

7TH FEBRUARY 2021.

Tynedale Local Area Council.

**Planning Committee Presentation. 9th February 2021.
Item 7. Re: 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**

The suitability of this site for housing has been discussed with senior officers in the planning team for two years. It is appreciated that officers have worked so hard to assist us in putting forward a scheme that has taken on board all the advice from them, resulting in a proposal that is acceptable in all regards other than being located immediately adjacent to the northern edge of Wark.

This scheme does everything other than meet the policies of the now out of date Tynedale Local Plan, therefore on the basis of the site being adjacent to the open countryside officers have recommended refusal on policy grounds. This statement sets out the significant benefits of the scheme and that approving the homes for Wark would not undermine the emerging strategic policies in the NCC Local Plan.

On a Strategic level it's accepted that sufficient housing is available to serve Northumberland, however this is about Wark, this is a local scheme that will bring the benefits of a carefully considered development and help to build on and maintain the sustainability of the village for future generations. The overwhelming support demonstrates that the scheme is needed and wanted.

The site is not speculative, it has been carefully thought through and bought forward by a farming family who have lived in Wark for generations. The layout, scale, use of traditional materials, stone boundaries, landscaping and ecology belt have all been carefully considered to ensure that this is a bespoke scheme designed to meet the needs of the community of Wark.

The proposal has no technical constraints to restrict it from coming forward. The points raised regarding heritage are outweighed by the ecological benefits the scheme brings. As well as the wider economic, social and environmental benefits that the homes will bring in the form of vitality and viability of the existing shops, pubs and community facilities, more children attending the school and the environmental benefits that tree planting brings within the ecological strip clearly outweigh any harm.

The need for the scheme has been expressed by the community in the 26 letters of support from residents, the strength of support from the Parish Council, the support from the school, who have seen numbers fall significantly in recent decades and need more pupils to maintain a sustainable service and letters of support from the business's in the village. This represents an overwhelming need for these family homes and the benefits it will bring to Wark. Wark wants these homes as it recognizes that it needs them.

NCC planners have worked so hard with the applicant and his team to bring the development to this point of being finely balanced, the weight being the concern that its approval could have on the LP. The LP is a strategic document seeking to deliver strategic objectives, this housing proposal is a local scheme, bespoke to Wark village and its needs. This proposal will not undermine the LP. The LP will still come forward, however it may be delayed, the inspector may request further clarification. This site, the support it has from the community of Wark and the benefits it will bring should & needs to happen now,

This proposal meets and exceeds every technical & design requirement, it provides affordable housing and suitable mix with no harm caused. The concerns regarding flooding, highway safety, trees and amenity have all been met and exceeded. It has been carefully designed, reflecting the best characteristics of Wark, using natural stone and slate, ensuring homes are all reflective of the local vernacular. It will also create an ecological corridor of 1400m² including planting of 200 native trees secured through S106.

To Conclude

The benefits of the scheme are extensive and no harm is caused by the development. The scheme brings only benefits, including family housing, exceeding required affordable housing high quality traditionally design, biodiversity enhancement and a clear landscaped edge to the north of the village. Housing should be located where it will enhance & maintain the

vitality of rural communities, The Parish Council, the school, local businesses and 26 residents have all expressed the need for housing to help ensure these vital services are retained for future generations.

We request Councilors approve this application, this is an opportunity to finish and approve the ground work your officers have done to push this finely balanced scheme to being an approval ensuring significant benefits to Wark village with no adverse impact.

Thank you for your time.