

Minutes of Beadnell Parish Planning meeting, 17 May 2017

Present:

Cllrs Batten, Hall and Nation

County Councillor Guy Renner-Thompson

Gareth Davies LI.B., Minute Taker

40 members of the public.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest. All elected members were enabled to take part by a dispensation agreed at the Parish Council meeting on 10th May 2017, enabling members to take part in planning meetings where they had a conflict of interests in order to enable the council to be able to transact its business. (Localism Act 2011 S.33(a))

2. Planning Applications

At 18:30 Cllr Hall called the meeting to order. After introducing Cllr Renner-Thomson Cllr Hall reminded those present of the need to focus on material planning considerations, which were outlined on advice sheets available in the hall, and of the Parish Council's procedure for planning applications.

The only planning application to be considered was 17/01401/FUL Land west of the Wynding Beadnell. Plans and details of the application were displayed on tables at the rear of the room

No representatives of the applicants were present.

None of those present wished to speak in favour of the application.

Eight members of the public spoke in opposition to the application.

The first speaker quoted Para 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework;

“The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, “

Para 115 of the NPPF - “Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty...” and

Para 116 of the NPPF “Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such

applications should include an assessment of:

- the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy
- the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way
- any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.”

In support of this they argued that the AONB had assessed the area of Beadnell as being of high landscape value and worthy of protection. They also argued strongly that support for the Kennedy Green development demonstrated that the village and its residents were not opposed to all development, but that this proposal was the wrong development which would have detrimental effect.

The second speaker, who identified himself as Andrew Brown, endorsed the remarks of the first speaker, then said

- There was no evidence of housing need to justify this development
- The fact that the pre-planning inquiry was for 98 houses, and the existence of a space between the proposed houses that would enable access to adjacent open land suggested that this development was only the first phase of a larger development
- There were concerns about the intentions of the developers, and the extent to which their affordable housing promises could be guaranteed, and
- The Statement of Community Involvement was inaccurate, and the questionnaires relied upon were flawed, and depended upon leading questions that assumed planning permission would be granted.

The third speaker expressed significant concerns about the extent to which the affordable housing element depended upon the government help to buy scheme, and the extent to which that affordability, or permanent residence conditions, could be enforced in the future.

The fourth speaker argued that the planning committee who considered this application at NCC should undertake a site visit because so much of the paperwork attached to the application, and especially the aerial photographs, were out of date. In addition this speaker, and others, expressed concern about the description of the site as being on the western fringe of the village, when it was clearly on the northern fringe of the village.

The fifth speaker expressed their view that the Section 106 agreement would need to be more strongly worded, and more enforceable, in order for villagers to have any confidence in it.

The sixth speaker, after clarification by the chair, expressed concerns that this application was clearly in conflict with the emerging neighbourhood plan.

The seventh speaker expressed the view that this application was inappropriate in size and style for this location, and that the proposed junction with the B1340 would be a traffic hazard. They illustrated their argument on the scale of development by pointing out that planning approval had been given, since 2000, for 240 units of housing in Beadnell.

Andrew Brown made further remarks at this point about the poor quality of supporting paperwork for the application, and alluded to the failure to undertake due diligence or consultations with neighbouring landowners about issues such as drainage. This last point was raised repeatedly by several speakers, not as a material planning matter, but as evidence for the argument that the applicants had failed to demonstrate that their application was well founded or well thought out.

Cllr Hall then introduced her draft submission, and read it to the meeting. After receiving no questions or adverse comments, on Cllr Hall's motion, seconded by Cllrs Batten and Nation it was unanimously RESOLVED

1. That Beadnell Parish Council opposed 17/01401/FUL Land west of the Wynding Beadnell, for the reasons laid out in the draft submission,
2. That Beadnell PC wished the application to be considered by a planning committee of Northumberland County Council, preferably after a site visit, and
3. That the Interim Clerk be instructed to send the submission appended to these minutes as Appendix A to Northumberland County Council.

