



## **Minutes of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee held on March 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017 in St James Church Rooms, Pottergate, Alnwick at 6.00pm**

**Present:** Cllrs M Swinbank (Chair), S Bell, M Harrington, P Holt, J Humphries, G Mavin, S Mavin, K Moore and A Symmonds.

**In attendance:** W Batey, Chief Officer & Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; T Kirton, Project & Funding Officer.

**P16/103 Apologies**

Cllrs P Broom and Edge.

**P16/104 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**P16/105 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th March 2017 were approved and they were duly signed by the Committee Chairman.

**P16/106 Matters Arising:**

**P16/89** Councillor Swinbank asked if the letter had been sent to Lidl requesting money towards the cost of a bus shelter outside St Paul's school. The Town Clerk advised that this had been drafted and would be sent shortly.

**P16/100** Bus shelter (Willoughby's Bank) The Town Clerk reported that data obtained from the bus companies indicated that very few people make use of either bus stop. The developer has a planning condition to provide a bus shelter at the location but the Town Council will ask if the allocated money for this can either be used for a bus shelter elsewhere in the town or used to provide other amenities including seats and bins around Clayport Bank.

Planning Outcomes

**16/04652/FUL Land North of 12-14 Bondgate Within, Alnwick** Change of use from garage to dwelling - **GRANTED.**

**16/04553/FUL Glebelands Lodge, Green Batt, Alnwick NE66 1TY** Demolition of extension and replace with single storey rear and side extensions and construction of new build studio within the curtilage – **GRANTED.**

**17/00263/FUL 46 Arkle Court, Alnwick NE66 1BS** Proposed single storey rear and two storey front extension – **GRANTED.**

**17/00291/FUL Land South of Aydon View, Alnwick** Change of use of agricultural land and construction of a single residential dwelling house, new access track and other ancillary works – **GRANTED.**

**17/00316/FUL 2 York Road, Alnwick, NE66 1RJ** Proposed two storey rear extension – **REFUSED.**

**16/02693/FUL Alnwick Chiropractic Centre, Wagonway Road, Alnwick NE66 1Q** Demolition of existing chiropractic centre building and erection of 3no. apartments and all associated site works - **GRANTED.**

**17/00492/LBC 1C Bailiffgate, Alnwick NE66 1LZ** Listed Building Consent for masonry repairs to the front of 3 storey Grade II listed building – **GRANTED.**

**17/00473/ADE Arable Farm Supplies 1 Sawmill Industrial Estate Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2QW** Advertisement consent for 2no. wall mounted signs (illuminated), vinyl signs inside windows and totem sign – **GRANTED**.

**17/006480/ADE Morrisons Supermarkets Plc, Lagny Street, Alnwick NE66 1HW** Advertisement consent for rebranding of external sign work – **GRANTED**.

**P16/107 To minute responses made since last meeting**

**17/00318/FUL Tennis Courts Prudhoe Street Alnwick Northumberland**  
Alnwick Town Council have no objections to the proposed lighting application but are unable to comment on the part of the application which covers minor tree works as the trees affected cannot be identified from the given documents.  
As some of the trees on the southern side of the site are mature they may interfere with the lighting column positions or the spread of light if not extensively pruned so we would request that the opinion of NCC's Tree Officer is sought on the proposed minor tree works and would support his comments.

**17/00648/ADE Morrisons Supermarkets Plc Lagny Street Alnwick NE66 1HW -**  
No Objections.

**17/00473/ADE Arable Farm Supplies 1 Sawmill Industrial Estate Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2QW** – No Objections but Alnwick Town Council feel that the advertisements on the South Road side of this development are too large.

The applicant has already cut down a number of mature trees at this site, some of which were not identified on the original planning application, exposing the building which should allow smaller signage to be sufficient. We therefore feel that the signs need to be of a scale which is in keeping with the visual amenity of the location and suggest that the Totem sign be a maximum of 1.0m wide x 2.0m high and the Large advert be a maximum of 2.4m wide x 1.3m high.

We also note that the 'entrance' sign does not appear to be included on the application form but suggest a maximum size of 2.4m wide x 0.4m high.

**17/00831/FUL 9 Coopers Close, Alnwick NE66-** No Objections.

**P16/108 Planning Applications**

The following applications were discussed and comments to be submitted were:

**17/00879/COU 27 Bondgate Without, Alnwick NE66 1PR** Change of use of existing office premises to self-contained holiday accommodation with associated minor internal works – **NO OBJECTIONS** to the change of use application but request a condition be applied stating that the space marked as parking on the plan, outside the front of the property, cannot be used for car parking as the property is situated by a bus stop and does have a drop curb. It is an offence to driving onto the pavement or footpath (to park or otherwise) (see section 72 of the Highways Act 1835).

