



Minutes of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee held on March 18th 2021 via Zoom at 6.30pm

Present: Cllrs Swinbank, Broom, Harrington, Humphries, Lyford, Wearn, Watson and Wood-Mitchell.

In attendance: P Hatley, Chief Officer & Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk and Councillor Grisdale.

P20/84 Apologies

Councillor Edge.

P20/85 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Swinbank declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 20/03641/VARYCO Swansfield Lodge.

P20/86 Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting February 18th 2021

The Minutes of the last meeting held on February 18th were approved as true record.

**RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the last meeting on
February 18th 2021**

P20/87 Matters Arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

P20/82 - Alnwick Greenway - The Town Clerk reported that the Freeman were broadly supportive of the project but would check with the tenant farmers.

Councillor Broom asked if there was any update from Northumberland Estates. The Town Clerk advised they were happy, in principle, but that they would prefer any agreement regarding the Greenway to be directly with the Town Council.

Planning Outcomes Notified:

19/00500/FUL Alnwick The Dukes Middle School The Dunterns Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1UN Proposal Conversion of Duke's School to residential apartments (27no.), including demolition and rebuild of the modern rear extension, development of specialist elderly living accommodation (49no. apartments) and residential dwellings (22no.), creation of a landscaped open area, all ancillary works including car parking, access and drainage - **GRANTED**.

19/00501/LBC Alnwick The Dukes Middle School The Dunterns Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1UN Listed Building Consent for conversion of Duke's School to residential apartments (27no.), including demolition and rebuild of the modern rear extension, development of specialist elderly living accommodation (49no. apartments) and residential dwellings (22no.), creation of a landscaped open area, all ancillary works including car parking, access and drainage - **GRANTED**.

19/00582/VARYCO Alnbank House, Alnmouth Road, NE66 2PR Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on approved planning application 16/01958/FUL in order to utilise roof space as living accommodation – **GRANTED**.

19/00583/LBC Alnbank House, Alnmouth Road, NE66 2PR Listed Building Consent – Erection of garage block with accommodations above and greenhouse including solar panels to both – **GRANTED**.

P20/88 To minute responses made since last meeting

21/00309/FUL Austry House 3 Grosvenor Terrace Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1LG Removal of internal wall between kitchen and lounge, removal of kitchen door and building up of opening – **NO OBJECTIONS**.

21/00310/LBC Austry House 3 Grosvenor Terrace Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1LG Listed Building Consent: Removal of internal wall between kitchen and lounge, removal of kitchen door and building up of opening – **NO OBJECTIONS**.

21/00380/FUL 81 Chapel Lands Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1ES

Rear single storey extension to replace conservatory. First floor extension over garage. Front single storey extension – **NO OBJECTIONS.**

P20/89 Planning Applications

Councillor Swinbank left the meeting and Councillor Harrington took the Chair.

20/03641/VARYCO Swansfield Lodge Alnwick NE66 1EJ Variation of Conditions 2 (approved plans) and 3 (materials) pursuant to planning permission A/2011/0067 in order to reduce the overall size of the development, omit a two storey side building and the construction of an orangery and propose a single storey extension to create a lounge space and the use of matching sandstone – **NO OBJECTIONS** but the Town Council request that the Planning Officer is satisfied that the original planning approval has not lapsed and that this should not be a FUL application rather than a VARYCO. We would also ask that the proposed cladding is reviewed as we feel a more suitable materials could have been proposed.

Councillor Swinbank re-joined the meeting.

21/00660/FUL 18A and 20B St Michaels Lane Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1TW

Retrospective: Installation of replacement windows – **OBJECTION.** The Town Council feel that any replacements or repairs should be done like for like so the replacement windows should be wooden and in the same style as the originals. We would ask that the Conservation Officer comments on the application.

