

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a virtual meeting of the **Tynedale Local Area Council** held on Tuesday, 9 February 2021 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor T Cessford
(Chair, in the Chair)

MEMBERS

A Dale	N Oliver (part)
R Gibson	K Quinn (part)
CR Homer	JR Riddle (part)
C Horncastle	A Sharp
I Hutchinson	G Stewart
D Kennedy	KG Stow

OFFICERS

K Blyth	Planning Area Manager - Development Management
M Francis	Senior Planning Officer
P Jones	Service Director - Local Services
N Masson	Principal Solicitor
C Mead	Highways Development Manager
R Murfin	Director of Planning
M Patrick	Principal Highways Development Management Officer
D Rumney	Principal Programme Officer (Highways Maintenance)
N Snowdon	Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement)
N Turnbull	Democratic Services Officer

184. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED AT A VIRTUAL STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Chair advised members of the procedure which would be followed at the virtual meeting and of the changes to the public speaking protocol.

Ch.'s Initials.....

185. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME 2021-22 AND HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE INVESTMENT IN U AND C ROADS AND FOOTWAYS PROGRAMME 2021-22

The Local Area Council received a report which set out the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme for 2021-22 and the draft Highway Maintenance Investment in U and C Roads and Footways programme for 2021-22 for consideration and comment prior to final approval of the programme. (A copy of the report is enclosed with the minutes as Appendix A).

The Service Director – Local Services explained that the programme had been devised following discussions with Town and Parish Councils along with Local Ward Members, to tackle issues of local concern. Confirmation of the settlement from Department for Transport funding was awaited; but a programme totalling over £19 million had been assumed, based on the allocation received the previous year and additional unallocated funds received for highways maintenance. £5 million had also been allocated as part of a three-year investment to improve U and C roads and footway maintenance from the Medium Term Financial Plan. The funding was divided across four key areas: Walking and Cycling; Safety Works; Road Maintenance Improvement Schemes and Bridges, Structures and Landslips.

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

- Discussions were in progress with the Planning Department regarding Section 278 agreement regarding the new development on Corbridge Road, Hexham.
- An update would be obtained regarding the status of plans to introduce 20 mph around the middle school and high school in Hexham.
- £80,000 was included within the maintenance programme to make improvements on roads leading to the new high school which were deteriorating with use by HGV construction vehicles.

Members made the following comments:

- Work on a feasibility study for a cycle route between Corbridge and Hexham and Haydon Bridge and Hexham, be progressed, prior to works commencing for sand and gravel extraction at the Anick Grange site.
- Funding allocated for Park Lane, Prudhoe be utilised where work was required more urgently.
- There was a lack of understanding by members of the public regarding delivery of projects on the LTP Programme.
- Ditching and drainage work continued to be of high importance to prevent flooding and further deterioration of the road network.
- Appreciation for progress of schemes that had been delivered.
- Replacement signage would be required at West Woodburn.

Updates on schemes would be obtained for Councillors Cessford, Gibson, Oliver, Sharp and Stewart, as requested.

The Chair and members expressed their gratitude to officers involved in the preparation and delivery of the LTP programme.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The report be received and noted.
- b) Members' comments be considered in the finalisation of both the LTP Programme for 2021-22 and the Highway Maintenance Investment in U and C Roads and Footways Programme for 2021-22.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

186. 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.

187. 20/01708/FUL

**Construction of 17 dwellings at a mix of 3 three bed properties, Ten 4 bed properties and 4 three bed affordable homes
Land North and East of Ashlynd House, Church Lane, Wark,
Northumberland**

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

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation. She advised that Wark Parish Council had written a letter of support which had been received after the report had been published and circulated to members the previous day.

At 14.47 the meeting was halted for a few minutes during the officer's presentation to resolve technical difficulties with the YouTube broadcast.

A statement in objection to the application from Mr Keep was read out by K Blyth, DM Area Team Manager (West), and would be attached to the signed minutes and uploaded to the Council's website.

A statement made by Councillor Gibson is attached to the signed minutes and uploaded to the Council's website.

A statement in support of the application from the agent Mr Milburn was read out by K Blyth, DM Area Team Manager (West), and would be attached to the signed minutes and uploaded to the Council's website.

