

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Tynedale Local Area Council** held at County Hall, Morpeth on Tuesday, 15 June 2021 at 4.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor T Cessford
(Chair, in the Chair for agenda items 1 – 3 and 9)

(Planning Vice-Chair Councillor A Scott in the chair for items 4 - 8)

MEMBERS

A Dale
CR Homer
C Horncastle
I Hutchinson
D Kennedy
N Morphet

N Oliver
JR Riddle
A Sharp
G Stewart
HR Waddell

OFFICERS

N Armstrong
M Haworth
R Little

N Masson
M Patrick

V Robson
E Sinnamon
N Turnbull

Principal Planning Officer
Planning Officer
Assistant Democratic Services
Officer
Principal Solicitor
Principal Highways Development
Management Officer
Built Heritage and Design Officer
Development Service Manager
Democratic Services Officer

There were 3 members of the press/public in attendance.

1. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Membership and Terms of Reference, as agreed by Council at the meeting on 26 May 2021, had been circulated for information.

The Chair welcomed the new Members and invited all members and officers to introduce themselves.

Ch.'s Initials.....

RESOLVED that the Local Area Council's membership and terms of reference, as agreed by Council on 26 May 2021, be noted.

2. MINUTES

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

- a) 9 March 2021
- b) 27 April 2021

3. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Oliver declared a personal and prejudicial interest in planning application 21/00357/FUL as his wife was the former Chair of Governors at Corbridge Middle School and he was friends with the applicant. He stated that he would leave the meeting whilst the application was discussed.

Elizabeth Sinnamon, Development Service Manager, declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest as it was the local school.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Councillor Cessford then vacated the Chair, for Planning Vice-Chair Councillor Scott to chair the development control section of the agenda, as was the arrangement for all Local Area Councils.

4. 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.

5. 20/02180/FUL

**Conversion, extension and alteration of existing coach house buildings to create a new wedding venue with associated demolition of existing outbuildings, new access, parking and landscaping (as amended)
Linnels Coach House, Fellside, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 1TS**

The Principal Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation. He reported that an additional consultee response from Highways Development Management had been circulated by email to all members earlier in the afternoon.

The updated comment followed a review of the impacts of the proposed development on the local highway and community having regard to the anticipated traffic movements, as well as the proposed parking provision and requirements for such a scheme. Highways now advised that the development would result in an unacceptable impact in highway capacity and safety terms.

For the reasons set out below, it was now recommended that consideration be given to an additional refusal reason on highway grounds, as follows:

'The development would result in an unacceptable impact in highway capacity and safety terms due to a lack of adequate parking provision on-site resulting in an unreasonable level of parking needing to occur off-site which has not been demonstrated as safe or acceptable on the public highway, part of the classified rural road network within the vicinity of the site. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policies GD4 and GD6 of the Tynedale Local Plan, Policy GD4 of the Tynedale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.'

The Development Service Manager reminded new and previous members of the assessment of planning applications, how this was set out in the officer's reports and key areas.

Mr. D Young and Mr. S. Phillips spoke on behalf of the 7 neighbours who had objected to the application. They highlighted the following:-

- They agreed with the comments in the officer's report that the tests for approval of development in the Green Belt had not been satisfied.
- Highways required that parking be contained within the site. The site was 2 miles from the nearest town with no public transport or footpath with most guests arriving by car.
- The area had many traffic issues due to its location in a steep valley with tightly bending roads. The adjacent Linnels Bridge was a single-track arched bridge, at right angles to the road, with no visibility from one side to the other. This often resulted in vehicles meeting on the bridge and one having to back up.
- They could not envisage how 110 guests could arrive in a short period of time without causing major traffic problems and gridlock.
- A similar country wedding venue had suggested that parking spaces for approximately half the number of attendees was necessary. The proposals for this application were much less. Any parking on nearby roads resulted in traffic disruption.
- Despite signposting, unsuitable large vehicles using sat nav systems frequently approached and were unable to cross Linnels Bridge, a fragile listed ancient monument with a 5-ton weight limit. Extracting long or

heavy vehicles was a major undertaking which required them to reverse a considerable distance up steep and winding roads. Turning a coach arriving with other wedding traffic would be virtually impossible.

- The duration and frequency of noise associated with a wedding venue, particularly in summer months, was likely to constitute a statutory nuisance, given current low noise levels, and lead to a detrimental impact on residents' lives.
- The noise assessment assumed that the walls of the new building would be constructed of 300mm stone and whether the amplified music level of 95db would transfer outside the building. However, the design proposed natural timber cladding and was not covered by the noise assessment.
- Whilst the footprint of the building had been reduced, the number of guests remained the same, leading to an increased need for ventilation. Residents were concerned that ventilation would be provided by opening windows and doors in the new barn area and the stated music level of 95db would migrate across the valley due a reliance on natural ventilation.
- Applying a permitted noise level of 10 db above the daytime background noise level of 37db and 29db at night, was likely to lead to a statutory nuisance with the applicant's stated amplified music level of 95db.
- The application as drafted was believed to be inappropriate. If progressed, the issues needed to be addressed with appropriate conditions on curfew and frequency of events to ensure that noise and guests were contained within the building.