**17/00790/FUL Castle View Residential Home, Castle View, Howling Lane, Alnwick NE66 1H** Re-organisation of internal room to give 4no. additional single bedrooms and new porch, w.c's and lounge and new two storey bay window - **NO OBJECTIONS**.

**17/00992/VARYCO 19B Bondgate Without, Alnwick Northumberland, NE66 1PR** Variation condition 2 (approved plans) pursuant to planning application 11/01164/FUL in order to include the bay windows – **OBJECT** on the grounds that the building is in the Conservation area (next to a listed building) so all conditions attached to the original planning approval should be fully complied with. The windows should be reinstated as originally approved to be in keeping with their surroundings.

**17/00368/ADE Keith Pattison Limited, 19 Bondgate Without, Alnwick NE66**

**1PR** Retrospective application for advertisement consent for 4no. wall mounted projecting signs – **OBJECT** as we feel the advertisements are adversely affecting the character, appearance and setting of the area. (PPS 6: Planning, Archaeology and The Built Environment Conservation Areas: Policy BH 13). The property is in a Conservation area, in the vicinity of several listed buildings, so we feel the scale of the advertisements is inappropriate to the architectural style and character of the building and its location. The signs should be removed and the stonework of the building reinstated using appropriate materials.

**17/00354/LBC 5 Percy Terrace, Alnwick NE66 1AF** Listed Building Consent: Re-build two abutting chimney stacks as a single chimney using stone, to the same dimensions and style and installation of wood burning stove in dining room in existing fireplace to include chimney flue lining (e.g. Thermocrete) - **NO OBJECTIONS**.

### **17/01001/FUL Alnwick Garden, Alnwick**

Alnwick Town Council have **NO OBJECTIONS** to planning application 17/00133/FUL but feel there are a number of aspects which require further investigation / evidence before a decision can be taken.

The Town Council have the following comments to make which they would request are considered for inclusion in the Conditions attached to the planning approval, if given.

Note - References to some of the relevant policies in the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan are included. The plan has been externally examined and approved by NCC, but awaits a referendum date and believe that it holds considerable weight when assessing this application.

## **1. LANDSCAPE SETTING**

The effect of the proposal on the historic and landscape setting needs further consideration. The Capability Brown Landscape to the north, the Alnwick Castle and indeed the Alnwick Garden itself are all important features. From the information presented it is difficult to assess how these will be affected. Views from both the approaches to Alnwick from the north, the views from the castle and the gardens should all be considered both in summer and in winter. The view from the Pastures footpath across the river Aln is the one most likely to be affected and should be awarded due consideration.

### **Policy HD1 of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan - Protecting Landscape Setting:**

**Development proposed in the Parishes of Alnwick and Denwick will be expected to be designed to avoid: visual harm to the landscape character and setting of town and village.**

## **2. NOISE POLLUTION**

The effect of noise issuing from a wedding venue, particularly when used in the evening (as this will be, according to the supporting evidence) must be adequately modelled. The effect, particularly on residential areas in Allerburn Lea and the proposed new development at the Allerburn House site could be vulnerable to disturbance. The windows on the current plans all appear to open towards Allerburn Lea – perhaps these could open away from residential areas.

## **3. LIGHT POLLUTION**

The effect of light pollution to the night sky needs to be assessed. This could impact the historic and landscape setting and also the view of the night sky from the surrounding area.

#### **4. CONSTRUCTION / MATERIALS**

There appears to be little information on the materials and colours of those materials to be used on the Play Village structures. Assessment of these details is vital in consideration of point 1. above. The sensitive use of colours and materials could have a large impact on the visual acceptability of the proposal.

#### **Policy E5 of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan- Economy / Tourism Development**

**New tourism development in or adjacent to the town, particularly that which will help grow Alnwick and Denwick as a year round tourism destination, will be supported subject to all of the following being met:**

- i) Development is located where it will complement business and services in the town and will not adversely impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre;
- ii) Development will contribute positively to the weekend and evening economy of the town;
- iii) The scale and character of development will not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon the natural and historic environment;
- iv) Development can be accommodated within the physical infrastructure of the town;
- v) Development will not have adverse impacts on living conditions in residential areas;
- vi) Development will not have a significantly detrimental impact on the transport network and travel patterns.