The Director of Planning drew Member's attention to the following points for consideration:

- The existing now out of date plan did not allow schemes in the open countryside but did not set out a settlement boundary.
- A decision from the Planning Inspectorate regarding the soundness of the Northumberland Local Plan which was expected imminently. It did set a settlement boundary and Wark was identified as a service village and a focus for future growth.
- The site had not been included within the settlement boundary when housing sites had been identified, due to access issues, however these been addressed as part of the detailed scheme.
- The applicant had engaged well with officers and had provided an extremely high-quality scheme. However, the existing local plan did not support this scheme. If this scheme was interpreted as providing a high-quality scheme which met local need and was desired, more weight could be attached to the benefits it delivered providing quality housing. A strictly consistent approach following the strategic policy where additional housing numbers were not required in the county, would see it refused.
- The decision was finely balanced and would fall where members placed the most weight.

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

- This application differed to a recent decision regarding a planning application for a site in Longframlington, which was the second phase and adjacent to a site which had been allowed on appeal.
- The previous appeal decisions within the village of Wark were in different parts of the village.
- There had been significant local opposition to the application in Longframlington whereas this application had some local support, including from the Parish Council which gave added weight to an exception site.
- A decision by the Planning Inspectorate had been required on the settlement boundary in Longframlington as it had been disputed by the applicant. Wark was defined as a service village, did not have a set boundary and this was not disputed by the current applicant.
- Decisions for each site were made on their own merits and under the planning framework relevant at that time.
- There was no strategic reason to trigger the release of additional land for housing land supply as there was a deliverable 5-year supply. However, this was a county wide supply and disguised areas where there was a demonstrable local need and the affordable housing requirements were exceeded.

- Comparison could not be made with sites in different parts of the county or with decisions made several years ago because the housing need and housing delivery rate had changed.
- The current scheme went beyond the policy requirement for provision of affordable housing.
- More housing was needed in Wark as it was defined as a service village and was considered as a sustainable location in the context of the NPPF.
- The detailed information submitted as part of this application had not been available when the boundary for the village had been set under the Northumberland Local Plan.
- The decision as to whether the application be refused or approved was extremely finely balanced in this case and the suite of documents which comprised the development plan needed to be read in their entirety. Under the Northumberland Local Plan, Wark was identified as a service village where growth was permitted, although the site was outside the settlement boundary. The decision would need to take into account the housing needs at the time of the decision. However other caveats allowed weight to be given to local support from the parish council when considering an exception site. Significant weight could not be given to the new plan as it had not yet received approval, however it aspired to not want to allow rampant incursions into the countryside as opposed to Wark needing growth, the site had been considered when housing sites had been under consideration, but discounted due to the aforementioned access issues, now resolved. The site could be put forward for inclusion in a future review of the plan.
- It was proposed that the 30 mph zone was to be extended to the north of the site so that traffic was slowed before reaching the access to the development, if approved.
- Work had been undertaken with the applicant to address flooding and drainage concerns as officers had recognised the decision was extremely finely balanced. Even though technical issues had been addressed, it did not make the scheme any more acceptable.

Councillor Hutchinson proposed acceptance of the officer's recommendation to refuse the application for the reasons set out within the report. This was seconded by Councillor Stewart.

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

FOR: 3; AGAINST: 8; ABSTENTIONS: 0.

The motion fell.

Councillor Oliver proposed that the application be approved on the basis that there was considerable local support, the scheme was of a high-quality design, provided affordable housing above the minimum requirement and supported a service village in a rural area. This was seconded by Councillor Horncastle.

In answer to a question from the Chair, the Director of Planning suggested that if the application be approved, delegated approval be given to him to agree conditions with the applicant. This would include a Section 106 agreement relating to the provision of affordable housing, sport and play provision and to protect the ecological belt of trees to the north of the site. He confirmed that if conditions were not agreed, the application would be brought back to the Tynedale Local Area Council.

Councillor Oliver agreed to include an amendment for delegated authority to be given to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Chair, to agree the wording of conditions and section 106 agreement.

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

FOR: 8; AGAINST: 0; ABSTENTIONS: 3.

RESOLVED that the application be **GRANTED** permission and that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Chair of Tynedale Local Area Council, to determine appropriate wording of conditions and subject to a Section 106 agreement.

