

**Minutes of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee held on
December 17th 2020 via Zoom at 6.30pm**

Present: Cllrs Swinbank, Edge, Harrington, Humphries, Wearn, Watson.

In attendance: P Hatley, Chief Officer and Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; Peter Reed and Ian Hall, Alnwick Civic Society.

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Apologies

Councillors Broom, Lyford and Wood-Mitchell.

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Declarations of Interest

Councillors Swinbank and Wearn declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 20/03299/FELTPO.

P20/54

Presentation by Peter Reed (PR), Alnwick Civic Society

Councillor Swinbank advised that the Civic Society had a couple of updates for the council.

Peter Reed (PR) reported that he would report on Shop Front Design Guide and the Retail to Residential checklist.

Shop Front Design Guide - he advised that it 25 years since the Civic Society produced the guide was 25 years old since the and had been commissioned by Alnwick Town Council. He explained that the Civic Society had, shortly afterwards, done a photographic survey of Alnwick which Bailiffgate Museum had copies of. He felt there was a huge improvement in the quality and standard of shop fronts in the town centre.

He felt that this was mainly due to owners and traders improving the standard of the buildings so had invested in the town centre. This commercial investment is more important than ever.

The Civic Society aim to help encourage investment in the town centre whilst not imposing new rules making things more strict but to ensure the standard is maintained. He added that there had been a couple examples of shop fronts which had been done, without planning permission, and which had bought down the standard of the shop fronts in the town centre.

The Civic Society felt that they needed to do something so decided with NCC Planning Officers that the Civic Society would provide the local input into a countywide guide.

The revised guide was expected to be in place mid 2020 but due to current situation this had not been possible. Once the guide is introduced it will need local support to ensure that it is used to help maintain standards.

He asked if the Town Council were still keen to have a local guide.

Councillors agreed that the updated guide was a good idea and looked forward to its introduction.

PR explained that there were two different problems: the people who understand the guidance but don't adhere to it and local people who do not understand the guidance. He felt that there needed to be approach – a local approach to help small independent retailers to understand the guidance and

Retail to Residential – PR advised that ore applications were coming through to change retail to residential use. He felt this was something everyone should encourage. At the current time there is no local or national guidance on undertaking these conversions.

Ian Hall had spoken to NCC and Historic England who agreed something was needed but that nothing existed at present. He advise that the Civic Society had used best practice from mother councils to produce a checklist for the Civic Society and other partners to use.

He was keen the guidance was used locally with the hope that a national checklist would be developed.

Councillors agreed that the checklist was something the Town Council could use when reviewing planning applications.

P20/55 Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting November 19th 2020

The Minutes of the last meeting held on November 19th were approved as true record.

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the last meeting on November 19th 2020

P20/56 Matters Arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

P20/51 - TPO request for Duke's School trees – Councillor Swinbank reported that the Local Area Planning Committee had confirmed the TPO on the 204 trees on the site.

P20/51 - Windy Edge – Councillor Wearn reported that she had an email from ARRA who had advised that the developers were working on the drains during which they had totally destroyed the temporary footpath and that no work had been done on the original footpath and the temporary footpath was now totally unusable. She added that the footpath outside the houses on Alnmouth Road close to the access to Peters Mill had been totally dug up to move lampposts, install drop kerbs and move the bus stop which was helpful.

PH advised that he had spoken to Liz O'Brien at NCC and had agreed that she would meet PH (and others) on a site visit on January 18th 2021.

Councillor Wearn also reported that Peter's Mill Lane had been renamed Somerset Drive.

Councillor Humphries thought that the Town Council should have been asked for comments on the proposed street names.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that the Town Council would normally receive a list of proposed street names for comments and that if the Town Council made no comments the proposed names would be approved.

Councillor Watson thought that it was necessary to get approval to change the name of a road which already has a name.

Councillor Swinbank asked officers to contact NCC to ask about planning requirements for street naming.