#### **5. TRANSPORT LINKS / ROUTES TO TOWN CENTRE**

CAR PARKING - The parking arrangements need to be critiqued. The Transport Assessment suggests that there is sufficient capacity in the current car parks for the new development. It bases its figures on a 'three hour' stay per vehicle and has a spare capacity of 71 places (out of 1300 + 20 coaches) at peak times. As the aim of the development as stated, is to turn the attractions from a single day destination (already one would assume more than a three hour visit) into a two day attraction, then we would question the use of the 'three hour' only stay as the basis for calculating car park capacity. A visit to the Garden, Castle and new Play Village plus probably lunch on site would take considerably longer than three hours or indeed three hours a day over two days. What would the effect of an average four or five hour stay time have on the car park spare capacity?

Overflowing of the car park could have major implications on the already constrained parking situation in the town in the peak month of August, and therefore impact detrimentally on the town which local people also need to access for services at these times.

CYCLE ROUTES / PARKING - The current provision of cycle parking on the site is very low and no further provision appears to be included in the proposal. As the encouragement of cycling (active travel) is central to transport policy, then adequate on-site cycle parking should be provided. Furthermore adequate signage needs to be put in place so that visitors can find the cycling facilities.

Cyclists coming from / going to the town presently have to use Denwick lane. This is quite narrow and largely walled on both sides with the south side having no footway for a distance from the War Memorial to Fisher Lane. This section is also all on a bend so restricting visibility. For safety reasons, a dual cycle path / footpath could be considered

through Column Field along the route of the existing footpath. This would take away much of the risk of conflicts between motorists and cyclists at this point. Furthermore when the proposed Alnwick Cycle Track is developed at the Eastern end of Fisher Lane, this will be an important route for young people visiting it by cycle.

There may be other opportunities within the Garden / Castle grounds for a cycle route into the town, but the route stated above could serve the purpose.

In the Transport Assessment accompanying the proposal the following references to Government policy are made: 'The Government's long term strategy for transport is set out in "The Future of Transport – a Network for 2030" (DfT White Paper, 2004).'

'An underlying objective of the strategy set out in the White Paper is to deal with the pressures of increasing demand for travel by striking the right balance between environmental, economic and social objectives, now and into the future. In terms of the road network, this means:'

'Creating a culture and improved quality of local environment, so that cycling and walking are seen as an alternative to car travel for short journeys, particularly for children. '

'Within the core planning principles as highlighted in para. 17 of the NPPF it states that planning should "...actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable..!'

### **Policy TRA2 of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan - Cycling**

**Proposals for major development will be required to have safe and convenient cycle access. The enhancement of provision for cycling including existing cycle routes will be supported.**

ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING POINTS - The provision of electric car charging points currently on site and in the proposals appears to be zero. Again as transport policy seeks to reduce the emissions of private cars, and as sales of electric vehicles are rising exponentially in the UK, then adequate electric car charging points should be provided. Furthermore the presence and location of these points needs to be signposted and advertised to encourage electric car use.

### **From the Low Emission Partnership Guidance for Planning Applications: 'Low Emission Topic Note 1. '**

'Provision of EV charging points via planning agreements Prepared by Green Sphere on behalf of the Low Emission Partnership'

'The National Planning Policy Framework states (para 35) that 'Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to [...] incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles''

'2.6 For other types of development (e.g. commercial, retail and industrial), requirements of around 10% is common, though there is greater variation here in the detail, some include an option to deliver in two phases (e.g. 5% then another 5%). "

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING – from observation there is a safety issue at the pedestrian crossing to the car park. Pedestrians exiting the Garden site occasionally cross the road

directly from the pedestrian entrance instead of turning right for a few metres and using the light controlled crossing. They then find that they can not enter the car park at the double gates (which seem to be usually locked) and have to walk on the roadway along-side the metal pedestrian barrier for a few metres to the location of the light controlled crossing where they can return to the footpath. Whilst outside of the barrier, they are on a narrow stretch of road and in some considerable danger of being caught between a vehicle and the barrier, particularly if another vehicle is coming the other way. The design solution is not obvious, but with considerable extra visitor numbers it should certainly be addressed.