188. 20/00242/FUL

**Proposed development of 1 no. dwelling house
Development at The Barn Sparty Lea, Allenheads, Hexham,
Northumberland**

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

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation. There were no updates.

Councillor Horncastle addressed the Local Area Council as the Ward Councillor and expressed his surprise that the application was recommended for refusal. A copy of his statement is attached to the signed minutes and uploaded to the Council's website.

A statement in support of the application from the agent Ms Wafer, who had written on behalf of the applicants, was read out by K Blyth, DM Area Team Manager (West), and would be attached to the signed minutes and uploaded to the Council's website.

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

- Allendale Parish Council previously had no objection to the scheme. They had then submitted a further response which confirmed that they supported the application.

- The planning history of the site was documented between 1988 – 2006 which confirmed that the former building was in existence during that period with photographic evidence. The Council's records indicated that the property had collapsed approximately 10 years previously.
- The officer had not dealt with the planning applications for the sites referred to by the local Councillor and therefore was unable to comment on the materials used on those buildings.
- Timber cladding was used for chalets and shepherds' huts but traditionally not on other buildings within the AONB. The AONB design guide had been reviewed when considering this application.
- The principle of development accepted the construction of a replacement building on this site and reference was made to the permission which had been granted for the conversion of the previous building, which had collapsed. However, the policy being relied upon within the Allendale Neighbourhood Plan was the rebuilding of a collapsed building with the inference that the replacement building should reflect the former building as much as possible. Officers had tried to resolve the design issues that were in dispute, such as the removal of the dormer windows, which were not a traditional feature of a barn structure.
- Officers had to be careful that there was not 'design creep' resulting in buildings which did not reflect the character of the area. The previous permission had been more similar to the characters of a barn.
- The scale of the proposed dwelling and position on the site were acceptable, however officers wished to see changes regarding the dormer windows, cladding and car port which were not traditional features of the former building. There had been some small changes to the original application, but they were not considered sufficient to recommend approval of the application. Suggestions included the removal of the dormer windows, use of stone on the building and doors on the garage. The applicant had wanted to test whether the proposed scheme would be approved as it was. Detailed discussions had been held with the applicant / agent regarding the changes that would make the application acceptable.
- Bold and assertive designs could work in protected areas; however, in this case the features in dispute were considered to introduce a suburban feel to the design of the building losing the original character.
- Sparty Lea was a small settlement of stone-built houses in close proximity to the road between Allenheads and Allendale.
- No response had been received from the North Pennines AONB on this application. They did work with officers on larger applications but were likely restricted on where their resources could be directed.
- The application had been assessed against Policy ANDP8 which permitted development where a building had collapsed and mirrored the features of the previous building. Comparison could not be made with the examples referred to by the local Councillor as the extensions of existing dwellings or conversion of buildings would not have been assessed in the same way as this application.
- The AONB design guide did make reference to climate change and sustainability issues but no reference had been made to these by the applicant or their agent.

- The style of building proposed in the current application was dissimilar to the permission granted in 2016, which had moved away slightly from the original position, so some flexibility had been permitted. The details did not conform to the design guide or the character of the AONB.

Councillor Gibson proposed that the application be approved if the applicant made acceptable amendments within 7 working days.

The Principal Solicitor explained that Members needed to make a decision on the application before them. He suggested that the application be deferred and that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning to agree the details under the scheme of delegation. If he was unable to do this, the application be brought back to Committee for a formal decision.

Councillor Gibson agreed to withdraw his previous proposal and moved that the application be deferred in order that the Director of Planning could consider amendments within 7 working days. The Director of Planning recognised the urgency that the matter not be unnecessarily delayed and resolved as soon as possible. If amendments to the scheme were unable to be agreed, the application be brought back to Committee for a formal decision. This was seconded by Councillor Riddle.

Members were in agreement that the matter be deferred to allow a further period of negotiation with the applicant on the areas which were under dispute.

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

RESOLVED that the application be **DEFERRED** and that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning to approve the application if amendments were made to the scheme to his satisfaction as soon as possible.

189. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

A report was received which provided an update on the progress of planning appeals received. (A copy of the report is enclosed with the minutes as Appendix C).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

190. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 2.00 p.m.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____