the adjacent garage and parking areas was not obstructed as it was also used by nearby properties.
- The application had been brought to committee following consideration by the Director of Planning and Chair and Vice-Chair under the Scheme of Delegation given the objections and contentious nature of the application.

- The application had not specified a specific age group for children in care, it was expected that any of child under 18 years old would reside at the property.
- The information submitted with the application envisaged that a child would reside at the property for up to 12 months. The speakers had suggested the average length of stay was between 17-22 weeks.
- Up to 3 members of staff would be on site at anyone time including 2 carers and a manager with additional visits from social workers, family members of the child and educational tutors.

Councillor Kennedy proposed acceptance of the officer's recommendation to approve the application which was seconded by Councillor Fairless-Aitken.

Councillor Oliver suggested that an informative be included that the access be kept clear. Councillors Kennedy and Fairless-Aitken agreed to an informative being included.

Members expressed their support for the application which would provide an essential service for vulnerable children. It was noted that Northumbria Police had no objection to this application unlike a similar application which had been for multiple children where the police had objected due to concerns. It was hoped that the change of use would have little or no impact on the neighbouring community and would be accepted by residents within a short period.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** permission for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report and the addition of an informative to the applicant that the access road be kept clear.

**137. Tree Preservation Order  
Tree Preservation Order – No. 02 of 2023  
Land at Wardrew Manor House, Gisland**

The Planning Officer introduced the report with the aid of a powerpoint presentation. He explained the background for the request which had been objected to by a neighbouring landowner. A Land Tribunal case to consider an Adverse Possession Order to determine the rightful owner was scheduled to be held on 16 May 2023.

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

- An adjacent footpath was considered to be sufficiently far away from the woodland area and therefore little risk to members of the public using the path, although this could not absolutely be guaranteed. A Consultant had assessed the trees and recommended the Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The TPO would not have been suggested if the trees were damaged or in

a dangerous condition. The land that the woodland was situated was in private ownership and due to its location, was unlikely to have anyone walking through it regularly.

- The trees had been assessed as having a 100+ years retention span and visually looked healthy.
- The land which belonged to the objector had been sold and therefore officers were unsure if the woodland would be used by livestock for shelter. They had been unable to contact the objector.
- Ownership of the land was in dispute and with there being a perceived threat to the future of the trees, this had led to the TPO request and assessment. The conclusion was that both areas of woodland 'definitely merited a TPO'.
- TPOs could be applied to individual trees or a larger area. In this case the impact of this whole woodland belt was considered to be important given the visual amenity value of the trees and therefore required protection.
- An application for work or revocation for individual trees or the whole area could be made at any time under the 5-day notice process which did not incur a fee.

Councillor Cessford moved the recommendation to confirm provisional order Land at Wardew Manor House, Gilsland 2023 (No. 02 of 2023). This was seconded by Councillor Stewart.

Some members were reluctant to apply a TPO across the whole woodland area. There was reference to nearby felling operations and some species of trees self-seeded and were quite prolific and only certain trees merited the TPO. There was also concern regarding the cost if work was required.

The Development Management Area Manager (West) stated that a TPO in such an isolated location was unusual. However, due to the perceived threat, the trees had been assessed against the TPO criteria which included health, age, perceived risk and visual amenity to determine a score.

Upon being put to the vote the results were as follows: -

**FOR: 6; AGAINST: 5; ABSTENTION: 0.**

**RESOLVED** that the Northumberland County Council (Land at Wardew Manor House, Gilsland) Tree Preservation Order 2022 (No. 02 of 2022), be confirmed without modification.

### **138. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE**

The report provided information on the progress of planning appeals.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

*Councillors Horncastle and Riddle left the meeting.*

*The meeting adjourned at 4.55 p.m. until 5.05 p.m.*

## **LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS**

### **139. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

### **140. PETITIONS**

This item was to:

#### **a) Receive any new petitions:**

There were none to consider.

#### **b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:**

There were none to consider.

#### **c) To consider updates on petitions previously considered:**

An update was requested on Peth Head, Hexham.

### **141. LOCAL SERVICES UPDATE**

Members received the following updates from the Area Managers from Neighbourhood Services and Technical Services:

#### **Neighbourhood Services:**

- Residual and Recycling waste collection services were performing well as was new the garden waste routes. Previously some garden waste collections had been missed due to the volume needing to be collected. Additional slots were being added for the bulky waste collection service to keep waiting times and performance within the target of 8 working days.
- Seasonal staff for grass cutting had been appointed and were in post as the service had commenced late March / early April. The weather had not been ideal at times although they were now on the second cut. There had also been delays due to the theft of 4 vehicles and grass cutting equipment from the Low Prudhoe depot. Equipment had been borrowed from other depots, purchased or hired, as necessary.
- Weed spraying was in progress for the next 6-8 weeks. Any areas of concern were to be reported and would be prioritised when the schedule permitted.
- The Hexham Hoedown, where residents in some streets removed weeds without spraying glyphosate, was in its third year. The work had varying levels of success.

