

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Castle Morpeth Local Area Council** held in the Council Chamber on Monday, 11 February 2019.

PRESENT

Councillor S. Dickinson
(Planning Vice-chair, in the Chair)

COUNCILLORS

Armstrong, E.
Bawn, D.L
Beynon, J.A
Dodd, R.R.
Dunn, L.

Jones, V.
Sanderson, H.G.H.
Towns, D.J
Wearmouth, R.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Bennett, Mrs L.M.
Fairs, G.
Hadden, D
Hitching, J.
Horsman, G.
McKenzie, R.

Murphy, J.
Sanderson, J.

Sinnamon, E.
Soulsby, R.

Senior Democratic Services Officer
Highways Development Manager
Lawyer
Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer
Senior Planning Officer
Senior Programme Officer
(Highways Improvements)
Principal Planning Officer
Senior Planning Manager (Planning
Policy)
Senior Planning Manager
Planning Officer

99. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Foster, P.A. Jackson and D. Ledger.

100. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council held on Monday, 14 January 2019 as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

101. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The attached report explained how the Local Area Council was asked to decide the planning applications attached to this agenda using the powers delegated to it. and included details of the public speaking arrangements. (Report attached to the signed minutes as **Appendix A**)

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

102. 17/03123/OUT

Outline permission for the erection of up to 9 dwellings Kirkley Sawmill, Kirkley, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE20 0BD

Geoff Horsman, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview. Mr. Horsman informed Members that there had been a change to the description which now referred to the demolition of all the existing buildings on the site and the erection of up to nine dwellings. The application was outline only with all detailed matters reserved for later approval. The plan of the site showing dwellings was for illustrative purposes only.

In updates to the report, Mr. Horsman reported that a further objection had been received on the grounds of increased flood risk, the presence of newts, highway safety and that the surrounding area would struggle to accommodate the number of dwellings proposed. It was also requested that a site visit take place. The objectors had also provided photographs of the course of the burn. In addition there were still some outstanding matters to be resolved with the Lead Local Flood Authority. Discussions were ongoing with the applicant in an effort to resolve these issues. The Ecologist had confirmed that the newts shown in the objectors' photographs were not great crested newts and so had raised no objection on these grounds. However, if the application was agreed an informative would be issued to minimise the risk of harm to wildlife.

Mr. Horsman informed members that the recommendation was to be amended and that it was minded to grant outline permission, delegate authority to the Director of Planning to decide the application accordingly subject to resolution of the drainage/flood risk matters to the satisfaction of the Lead Local Flood Authority, including any conditions that may be required by it, the conditions as specified in the report, the additional ecology informative being added to the decision notice and completion of a Section 106 Agreement to secure the education contribution specified by the Council's education team.

Mrs C. Brownlee spoke in objection to the application and her key points included:-

- The local infrastructure would struggle to cope. There was very little public transport and the bus service only ran during term time.
- Road safety was an issue due to the volume and speed of traffic. The new housing could result in up to 30 additional vehicles and the road in the area was in poor repair. The road was also regularly used by horseriders, of all abilities from Kirkley

college, and cyclists. Mrs Brownlee rode on this road herself and had had many 'close shaves' with traffic.

- Ponteland schools would struggle to cope with the potential number of additional pupils.
- A site visit should be held.

Mr. G. Brownlee spoke in objection to the application and his key points included:-

- Flooding was a major concern as the burn would not be able to cope with additional run-off and already flooded regularly.
- The proposed houses on the new development were positioned at a higher level than existing houses and so would not flood. The existing properties would be affected.
- Land was being lost to flood erosion.
- A site visit by the Lead Flood Authority had not taken place yet and consideration of the application should be deferred until this had happened.
- Their land already flooded but it could be their property in the future. What assurances could be given?

