

## **NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

At a meeting of the **Strategic Planning Committee** held in the **Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF** on **Tuesday 5 March 2019** at **4.00 pm**.

#### **PRESENT**

Councillor CW Horncastle

#### **MEMBERS**

Flux B	Renner-Thompson G
Gibson RM	Robinson M
Gobin JJ	Stewart GM
Lang J	Swithenbank ICF
Ledger D	Thorne TN
Moore R	Wearmouth R
Reid J	

#### **OFFICERS**

Churchill F	Interim Director of Planning
Hitching J	Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer
Little L	Democratic Services Officer
Masson N	Principal Solicitor
Murfin R	Director of Planning
Murphy J	Principal Planning Officer
Patrick M	Principal Highways Development Management Officer
Soulsby R	Planning Officer
Wood T	Senior Planning Officer

#### **ALSO PRESENT**

Dodd R	Seymour C
Press/ public: 8	

#### **78. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chair introduced Rob Murfin the new Director of Planning and welcomed him to the Committee.

Members stood for a minutes silence in memory of Councillor Bernard Pidcock who had been a much respected member of the Committee.

#### **79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Richards.

## 80. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee held on Tuesday 5 February 2019, as circulated, be agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## 81. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The report requested the Committee 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. The procedure at Planning Committees was appended for information.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

## 82. 18/04202/CCD

**Erection of a new single storey fire station and training tower with associated training yard, hard standing and the provision of 13 no. parking bays.  
Land West Of Ponteland High School, Callerton Lane, Ponteland,  
Northumberland**

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the Committee with the aid of a powerpoint presentation. Updates were provided as follows:-

- Following publication of the officer report, the 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had been released which included minor amendments to the 2018 version. There were no impacts to the assessment of this development nor any change to the paragraph numbers referenced within the officer report.

- Condition 11 should be updated to read:

“Prior to the commencement of development above foundation level a plan for the landscape planting of the site shall be submitted for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall detail the species and number of trees, hedgerows, shrubs and use only Northumberland native species. Once approved the plan shall be implemented in full during the first planting season (November - March inclusive) following the commencement of development. Landscaping detailed within this plan shall be maintained for a period of up to 5 years from the completion of the development. This shall include watering, weeding and the replacement of trees, hedgerows and shrubs comprised in the approved landscaping plans which fail.”

John Hague addressed the Committee speaking in objection to the application on behalf of the Ponteland Civic Society. His comments included the following:-

- Callerton Lane marked the boundary between Ponteland and the North Tyneside Green Belt with new development not normally permitted within the Green Belt. In the 1960's limited permissions were allowed for the school and leisure centre on the condition that boundary screening was provided. The landscape had developed over 50 years to be a significant asset which should be protected.
- The Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan which gained approval with a 97% local referendum referenced the retention of Callerton Lane as a green approach into the village.
- The proposal was in the Green Belt and would require the removal of a small copse of trees which would inflict significant damage. He objected to the way in which the trees were described in the Officer's report as non-native sycamore and plane and found this to be a strange reason for allowing removal. He did not agree with the Tree Officer's assessment that they would not be a significant loss as they had taken 50 years to gain this level of maturity and could take another 50 years before they were fully grown and should be retained.
- Residents in the cottages opposite the site have looked out for 50 years onto an area of playing fields, trees and hedgerows, if this proposal was to go ahead they would look out onto a semi industrial building with red panels and grey cladding which no-one would want to look out on. The change itself would result in significant loss of amenity.
- Once the new school and leisure centre had been constructed and the land reverted to Green Belt this development would stick out like a sore thumb on the green approach to Ponteland and should be relocated elsewhere.
- The report stated that there would not be a significant loss of amenity due to the number of times the fire engines leave, however the building would remain at all times.
- If the proposal had been for a commercial development then it would not be contemplated at all.
- The development should be located at the southern end of the site.

Councillor Christine Caisley addressed the Committee on behalf of Ponteland Town Council. Her comments included the following:-

- She welcomed the revised Condition 11 which would make good the landscaping.
- The proposals were in line with Policy PNP13 of the Neighbourhood Plan with all development proposals monitored.
- There were very special circumstances to allow the development in the Green Belt. No other site met the time requirements for firefighters to respond within 5 minutes. The nearest fire station was Cramlington which was 8.5 miles distant and then Pegswood at 12.5 miles which would result in much increased response times. Other sites in Ponteland were not suitable. The fire station was of vital importance, was for the greater good of the Community and the existing required updating.
- In respect of the aesthetics of the proposed building, no comments had been made against that style of building.