We feel the changes would cause harm to the heritage aspects of the building as the replacement windows do not match the original windows, especially the ones at the rear of the building where one of the original windows is proposed to be changed into a double glazed french window. Being in the Conservation area we feel strongly that efficient wooden replacements, which are available, should be used and all the existing windows maintained. The location of the property with more modern buildings to the front and rear does not mean that this property should not be maintained to the highest conservation standards and ease of future maintenance is not a satisfactory reason to replace wooden windows with uPVC.

We feel strongly that approval of this application would certainly set a precedent for other buildings within the conservation area and should be refused.

The following Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan policies need to be considered:

HERITAGE & DESIGN

HD7 Design in the Historic Centre

New development in the historic centre of Alnwick (including extensions, alterations and changes of use to existing buildings) will be supported if it adheres to the following design principles:

3. Quality: expected to match the quality of Alnwick's historic townscape in design, materials, detailing and finishes;
5. Size and scale: expected to respond to local character and history;
6. Materials: expected to be sympathetic to the local materials that are traditional in the historic core;
9. Existing guidelines: development expected to be in accordance with guidelines on shop fronts, stonework, windows and colours produced by Alnwick Civic Society in association with the former Alnwick District Council.

21/00645/COU The Linen Cupboard 20 Narrowgate Alnwick Northumberland NE66

1JG Change of use from retail shop to micro pub – **NO OBJECTIONS** but the Town Council would like the Planning Officer to be satisfied with the outside provision for smokers and the proposed use of the small alley to the side of the property.

21/00707/FUL 6 Denwick View Alnwick NE66 2PZ Complete replacement of existing roof structure, with the addition of north and south facing (side) elevation dormer windows with the addition of a timber staircase and internal alterations – **NO OBJECTIONS.**

21/00810/FUL Thornrigg Alnmouth Road Alnwick NE66 2QG Extension to rear of detached house with decking at either side – **NO OBJECTIONS.**

21/00532/LBC 19 Upper Howick Street Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1UZ Listed building consent for removal of 3 No. Timber window frame and replacement of new frames and new sash windows – **NO OBJECTIONS.**

P20/90 Updates on Major Developments

Councillor Broom reported that the House of Hardy were moving out of Alnwick.

Councillor Wearn advised that they were not moving out of town but would be moving be having a shop in town and to another industrial estate location.

Councillor Swinbank reported that the Hardy's building was for sale.

Councillor Humphries asked if the museum would be lost. Councillor Broom advised that this would also be moving into an empty shop in the town centre.

Alnwick Garden Lily Dory – The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that 3 new documents had been uploaded onto the Planning Portal: agents covering letter; ecology report and protected species report which both related to tree works and were requested by NCC's Conservation Officer.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the Planning Officer be asked if they knew if any more documents would be submitted by the applicant.

Windy Edge – The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that there were no new DISCONs or other new documents on the Planning Portal.

Councillor Wearn reported that it was very quiet at the moment. She reported that the new footpaths were progressing well and wheel cleaning was taking place.

Councillor Swinbank (speeding issue) - monitoring will take place as a first step to collect data and provide evidence of need. This issue has been raised at the Alnwick Forum.

P20/91 Issues for NCC

30 mph speed limits – The Town Clerk reported that a request will go to NCC for temporary 30mph limits for Denwick Lane and wondered if any other locations should be requested.

Councillors felt a temporary 30mph limit should be installed on the road into Alnwick before the Lion Bridge.

Safety Issues at Cemetery Entrance - The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had received a reply to the request for help regarding safety issues at the entrance to the cemetery. NCC felt they were unable to offer any help. She reported that she had then requested a road sign be installed but NCC felt this was not necessary. She advised that NCC had felt there was enough white lining and road signage. She felt these needed repainting.

Councillor Watson reported that he had been in Morpeth and that the white lines there were all pristine. He asked if Councillor Castle could take this up on behalf of the Town Council.

Councillor Swinbank asked if this could be raised as a separate issue at the Alnwick Forum.

The Town Clerk advised that he would now take this issue up with NCC.

Councillor Swinbank reported there were many missing white lines including box junctions.