Councillor Christine Caisley (Ponteland Town Council) spoke in the local member slot and her main points included:-

- Ponteland Town Council supported the local residents in objecting to this application which was located on a brown field site within the Green Belt.
- There was concern about the potential for flooding particularly as the existing properties were lower than the proposed new properties.
- The development was contrary to Policy H15 of the Castle Morpeth District Local Plan.
- A site visit should be held as it was the only way to understand the potential issues with the site.
- Environmental change would lead to more rain in the future which could increase the risk of the flooding from run off.

Chris Megson (Agent) then spoke in support of the application and his key points included:

- The recommendation to grant permission should be endorsed.
- The applicant had worked with officers to produce a quality scheme on the site.
- With regard to the flood risk and drainage issues, discussions were underway to ensure that the risk was not increased

Members then asked questions to officers and the key points from responses included:

- There was no objection, in principle, to the proposals with regard to drainage. It was too early to make any recommendations regarding conditions until further technical details in relation to surface water management were received from the applicant.
- If the development was approved it was likely that drainage would be improved and provide betterment for the area as a result. Water could be released at a more controlled rate. Details were awaited, however.

- The road junction frontage was suitable for access to the site and to cater for up to nine dwellings.
- The proposal was contrary to policy but this had to be balanced with the NPPF
- The development was contrary to Policy C17 of the Castle Morpeth District Local Plan but weight had to be given to the more up to date NPPF.

Councillor S. Dickinson proposed, seconded by Councillor D. Bawn that consideration be deferred in order that a site visit could be held. Following a query from a member, the proposal was amended to add that further information be awaited from the Lead Local Flood Authority; the proposal was then further amended to defer for a six week period before coming back to Members. The amendments were also proposed and seconded by Councillors S. Dickinson and D. Bawn.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously agreed that it be

RESOLVED that the application be **DEFERRED** for six weeks pending receipt of further information from the Lead Local Flood Authority, a site visit, and re-submitted to Members.

103. 18/03703/FUL

**Proposed junction for agricultural forestry access to land adjacent Fir Tree Nursery site (further info recd 13/11/18)
Land West of Fir Trees Nursery, Widdrington Station, Northumberland,**

Ryan Soulsby, Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview.

There were no questions or debate.

Councillor R. Wearmouth moved the officer recommendation to grant the application. This was seconded by Councillor J. Beynon.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed unanimously that it be

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

104. 18/02629/FUL

**Detailed planning proposal for 53 residential dwellings and associated infrastructure (RESUBMISSION)
Land North Of The Garth, Pottery Bank, Morpeth, Northumberland**

Geoff Horsman, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview. He reported that there had been no further comments from residents. The Lead Local Flood Authority had now lifted its objection to the proposal, subject to appropriate conditions. It was also noted that there was an error in the report in that the view of the County Archaeologist was that no further archaeological work was required.

A copy of amended conditions were circulated to Members and the public present at the meeting.

Maureen Davison (Objector) spoke in objection to the application and her key points included:

- The revised plan was fundamentally unchanged from the first plan.
- The buffer zone between the development and Pottery Bank Court was insufficient and was likely to become a play/dog toileting area for the new development.
- If the planned trees flourished they would block out light to neighbouring properties
- The split heights of the proposed development would lead to pedestrians being able to see into the living areas of Pottery Bank Court properties.
- The design and massing of the development was out of character with the area and would spoil the street scene.
- There should be an independent traffic analysis as the data supplied by the developer was flawed and the survey was outdated.
- The developer preferred traffic lights at the junction as a roundabout would affect the proposed layout and it was disappointing that Highways had not raised any objection.
- The site had not been identified for housing.
- There was zero local support for this application which only benefitted the developer.