### **Policy TRA1 of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan - Walking**

**Proposals for development will be required to have safe and convenient pedestrian access. The enhancement of provision for walking including public rights of way will be supported.**

The pedestrian link between the Garden and Town is very good, but further consideration should be given to the cycling link. The existing main pedestrian link is of generous width, but considering the visitor numbers in summer would undoubtedly not be acceptable as a dual use pedestrian / cycling route. Consideration therefore should be given to another route to the town centre. Identifying the attraction as a 'two day' destination suggests that visitors will be staying locally overnight. They will only be encouraged to walk or cycle to the attraction where good, safe facilities exist - particularly if they have children with them.

The corridors between the Garden / Castle / Play Village area and the Town centre could be enhanced to encourage visitors to explore further into the historic town centre. There are currently maps and some signage to help visitors new to the area who have entered the Garden / Castle / Play Village area from the Denwick lane car park understand where they are and what else may be worthy of visiting close at hand. Every effort should be made to enhance this aspect of the design.

A feasibility study was recently conducted by NCC on improvements which could be made to Alnwick Town Centre. As with most town centres at the current time, Alnwick could benefit from some investment in street infrastructure. An aspect of the report was the connection corridors between the town and the Garden / Castle. It may be appropriate at this stage to re-visit this assessment and request a contribution to this project.

The economic viability of the town is enhanced by the proximity of the Alnwick Garden / Castle attractions. This is welcomed by the community, but even small enhancements to the numbers of visitors reaching the town centre would have a considerable positive economic impact on the town especially in the less busy seasons. The historic nature and numerous independent shops are attractive to visitors, so enhanced connectivity can be viewed as a mutually reinforcing aspect of the proposed development- a 'win-win' in vernacular terms.

#### **P16/109 New Access Proposals for Lionheart Industrial Estate**

Councillor Swinbank advised that an additional road was being proposed to access the new depot site, and possible the new fire station. He confirmed that the new road would include a cycle lane and footpath. The plans suggested that some hedging would be removed and he felt that the Town Council should request that new hedging should be replanted in the appropriate areas.

Councillor Harrington felt the new road would make this a very good junction with good visibility something which is currently lacking. He also felt that moving the 30mph speed limit would be useful.

**RESOLVED: To advise NCC of the Town Council's comments regarding the hedging and the position of the 30mph speed limit sign.**

**P16/110 Car Parking in Alnwick**

Councillor Swinbank advised that with the proposed extensions at The Alnwick Garden the amount of traffic coming into the town to park would increase. He reported that, on the morning he and Councillor Edge had spent planting trees on Greenwell Road, he had seen people trying to find parking spaces and looking to purchase parking discs. He had also seen several people park on the Greenwell Road car parks but go to The Alnwick Garden.

He also reported that Garden staff were also parking on the Greenwell Road Car Parks rather than in the allocated parking at the Garden. He felt that it would be advisable to collect more traffic data on the Greenwell Road car parks and asked if officers could undertake this. The Town Clerk advised that the last time data was collected in 2016 there had also been several vehicles which had been parked overnight on the car parks.

Councillor Symmonds agreed that a car park survey should be undertaken.

Councillor Moore reported that Lisburn Street was much busier with people parking and that this may become an issue as this was one of the main thoroughfares through the town.

Councillor Humphries thought that The Alnwick Garden needed to be persuaded to have free parking so that Garden only visitors did not to park in the town itself.

Councillor Swinbank advised that The Alnwick Garden had several planning applications in at present and that the Town Council could ask for a condition addressing car parking.

Councillor S Mavin reported that the car park at Homebase was half empty most of the time and felt that the town could do with a park and ride scheme.

**RESOLVED: To carry out a car park survey and report back to the next Planning Committee.**

**16/111 Any Other Urgent Business**

Councillor Moore asked if another planning application would be submitted for a civic flagpole. The Town Clerk advised that an application would be submitted after having spoken to NCC Planning Officers.

Councillor G Mavin reported that NCC were causing problems with incomplete works. The drop kerbs had been done on South Road but no other work carried out at the same time. Councillor Swinbank advise that the work was being undertaken by two different teams.

Councillor Humphries reported that there had been a lot of upheaval due the works with not much notice given of it taking place.

Councillor Swinbank reported that advertising signs for Ascent Home had been put up around the town. Councillor Swinbank also reported that the Post Office on Wagonway Road had been rebranded but that no planning application had been received.

Councillor Humphries asked if enquiries could be undertaken to find out if a Change of Use (COU) Planning Application had been submitted for the former hairdressers on Victoria Avenue which is now a sweet shop.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had spoken to McCarthy Stone about the retail units at Robert Adam Court and been advised that a tenant was moving in imminently.

The meeting closed at 7.05 p.m.