- Verge Cutting was expected to be carried out in June and July with sight lines and previous priority areas undertaken before the main programme commenced. There was 6.8 million metres<sup>2</sup> of verge to be cut county wide with the assistance of contractors.

In answer to question, it was confirmed that:

- They would be meeting with the Traveler Liaison Officer and other colleagues in Public Protection before the traveler migration began in June to ensure the monitoring of facilities in areas such as Tyne Green and Park Well layby.
- A person had been arrested in possession of keys for the stolen vehicles which been identified as belonging to the Council. The locks had been changed on vehicles which had not been stolen.
- Dye would be used to indicate areas where glyphosate had been sprayed.
- The programme of road sweeping was similar to previous years which saw areas cleansed 4 times each year subject to there being no parked cars preventing access, severe weather events or vehicle downtime. The programme had been the same for the last 10 years.
- The Council supported community litter picks with the provision of equipment and the collection of litter. Individuals were encouraged to report locations where refuse bags needed to be picked up to prevent access by wildlife.

#### **Technical Services:**

- The winter services season had now been completed with 148 gritting runs carried out in 2022/23. All of the staff who had participated were thanked for working long and unsociable hours. The end of season winter restock of salt was taking place with 14,000 tonnes of salt having being ordered to replenish stock.
- Highways inspections were up to date in the Tynedale area with 6,436 actionable defects recorded over the last 3 months. 90% had been repaired in line with the policy. Extra resources had been brought in to address the deterioration of the network after the winter period.
- The sweeper and gully tanker were currently working in Bellingham after flash flooding on Saturday.
- Surface dressing preparation had been due to start earlier in the day but had been delayed. There were 7 schemes in the Tynedale area covering 128, 719m<sup>2</sup> with a total of 436,084m<sup>2</sup> for the whole county.
- An update was provided on a number of LTP safety schemes and drainage works which were scheduled, in progress, or had been completed.

Several Councillors expressed their appreciation for issues that had been promptly resolved following the reporting of incidents. Details would be checked for the scheduling of work in areas that had been highlighted at the meeting. Councillors were invited to contact officers by email to report issues which required attention.

The appearance of the recently installed raised crossing points on Allendale Road were commended and their use recommended in other locations.

**RESOLVED** that the updates be noted.

## **142. DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Anne Lambert, Learning and Development Coordinator, was in attendance to give an overview and answer questions on Northumberland's implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. (A copy of a powerpoint presentation is enclosed with the signed minutes).

She explained that for the first time, the Act created a statutory definition of domestic abuse which included any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, emotional, economic, financial, sexual, financial, controlling or coercive behaviour) between persons aged over 16 who were personally connected, whether they had been intimate partners or family members. Children who experienced domestic abuse were also now recognised as victims in their own right.

The presentation included:

- An overview of the Domestic Abuse Act and duties.
- Information on additional protection measures.
- Introduction of Domestic Abuse Protection Notice (DAPN) and Domestic Abuse Protection Order Orders (DAPO) to tackle offenders.
- Duties placed on local authorities in England to support victims/survivors and their children in safe accommodation.
- Governance and accountability via a Domestic Abuse Commissioner and national and local multi-agency Partnership Boards.
- An update on progress to date in Northumberland.
- The availability of multi or single agency training.
- Services available in Northumberland which included the Domestic Abuse Support Service Northumberland, NDAS, Cygnus, Harbour, Acorns.

Members were asked to consider the above when contacted by residents with concerns on other matters which did not initially present as domestic abuse, examples of possible complaints could include noise and damage etc.

The following information was provided in response to questions from members:

- Under Clare's Law, an individual could apply for information about a current or ex-partner if they were worried the partner might have a history of abuse and were a risk to the individual. Professionals working with clients could not apply on their client's behalf. A decision would be made by the police as to whether the threshold was met for information to be released.

- Additional information would need to be sought from Housing regarding the process to obtain accommodation.
- It was often difficult for others to understand the behaviour of victims to keep themselves safe, for example: escalation of issues if they tried to leave the perpetrator or make a complaint to the police, being nice to the perpetrator so they were less likely to be hurt.
- A culture shift was needed to address issues with perpetrators, so the problem was not moved elsewhere.
- Operation Encompass aimed to ensure that children experiencing domestic abuse received support in school.
- There had been a significant increase of domestic abuse incidents during the Covid pandemic.

The Chair and members thanked the officer for the informative presentation.

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be received.

#### **143. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

A list of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings was circulated. (A copy is enclosed with the minutes.)

Members were invited to email any requests to the Chair and / or Democratic Services Officer between meetings.

**RESOLVED** that the work programme be noted.

#### **144. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting would be confirmed after the Annual Meeting of Council on 17 May 2023.

**CHAIR** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_