

WETHERAL PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD on Monday 28th September 2020
In a virtual meeting room, commencing at 1pm

(This meeting was virtual and therefore did not take place at a physical location, following guidelines set out in Section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Earp (Chairman), Cllr Poole, Cllr Oliver (for Cllr Higgs), Cllr Higginbotham (for Cllr Round).

Also present: Cllr Searle (as an observer), Cllr Christian, a resident of the Parish.

PL/20/01 Apologies

Cllr Round, Cllr Higgs, Cllr Dobson.

PL/20/02 Minutes of the previous meeting

Resolved for the Chairman to sign the minutes of the Planning Meeting of 24th August 2020 as a correct record.

PL/20/03 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Christian declared an interest as a member of the Development Control committee, Carlisle City Council.

PL/20/04 Requests for Dispensation

None

PL/20/05 Public Participation

A resident of the Parish attended the meeting to discuss his own application, 20/0587. The garage was built a couple of years ago to provide storage for the applicant's work in motor sport. As most related events are now cancelled due to COVID-19, the applicant wishes to diversify and convert the garage into a holiday let, which he said would bring people to the area and possibly result in job creation in future (i.e. for a cleaner).

Cllr Earp asked whether there would be a second access point, as the property is on The Narrows and there is limited visibility. The applicant said the garage already has an access point with a dropped kerb, and noted that there is courtyard parking for two vehicles. As the holiday let would have a maximum of two people staying, he does not expect a significant impact.

Cllr Earp asked about the plans for surface water drainage and foul water discharge. The applicant explained that the water will go into the existing drain on the property.

Cllr Higginbotham expressed concern that parking issues may arise if the resident arrives home for a short time, where the temptation may be to park on the street rather than go through the courtyard gate. The resident pointed out that most of the surrounding properties only have space for one car while Myrtle House has two, but also said there is room to extend parking into the existing garden if needed in future.

PL/20/06 Cllr Christian's Presentation on Climate Change

Cllr Christian is Carlisle City Council's Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport. He told the committee that more unpredictable and serious weather events are expected as a result of climate change

The City Council's climate change strategy has a series of objectives:

- i) Reducing emissions from the City Council estate and operations.

- ii) Reducing energy consumption and emissions from homes and businesses in Carlisle, and tackling fuel poverty.
- iii) Reducing emissions from transport.
- iv) Reducing consumption of resources, increasing recycling and reducing waste.
- v) Supporting Council services, residents and businesses to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

- Unfortunately, there were few public responses to the City Council's climate change consultation.
- Cumbria County Council has been awarded £2.5m of National Lottery funding. This will be used to employ staff for its Cumbria Zero Carbon Partnership.
- Cumbria has the opportunity to 'sink carbon' through changes in agricultural practice and land use.
- The 'Garden Village' aims to be a carbon-neutral development, and this strategy could be applied to future developments.

The Planning committee submitted a series of questions to Cllr Christian:

Q: Will the City Council will be adopting a more flexible work-from-home strategy?

A: There are pros and cons to this, but Cllr Christian believes it is vital to keep it up as part of the climate change response. It saves time and money in terms of commuting, as well as reducing carbon emissions and traffic impact.

Q: What is the progress on free energy, e.g. wind and solar?

A: 11% of UK power is currently generated by wind, 23% by solar. There is huge scope to improve.

Q: More safe cycle routes are needed. What is being done to encourage more cyclists?

A: Prior to COVID-19, there were talks with the County Council re: improving cycle routes into the city, with a focus on commuter routes. Cllr Christian believes we will see the County Council propose Safe Cycle Routes, though accepts that there will be disruption to drivers as part of this.

Q: How does the City Council's climate change strategy fit in with its planning strategy? There is mass house building being approved, particularly on greenfield sites. This releases carbon and replaces green spaces with tarmac. Will the planning policy change?

A: There is a currently a White Paper looking at changes to planning policy, but this is driven by national legislation. The government's priority is building more houses, and houses in the local area are being bought, indicating that there is demand. There is a strong requirement for planning policies to try to protect the countryside, but it is impossible to stop developers asking for permission to build, and if the criteria are met it is difficult to refuse applications. There are very few brownfield sites in the Carlisle area. Cllr Christian does not believe there will be a moratorium on building.

Q: Could the planning policy require builders of large developments to plant certain amounts of trees?

A: There should be a way to require developers to offset the carbon produced by their activities. Cllr Christian would personally like to see a large forest created in the local area and hopes things will move in the right direction.

Q: There should be better organisation to ensure more efficient operations and planning, to conserve energy. For example, we often see roads being dug up for work by a specific utility, only to be dug up again a few weeks later.

A: Cllr Christian agreed with this.

Q: When will there be more cycle racks/lockers in the city centre? At the moment there are very few.

A: There will be new cycle spaces on English Street soon, paid for by the government's funding for transport (the Emergency Active Travel Fund).

Q: Some areas in England require new houses to be built with photovoltaic panels. Could this be done in Carlisle? Also, there are few electric vehicle charge points in the local area.

A: There will be 19 on-street EV charging points installed soon. Cllr Christian will follow up the point about photovoltaic panels.

Q: What control mechanism is in place to ensure new houses are built to required insulation standards?

A: This needs to be tougher. Cllr Christian hopes it will move in the right direction.

PL/20/07 Planning Decisions reported to date:

i) 20/0516 – Langthwaite, Heads Nook

Granted.

ii) 20/0511 – Washbeck Paddock, Broomfallen Road, Scotby

Granted

iii) 20/0507 – West View, Great Corby

Granted

iv) 20/0510 – Green Field Pastures, Broomfallen Road, Scotby

Granted

v) 20/0554 – Fern House Farm, Low Cotehill, Cotehill

Granted

PL/20/08 Planning Applications considered:

Plan Number

i) 20/0592 – High Hollins, Warwick on Eden

Observations – The committee does not object, but notes that it appears that the extension has already been built, therefore the application should be retrospective.

ii) 20/0587 – Land at Myrtle House, Cotehill

Observations – The committee does not object, but vehicles should be parked within the curtilage of the property, to avoid additional pressure on local parking.

iii) 20/0612 – Former Wellspring Christian School, Cotehill

Observations – No objection, but the committee would like to comment that bungalows would be appreciated as part of the development, as there is a local need for this type of housing.

iv) 20/0611 – Hollygarth, 10 the Orchard, Great Corby

No observations.

v) 20/0602 – Land to the east of Cringles Farm, Cumwhinton

Observations – Although it does not object to the development, the committee has concerns about the high speed of traffic in this area and feels that a speed control measure such as a chicane should be implemented by the developer.

PL/20/09 Correspondence

i) APP/E0915/C/20/3257761 – Field 3700, Lakes View, The Stripes, Cumwhinton

Change of use of land for siting of 1 no. static unit used for residential accommodation. An appeal against the enforcement notice has been made to the Secretary of State.

Next meeting Monday 26th October 2020, 1pm, via Zoom.