Councillor Harrington felt that 30mph speed limits were no good if no-one policed them. He was not aware of any speeding tickets being issued.

Councillor Swinbank felt the matter could be raised with the police and speed traps requested.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk asked councillors to send any issue white line locations to her and she would collate for NCC.

Councillor Broom reported that some of the road surfaces in Alnwick were in a very bad state. He hoped that NCC would use more appropriate surfaces in future and would get the contractors who did Denwick Lane to redo the work. He also reported that the road surface in Percy Terrace had come away and needed to be investigated and that the road surface at Tower Lane / Clayport Bank where potholes are becoming a real issue and needed resurfacing.

P20/92 Hotspur Tower - update

The Town Clerk reported that a group of stakeholders has been set up, driven by Alnwick Civic Society, but he felt that the group needed to be led by NCC.

Councillor Swinbank reported that in the last 12 years the Tower had been hit about 12 times but that no-one had ever taken a longer-term view of the matter. He felt that a plan needed to include how any diversions should be put in place. He felt that NCC needed to take the lead and that the Town Council needed to be involved.

Councillor Watson felt that the Town Council should lead on the issue. He felt that the Tower may well be closed on a permanent basis and thought that a height restriction should be put in place to limit the types of vehicles going through the Tower.

Councillor Harrington explained that the Tower needed opening as soon as possible as it was the main entrance into the town centre. He agreed that a height restriction needed to be put in place which could be a metal bar set away from the Tower. The Tower being closed was causing a real issue at Westgate House.

The Town Clerk was concerned that no-one was taking this issue forward. He reminded councillors that the Tower did not belong to the Town Council and that the highway belongs to NCC.

Councillor Wearn agreed that NCC need to take the lead on this. She felt that a steel frame would be quite controversial but that there must a more aesthetic solution and that restricting larger vehicles would impact on other streets. She felt that NCC should be pressured to take control of the situation.

Councillor Broom explained that the whole road system in Alnwick needed a complete overhaul and that NCC needed to come to Alnwick to find solutions. He felt that Green Batt should become a one-way system, which would create more parking spaces, and that all traffic should turn left at the Tower with mini roundabouts installed at Tower Lane/Clayport Bank and Morrisons. He also felt that a new location should be found for the bus station, perhaps behind the Playhouse.

Councillor Swinbank explained there needed to be a professional appraisal on the possible solutions which people could then discuss.

Councillor Humphries explained that there was a matter of urgency so NCC needed to organise something quickly as the high season was only 6-8 weeks away.

The Town Clerk agreed with Councillor Humphries concerns and explained that he wanted the committee's support to push NCC.

Councillor Swinbank advised that councillors would be happy to be part of any group looking at the matter.

P20/93 The Cobbles

The Town Clerk reported that NCC designs had been taken to the Alnwick Forum. These were disappointing and did not include any designs for cars to be parked the other direction, as had done in the past.

Councillor Harrington said that the issue had already been in the press and on Facebook so a proper press release would be helpful. He reported that Newcastle were having trees planted in a pedestrianised system which was getting underway the following week.

The Town Clerk reported that some of the good work done 12 months ago had not been taken forward effectively. He did not feel that the ideas put forward by NCC were not what was discussed.

Councillor Wearn thought the choice of cobbles was an important one.

Councillor Broom felt the costs seemed far too low to replace the whole area of cobbles.

Councillor Swinbank advised that previous estimates had been anticipated at around £1mill. He felt that suitable consultation needed to be part of the process and that even the Town Council had not had suitable consultation on the proposals.

Councillor Watson advised that the replacement would be setts not cobbles and that different coloured setts would be used to delineate the parking bays. He felt residents should be consulted on the proposals. He added that historic photographs of Alnwick show setts in place. He felt that plans for better tree planting needed to be included.

Councillor Harrington felt that the area should be like Kelso which has flat top setts.

Councillor Swinbank felt that it needed to go back to NCC.

P20/94 Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.