There being no other business to consider the meeting closed at 19:05

Appendix A

Planning Ref 17/01401/FUL

Land west of the Wynding Beadnell –Submission

Summary

1. The application incorrectly uses statements from both the *AONB Sensitivity and Capacity Study* and *Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment produced for Northumberland County Council 2010*. These relate to parts of Beadnell Green, to the south side of Swinhoe Road, and not the proposed development site. This appears to be a deliberate attempt to mislead decision makers who may not know the village. The area of proposed development is clearly shown in the AONB report as a 'sensitive area' where no development should be allowed as 'it provides an important 'setting' to the village and the views of the low lying coastal area'.
The diagram at page 75 of the AONB document clearly shows the 'area less sensitive to limited housing development' i.e. the rear of Longbeach Drive development and the 'settlement edges sensitive to New Housing Development'. The latter completely envelops the proposed development site.
2. The report by Southern Green, places the site at the western 'fringe' of Beadnell rather than the northern boundary.
3. Landscape and visual appraisal. The new development will become the skyline feature of the historic part of the village. The North of England Civic Trust are looking at designating a new conservation area for parts of Beadnell including the Craster Arms and other buildings near the proposed development site.
4. The site will be visible from 1km by 100% of people approaching the village on the only access road from the west, the B1340.
5. Although dated April 2017 both the maps and aerial views of the village are at least 10 years out of date and do not show recent developments such as the additional houses constructed as part of Stage 3 of Longbeach development, St Ebba's Way (13 Dwellings) , Kennedy Green (14 dwellings) and the nearly completed, 43 dwelling, Beadnell Point development.

6. Affordable Housing and Sustainability Statement – The proposed site is outside the village boundary in the Emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
7. The North Housing Delivery Area already has a deliverable housing land supply equivalent to 7.2 years or 144%.
8. Affordable Housing, The development should supply 30% affordable housing made up of 2 and 3 bedroom family housing and bungalows.
9. The Northumberland Estates planning application for development of 45 houses in Beadnell Green is designed to meet exceptional circumstances i.e. the current local need for affordable housing and to test the need for permanent housing.

The proposed development will be in competition for sales and occupation potentially working against the future sustainability of the village by reducing the supply of permanently occupied housing. .

10. The development will not integrate with existing buildings where many of the existing houses are stone built and bungalows. The scale, massing and density do not fit with the existing buildings and the materials proposed will make the development stand out from surrounding housing.
11. There is insufficient separation between the existing dwellings and the new development. The current design does not appropriately address privacy and right to light issues. The density is too high and not appropriate for this site
12. Transport. The entrance to the site is inappropriate and leads onto a high speed stretch of road. The B1340 is not lightly trafficked. The Traffic Survey used national Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) to generate its figures and only weekday surveys were used. The Noise level survey was carried out in January 2017, one of the quietest periods of the year.
13. Utilities – The village already struggles to meet the need of 5 major developments in the past 15 years. If building is allowed, a new dedicated High Speed Broadband supply is vital to allow families to work from home.

Notes

1. The 'western fringe of the settlement' mentioned is clearly the area to the rear of Harbour Road developments and has recently been granted planning permission for 53 and then 43 new dwellings. Paragraphs 5.30, 5.31, 5.33, 6.12, 6.13, 6.26 and 6.27 all repeat these misleading statements.

2. This site is clearly at the northern edge of the village. The site referred to in the Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment, produced for Northumberland County Council 2010, is the field due south, at the other side of Swinhoe Road, known as Beadnell Green. Planning permission for parts of this much larger site were granted in the 1970's and again in 2016.
3. The legislative framework has regard to Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building and its setting, as well as the need to preserve or enhance the character, appearance and setting of conservation areas (s.72) of the Act.
4. The proposed development does not 'accord' with the recommendations of the AONB report. It will be built on the most visible area of grassland which forms the north boundary of the village. It would obliterate the current view of mature trees, the church and the historic buildings in a proposed conservation area which is appreciated by visitors arriving from the A1 and all areas west of the village. It will undoubtedly detract from the character and visual amenity of the surrounding area.
Landscape proposals will not be able to disguise or mitigate a development on the side of a hill facing the main access route to the village.
5. No notes
6. 5.2.27 View 9 –View east from the B1340, has been taken from the footpath at a point set back from the crest of the hill and does not show the full impact of a 52 house development laid against a west facing slope. It also does not show the effect of 2 storey detached and semi-detached buildings screening the existing views of the historic centre of the village. The proposed new site will form a new incongruous edge to the settlement which could only be hidden by mass planting of forest trees when they are 40-50 years old.

The changes brought about by the development will represent a major change to the landscape character from short and mid-range views and will become the first view of the historic village to all visitors from the west of the village.