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

- Several discussions had been held regarding this application and the approach to be adopted as the Council did not have set standards with regard to wedding venues and parking. The final response had been presented to members as reconsultation 4.
- Some buildings and structures were not listed, however due to their architectural and historical importance and their relation to designated assets, they were designated as non-designated heritage assets.
- Historic England's Advisory Statement 5 required planning authority's to assess the weight to be given to the harm to buildings not listed but of historic importance. Paragraph 197 of the NPPF also required that weight needed to be given to non-designated heritage assets.
- Non-designated heritage assets were assessed on a case by case basis, particularly in the countryside. Lists were normally drawn up in conservation areas where there were conservation area character appraisals and in areas where there was a local neighbourhood plan.
- Very special circumstances were not required in the Green belt in all cases, only where development was inappropriate. In this case the proposals did not meet the exceptions set out in paragraphs 145 and 146 of the NPPF. Inappropriate development in the Green Belt was to be refused unless there were very special circumstances which was a matter of planning judgement and whether these outweighed the harm to the

Green Belt and any other harm, in this case to the character of the area, the heritage assets and highways.

- The test in paragraph 145 of the NPPF was whether the proposed extension or alteration would be a disproportionate addition above the size of the original building. Whilst paragraph 146 set out other forms of development that would not be inappropriate in the Green Belt provided that they preserved its openness and did not conflict with the purpose including the land within it, this had been applied for the new car parking and engineering operations and officers felt there would be a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt. In some cases, this might not reduce the openness, but a decision would need to be made on each case.
- Whilst a traffic management plan and use of sustainable forms of transport, such as use of electric charged minibuses which could transport guests to a sustainable location, might be suitable at another location. In this case highways development officers were concerned regarding the lack of available parking spaces and maneuverability within the site.

Councillor Stewart proposed acceptance of the recommendation to refuse the application with the additional reason from Highways. This was seconded by Councillor Hutchinson.

Whilst Members noted the economic benefits of the application, several Members commented on their familiarity with the location and their concerns regarding the potential for traffic problems in the area.

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

RESOLVED that the application be **REFUSED** permission for the reason outlined in the report and the following additional reason:

‘The development would result in an unacceptable impact in highway capacity and safety terms due to a lack of adequate parking provision on-site resulting in an unreasonable level of parking needing to occur off-site which has not been demonstrated as safe or acceptable on the public highway, part of the classified rural road network within the vicinity of the site. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policies GD4 and GD6 of the Tynedale Local Plan, Policy GD4 of the Tynedale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.’

- 6. 20/03388/FUL**
Change of use from dwellinghouse and cottage (C3 use) to guest accommodation (C1 use); single-storey rear extension to form wedding venue; and car parking (As amended).
Shildon, Corbridge, Northumberland, NE45 5P

The Chair reported that the application had been withdrawn from the meeting.

Councillor Oliver, having previously disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest, left the meeting during consideration of the following application.

7. 21/00357/FUL

Installation and siting of 3 x garden room teaching pods, measuring 3.5m x 3.5m in floor area and a height of 2.8m

Corbridge Middle School, Cow Lane, Corbridge, NE45 5HY

The Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation and updated members as follows:

‘Following a query received from Councillor Morphet regarding the sourcing of sustainable materials, the applicant had confirmed earlier that day that the materials would preferably be sourced from UK Western Red Cedar cladding and would not be from any old growth forest, or indeed Ancient Woodland; this had also been confirmed by the supplier.’

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

- The lifespan of the pods had not been confirmed.
- The pods were to be used to support the Covid-19 catch up work with pupils following missed education as a result of the pandemic over the previous 12 months. This would have been the priority and driver for the type, model and design of the proposed buildings within a finite budget.
- Discussions had been held with Strategic Estates regarding proposals for new buildings on county council owned land and sustainability credentials. They had confirmed that they were looking at ways of carbon reduction, improved heating system and a range of other methods to tackle the climate change emergency.
- The emerging Local Plan, which was out to consultation, made modifications to the policy to strengthen arguments for sustainable design and construction, the lifetime and sustainability of products being used.
- Some of the proposed materials were more sustainable than others such as the use of larch and redwood although it was acknowledged that some aspects were not recyclable or long term sustainable. Cost, use and budget were all factors to be taken into consideration.

Councillor Homer proposed acceptance of the officer recommendation to approve the application for the reasons set out in the officer’s report which was seconded by Councillor Cessford.

Upon being put to a vote the proposal was unanimously agreed.

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

8. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

The report provided information on the progress of planning appeals.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

On the conclusion of the development control business Councillor Scott vacated the Chair. Councillor Cessford returned to the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 13 July 2021 at 4.00 p.m.

Councillor Oliver returned to the meeting.

The Chair congratulated Hexham Town Councillor Stephen Ball who had recently been awarded an MBE for his services to rural charities.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____