Councillor Watson suggested that Councillor Wearn attended the meeting with the Enforcement Officer on January 18th. The Town Clerk advised that they could meet the Enforcement Officer off site initially to discuss the issues.

Planning Outcomes Notified:

20/02714/VARYCO Thornbrae Apartment Alnmouth Road Alnwick NE66 2PS
Variation of Condition 4 (Recreation Room) pursuant to planning permission 17/00019/FUL to enable the use of the recreation room in connection with the approved holiday letting units (as amended) – **GRANTED.**

20/03286/FUL 46 Arkle Court Alnwick NE66 1BS Proposal Construction single storey extension, to create a downstairs toilet/shower/utility room with internal alterations to the existing, together with the addition of a timber pergola to the rear facing (South) garden – **GRANTED.**

20/03320/FUL 11 Alwynside Alnwick NE66 1DL Construction of a two storey side extension – **GRANTED.**

20/03387/FUL 58 Oaky Balks Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2QD Single storey rear extension – **GRANTED.**

20/02731/FUL 1 Hope House Cottages Hope House Lane Alnwick NE66 2AA
Proposed off-street parking for number 1 Hope House Cottages - **WITHDRAWN**.

20/02992/FUL 46 The Dunterns Alnwick NE66 1AN Construction of garden store and raised planting bed to front elevation within courtyard - **GRANTED**.

20/00567/VARYCO Oddfellows Arms 35 Narrowgate Alnwick NE66 1JN
Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and 6 (construction method statement) of application 18/01400/FUL - Amendments to plans and elevations to reflect revised proposals at rear of property - revised plans and elevations, revised roof finishes of new builds, revised positioning of new builds, existing flat roof structure at rear to remain - **GRANTED**.

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To minute responses made since last meeting

20/03299/FELTPO The Lodge Cottage Alnmouth Road Alnwick NE66 2PS Tree preservation order - T1 - Multi stemmed Beech (fell section to reduce risk of damage due to bad form) and T2 - Sycamore (prune low lateral branches away from road due to overhang)- Alnwick Town Council **OBJECT** to this application as they feel some of the proposed works are unnecessary. The property is on an important gateway into the town so work should only be done when a tree shows signs of disease, damage or being unsafe.

We would request the Tree Officer makes a site visit and is satisfied with the proposed works and, if planning permission is granted, suitable replacement trees are planted.

The application was not originally accompanied by a tree survey / report and we feel that the report which has now been submitted does not establish the health and longevity of the trees which is a requirement of the following Environment policy from the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan:

ENVIRONMENT

ENV 6 Protecting Trees

Proposals affecting ancient trees or trees of good arboricultural and amenity value should be accompanied by a tree survey that establishes the health and longevity of any affected trees and proposals should be designed to retain ancient trees or retain or replace trees of arboricultural and amenity value with equivalent trees.

P20/57

Planning Applications

20/03815/VARYCO Land North East Of Close Cottage Rugley Road Alnwick Northumberland Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of application 18/02144/FUL - Updated design of clubhouse and site layout – **NO OBJECTIONS** but we request that the materials used are the same as in the approved plans.

We still have a couple of concerns which we feel need to be addressed:

There are still safety concerns about pedestrians and cyclists accessing the site and request that the bridleway is upgraded to an all weather surface. We understand that in the past there was a double width road and feel that this could fairly easily be reinstated.

Our other concern is that, although the applicant states that all traffic would access the site from the north, those travelling from the south (especially those using sat navs) will take a more direct route to the site. The plans do not include any improvements to the access from the south so we would request that the access road is assessed to ensure there are adequate passing places and signage.

20/03747/FUL 45 St Georges Crescent Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1AY
Proposed 2 storey rear extension – **NO OBJECTIONS**.

20/03816/VARYCO Alnwick Golf Club Swansfield Park Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2AB Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of application

18/01016/FUL - Updated design and layout - **NO OBJECTIONS** but we request that the colour of the building is the same as in the approved plans.