It will have the highest and irreversible effect on views into a village reliant on tourism.

7. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - local planning authorities must use the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period. The Emerging Neighbourhood Plan identifies the majority of future development will be expected to be in North Sunderland (Seahouses) rather than in Beadnell or Bamburgh. Potential housing sites to provide 5 years supply have already been identified in Beadnell. The proposed site is not one of these and is in fact outside the accepted village boundary. Beadnell has a 20 year record of over delivery of housing including 2 major developments delivering nearly 90 additional dwellings over the past year.
8. The recently passed Northumberland Estates planning application for development of 43 houses in Beadnell Green, at the other side of Swinhoe Road, is the first such voluntary proposal for permanent residence restrictions in the country. This development should be allowed to be completed and tested before any more applications are granted.

There is a clause in the S106 which allows individual properties to be offered on the open market if they have been up for sale for 12 months without being sold. By more than doubling the number of dwellings being built, and coming to market at the same time, all with new residency restrictions, the chances are many could remain unsold for 12 months thereby reverting to market housing and as currently, being sold as investments.

The proposed 100% permanent housing, although welcome, will be in direct competition with the 43 similar houses which have recently gained permission. The inability to sell any of these may result in them being sold on the open market and becoming yet more Holiday Homes, contributing to neither Council Tax nor Business Rates through loopholes in the current legislation which makes available 100% Small Business Rate Relief.

9. The Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment contains several overarching development guidelines for protecting the qualities of the area including *'avoiding inappropriate development which would erode the visual characteristics of the area, the need for new development to reflect the local vernacular and the need to protect key views along the coast and seaward'*. The proposed new development does not meet **any** of these conditions.
10. There is a need for Affordable Housing in the North Northumberland Coastal Neighbourhood Plan Area. It could be argued that Beadnell with 29 Housing Association properties and a further 9 promised, has more than its fair share. But, if the development is to take place then the full 30% contribution of

Affordable Housing should be provided. The present county wide level is a result of recent house building in the south and west of Northumberland and these resulting properties are not available to those living in North Northumberland unless they are prepared to move.

The Planning Authority's own Core Strategy, recently submitted for examination, 6.64 and 6.65 states '*Where there is a high level of affordable housing need identified in a published document, a contribution in excess of 15% may be required up to a maximum of 30%*'. Hellens planning application relies heavily on such 'published documents' to argue its case for development.

All the proposed houses, including the affordable housing, are 2 storey whilst the clear demand for housing, identified in the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Need survey 2015, was for single storey bungalows, to rent or buy.

11. The NPPF stipulates that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONB's which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. This application proposes to destroy the existing landscape and distract from the scenic beauty by over development of an important area of farmland which frames the historic core of the village. The proposed dwellings should be moved well back from the boundaries. The existing properties on The Wynding are built close to the existing fencing. Many of those on Swinhoe Road have been extended bringing them alongside the boundary.
12. The site proposes to create a new entrance onto the B1340. This is a notorious stretch of high speed road which has recently had a 40mph speed limit imposed as a result of another fatal accident. The new entrance will be down a newly created slope and entail a large section of stone wall being removed. This stone wall is relied on by the applicant (Landscape and Visual Impact 6.63) to provide screening of the site from sections of the road.

The B1340 is not lightly trafficked. The road is the main signposted Coastal Route between Newcastle and the A1 in the south and west and Seahouses, Bamburgh and the A1 from the north. It is the only road providing access to and running past the many popular local tourist sites such as Bamburgh Castle and Seahouses Harbour. The road is used by local traffic as well as the many thousands of holidaymakers visiting the area each year. Despite traffic calming methods, including local Speed Watch volunteers and the newly introduced 40mph limit, the straight stretch of road is still a temptation to motorists, and especially motor cyclists, which use it to 'test' their vehicles every weekend during the Spring and Summer months.

The existing noise level survey should be re-run during a weekend in the

summer months.

13. The Water Authority have refused permission to build until a major review is carried out. Despite the claims of High Speed Broadband the current supply is limited due to the distance from the one 'BT Box' near the beach. It is unlikely any new development in this location would receive a satisfactory supply. If building is allowed a new, dedicated High Speed Broadband supply is vital to allow families to work from home and access a satisfactory internet service.