Caitlin Newby addressed the Committee speaking on behalf of Hedley Planning Services in support of the application. Her comments included the following:-

- She welcomed the positive recommendation for approval of the application which would allow the upgrading of facilities and facilitate the building of the new school and leisure centre.
- The application was in line with policies in the Development Plan and Neighbourhood Plan.
- The main consideration was development in the Green Belt and very special circumstances had been demonstrated with the Officer concluding that very limited harm would occur and there was a need for this location due to the response times.
- The scheme was well designed, would complement the design of the school and leisure centre and was of sufficient distance from the nearest residential properties.
- There were no objections from Highways or Ecology and a revised condition proposed regarding the management of tree planting. The objections raised by the objectors had been addressed in the report.
- The application accorded with national and local policies and there were no adverse impacts to warrant refusal and therefore she requested the Committee to approve the application.

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

- The Arborist report advised that 15 trees would be removed with others retained. A scheme for replacement tree planting would need to be submitted under the revised Condition 11 with Council Officers agreeing an acceptable scheme including the number and type of trees. The Tree Officer had confirmed that the existing trees were in poor condition, offered poor value and were of species not native to the area.
- The supporting statement demonstrated that the main reason for the fire station to be provided at this location was due to the required response times. It was not a material planning consideration whether response times had either changed or had been met previously.
- There was no information in the planning documents related to the future use of the existing site and this was not a material planning consideration.
- The siting of the new fire station was important in order to maintain response times and this site had been shown to meet these times. There could be no break in service and therefore the new station would need to be built before any demolition of the existing took place. The need for specific response times demonstrated the very special circumstances to allow development in the Green Belt.
- The height of the existing training tower was not known.
- The type of finish for the proposed fire station would reflect that of the new school and leisure centre.
- Notwithstanding that in the future the site would constitute previously developed land, any subsequent development on the site would need to pass the

assessment of very special circumstances for development within the Green Belt. As there was no evidence provided to assume that the building would not be used as a fire station for the foreseeable future, any condition imposed to time restrict it to this use would not be enforceable. The default position would be that there would be no presumption of development for uses other than those directly related to a fire station. For the avoidance of doubt it was confirmed that the site would remain Green Belt.

- The Highways Authority had advised that there was no requirement to provide traffic lights which would give priority to fire engines leaving the site. If this was required as part of any operational review in the future then it would be considered at that time.

Councillor Thorne moved acceptance of the recommendation to approve the application with the revised Condition 11 as outlined previously, which was seconded by Councillor Wearmouth.

Whilst it was accepted that there was no reason to refuse the application, a Councillor advised that he would have preferred to have some condition or clause in the deeds to prevent the use of the building for any other purpose. It was considered the proposed building was in a good location to retain the service and the support for the application from the Town Council was welcomed. Following a vote it was unanimously

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

**83. 18/03589/FUL**

**Proposed erection of free- range egg production unit.**

**Westcotes, Milbourne, Newcastle Upon Tyne, Northumberland  
NE20 0DG**

The Chair allowed time for Members to read the information circulated at the beginning of the meeting in connection with this application which would be attached to the signed minutes of the meeting and uploaded to the Council's website. The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application to the Committee with the aid of a powerpoint presentation.

Updates were provided as follows:-

- Following publication of the report, the 2019 National Planning Policy Framework had been released. This did not impact on the assessment of this development.
- Ponteland Town Council were satisfied with the further reports on this proposal and have withdrawn their objection.
- The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) had also withdrawn their objection and proposed the three conditions as set out on the information circulated at the beginning of the meeting which would be added to the conditions in the report. In summary these asked for details of the disposal of the surface water to be submitted and approved; details of the adoption and maintenance of all SUDS features to be submitted and approved; and a verification report to be submitted

and approved. In addition the plans the LLFA had asked to be added were proposed to be added to the list of approved plans in condition 2.

Jo Evans addressed the Committee speaking in support of the application. She thanked the Officer for her report advising that the application was important to allow the future proofing of the business. The proposed building would be screened by the topography of the site. There were no objections from statutory consultees to the application and she asked the Committee to support the application.

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

- It was confirmed that the only reason the application was before the Committee was due to the applicant being a Member of the Council.
- The Highways Authority were satisfied that any additional traffic generated by the proposal could be accommodated on the road network.
- Public Protection had requested a condition in respect of the disposal of waste generated from the business be included in any permission granted.
- Large scale agricultural businesses were covered by national legislation and monitored and enforcement action taken by both the Environment Agency and the Council's Environmental Health team.
- Any reserved matters related to the management of the site would be consulted on with the Environment Agency and other regulatory bodies and the Local Planning Authority could refuse an application if not carried out. All information would be validated and consulted upon.

Councillor Flux moved approval of the application which was seconded by Councillor Reid and unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and conditions as outlined in the report and additional conditions as requested by the Local Lead Flood Authority.

#### 84. **PLANNING APPEALS**

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.00 pm.

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

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