Councillor Andrew Tebbutt (Morpeth Town Council) spoke in the local member slot and his main points included:-

- Morpeth Town Council remained strongly opposed to the development for the same reasons outlined in the officer's report.
- Morpeth Town Council had sought assurances as to the weight given to the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan in considering planning applications. It understood that it would be given full weight whereas it appeared that officers could ignore it. This was frustrating, annoying and disrespectful considering all the work that had gone into producing it.
- The Town Council had outlined which policies it felt sustained its view that the application should be refused, along with other significant factors such as the use of traffic lights and that the site was not allocated for housing.
- It was proposed to build twice as many houses on this site as recommended by the SHLAA, adding to the 3,200 houses already approved for Morpeth, almost 80% more than in the Local Plan.
- The proposed play area did not conform to traditional play area provision although it did meet the appropriate standards. Morpeth Town Council was often asked to take over maintenance such play areas, but would be wary of doing so if it had had no involvement in its design and construction.
- Members should stick to their bold and courageous decision to reject the application last year, and refuse it again.

Samuel Kenny (Agent) spoke in support of the application and his key points included:

- The developers had listened to the comments made last year and worked hard with officers.

- They had worked with Highways to minimise the impact on traffic flows.
- They had worked with the Local Plan steering group and the development was within the settlement boundary.
- The development was of superb design and landscaping was provided over a significant area.
- A detailed plan had been worked up to alleviate the flooding risk.
- The proposed dwellings would be at a higher level than the existing houses and the separation distance was over 70 metres from Pottery Bank Court which was four times the required distance.
- The developers had listened, and worked hard to produce a high quality design which was fully policy compliant.

Members then asked questions to officers and the key points from responses included:

- With regard to massing on the site, there were no changes in the re-submitted plans.
- The transport assessment had been expanded to the wider road network in Morpeth and included Telford Bridge and Coopies Lane. Very few additional traffic movements had been identified.
- Members could only consider the developers' preferred option of traffic lights rather than a roundabout.
- Traffic lights were a suitable arrangement for that junction.
- If Members decided to take a different view to that of November 2018, then it must be clearly explained why that was the case.
- No significant weight could be given to policies in the emerging Local Plan

Councillor D. Bawn then proposed, seconded by Councillor R. Wearmouth, that the application be refused on the grounds that the site was not a designated site for housing development and was, therefore, contrary to the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan and the impact of design, height and massing would have an adverse impact on the amenity of residents at Pottery Bank Court contrary to the NPPF, Castle Morpeth Local Plan Saved Policy H15 and Policy Des1 of the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan.

Debate then followed and the key points from members included:

- The developers had not really listened to the public and that there were no material changes to the scheme.
- No effort had been made to improve the scheme with regard to massing or to the type of junction.
- Morpeth had previous bitter experience with the impact of traffic lights. Traffic models did not reflect what happened on the ground.
- It was unfortunate that highways had been withdrawn as one of the reasons for refusal to be considered at the appeal.
- Having traffic lights at the junction on Pottery Bank would cause chaos, noise and pollution.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed unanimously, that it be

RESOLVED that the application be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:-

- The site is not a designated site for housing development and is therefore contrary to the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan (May 2016).
- The proposed development by virtue of its design, height and massing, would have an adverse impact on the amenity of residents at Pottery Bank Court, contrary to the NPPF, Castle Morpeth Local Plan Saved Policy H15 (2003, Saved Policies 2007) and Policy Des1 of the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan (May 2016).

105. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

To note the progress of planning appeals. **(Attached as Appendix B)**

RESOLVED that the report be received.

106. REPORT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PLACE

Local Transport Plan Programme 2019/20

Members received details of the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme for 2019-20 for consideration and comment by the Local Area Council prior to final approval of the programme. (Report attached to the signed minutes as **Appendix C**)

RESOLVED that the report be received.

107. NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL PLAN - PUBLICATION DRAFT PLAN (REGULATION 19)

Members received a presentation on the Northumberland Local Plan, which provided information on the progress to date on the Local Plan and details on the Publication Draft Local Plan. The presentation also covered the next steps in the Local Plan process as well as providing advice on how to submit formal representations on the Publication Draft Plan. (Presentation attached to the signed minutes.)

RESOLVED that the presentation be received.

108. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 11 March 2019, at 4.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth.

CHAIRMAN

DATE

Ch.'s Initials.....