20/03831/VARYCO Argos Willowburn Avenue Alnwick NE66 2JH Variation of Condition 1 (Sale of Goods) pursuant to planning permission A/2006/0205 to ensure consistency between its categorisation as Use Class E under the Use Class Order 2020 and the planning conditions. Wording changed to the following:- 'Notwithstanding condition 13 of planning permission A/2005/0159 the use of the development hereby approved is Use Class E of the Use Class Order (2020), and may be used for any use falling under that categorisation without restriction' – **NO COMMENTS MADE.**

20/03667/PRUTPO St Pauls R C Church Percy Street Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1AE Tree Preservation Order: Various works to trees - see tree report – **NO OBJECTIONS** but the Town Council would have expected to see a detailed tree survey showing the reasons for the proposed works on each tree not just a list of the proposed works.

20/03228/FUL 4 Grosvenor Terrace Clayport Street Footway Alnwick NE66 1LG Single storey rear extension with flat roof, replacement of windows and door and frame to South East elevation with new timber sliding sash windows and timber door and frame – **NO OBJECTIONS** but the materials and style need to be in keeping with the existing building.

The Town Council await the necessary LBC application to be submitted.

20/03354/FELTPO Crag View Cottage Alnmouth Road Alnwick Northumberland NE66 2QG (additional information) Tree preservation order application for removal of one sycamore tree and crown raise another 6 trees to remove lower branches – Alnwick Town Council support the comments of the Tree Officer.

P20/58

Feedback from Parking Action Plan meeting with NCC

The Town Clerk reported that, as part of the review, a new car park on the old Duchess High School site had been approved.

Councillor Swinbank advised that a planning application would come forward for the new car park would be made in January 2021. He also confirmed that there would be room on the site for housing. He advised that there would be 196 parking spaces with 8 electric car charging points.

Councillor Watson felt that signage to the new car park was very important.

Councillor Swinbank advised that signage was particularly important from the north and east of the town.

P20/59

Concerns regarding traffic turning into Alnwick Cemetery

Councillor Wearn explained that cars turning into the cemetery need to swing out to gain access to the cemetery. She reported that one of the Town Council employees had sent her a video (which she shared with the committee) of a car undertaking at the cemetery entrance. She felt that the signage could be improved.

Councillor Humphries advised that he accessed the cemetery regularly and had not had the issue.

Councillor Wearn asked if a sign saying Caution Vehicles Turning could be considered.

Councillor Harrington felt that the issue was serious as if pedestrians had been on the pavement they could have been injured. He explained that speeding was a constant issue all over town.

Councillor Watson reported that existing the cemetery was also an issue and perhaps a Concealed Entrance sign could be installed.

Councillor Harrington advised that when the new Premier Inn was built on the Willowburn Estate this would only compound the issue.

The Town Clerk advised that he would speak to Richard McKenzie. The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that as it was a safety issue it could be discussed with Graham Bucknall, NCC Highways Manager, as he may have someone who deal with road safety.

Councillor Swinbank felt the issue was very as it could have impacted on pedestrians and was an official route to the high school.

P20/60 Cycle Parking (revised plan)

Councillor Swinbank reported that NCC had sent through a reviewed cycle parking plan having been updated from the Town Council's comments. He felt the proposed plan was a very positive step. He advised they would be black stands to match other street furniture.

P20/61 Resident parking schemes

Councillor Swinbank advised that this was discussed at the car parking action plan meeting with Paul Jones, NCC.

The Town Clerk confirmed that it had been confirmed that the parking fees would not be increased and would be £25 a year.

He reported that Paul Jones, NCC, was reluctant to review the current schemes but would review an individual scheme if needed.

Councillor Swinbank asked the Town Clerk to speak to Councillor Broom about any potential requests for changes.

Councillor Harrington explained that the issues had been raised as it was felt that the people who had the schemes outside their properties were not making use of them.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that the figures from NCC showed that there were quite a few residents with parking permits. She explained that Councillor Broom thought the Monkhouse Terrace parking scheme would be more useful if it was the same type as the Bondgate Without scheme.

P20/62 Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting closed at 8.09 p.m.

