

**Minutes of the Zoom Meeting of Allendale Parish Council
(including minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee)
held on Thursday 3rd September 2020 at 7pm**

Present: Cllr Crellin (Chair), Councillors Dunn, Galley, Hill, Howard, Lee, Philipson, Quinn, Sandison and Simmonds, White and Co Cllr Horncastle
H Newsome (Clerk)

1) Apologies for absence

Cllrs Baxter and Henderson

2) Planning Sub-Committee

Planning applications

Cllr Crellin invited members of the public wishing to speak before Councillors discussed the planning applications and make their decisions. He also reminded everyone that the Parish Council made recommendations based on planning policy as set out in Allendale's Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP).

20/02417/FUL – Land North Of Lonkley Lodge Lonkley Head Allendale Development of a residential estate comprising thirteen new properties and associated infrastructure works

Several members of the public voiced their concerns about the proposed residential development of thirteen new properties on Land North of Lonkley Lodge. The main concerns raised included the absence of a drainage strategy for a site that drew water from the top of the hill to the bottom, including supplying Isaac's Well through a series of cundies; poor drainage of the site that was prone to flooding the adjacent properties; safety concerns about access to the site from a narrow carriageway and an awkward traffic junction on Lonkley; with no footpath, safety concerns for children walking to school/village, made worse by the run off freezing in winter, and causing hazardous conditions for both pedestrians and drivers; insufficient detail and information in the application, including the levels of the proposed dwellings not being shown, and concern about the close proximity to existing dwellings leading to a loss of privacy; a lack of confidence that the dwellings would in fact be affordable; and, the possible existence of a restrictive covenant preventing development of the land.

Cllr Crellin reminded everyone that the Allendale's Neighbourhood Development Plan, that was in keeping with the National Planning Policy Framework, currently took precedence over the old Tynedale Plan, and the yet to be adopted Northumberland Local Plan. Co Cllr Horncastle agreed that the ANDP was currently the most relevant planning policy document, and that the Tynedale Plan, being so out of date, carried less weight, however, he said that the new, soon to be adopted Northumberland Local Plan *is* now carrying some weight. He said that whilst he had taken on board what people were saying, he reminded everyone that he could not make any comments on planning applications at parish council meetings, because he was part of the Tynedale Local Area (Planning) Committee that determines applications when the parish council's recommendation was different from that of the planning officer. Co Cllr Horncastle also said that he had every confidence in the county council officer who would be tasked with reviewing any proposed drainage arrangements at the site.

Councillors discussed the application and Cllr Philipson said that with so much uncertainty about the drainage issues it might be better to postpone further discussion until some of the questions raised were answered, and to know if the site was suitable for building on. Cllr Lee said that comments from other key statutory consultees (Highways, Northumbria Water etc) were missing making it harder to make any decision and that it was inaccurate to say that the site was surrounded by properties when it wasn't. Cllr Simmonds reminded everyone that the Local Housing Needs Survey showed that the greatest need was for smaller, starter homes and that the proposed development was not what the Parish Council had in mind.

Cllr Quinn said that in addition to concerns raised by other councillors about the number of dwellings being too high and drainage problems with the site, he thought that this application, and the accompanying "Planning Statement" and "Design, Access and Heritage Statement" fell far short of the standard to be expected - not least the failure to mention the ANDP - and included statements that were patently not true. He was puzzled to read that the applicant was "keen to develop the site for residential purposes" when the land was for sale for £400k through an estate agent. Both of the supporting documents said (in similar words) that "the site is surrounded on all sides by existing residential development". This is not correct: although the northeast boundary abuts part of Dale Park, there is just one house in the southern corner of the site, one house in the west corner, and the northwest boundary is some distance from the houses on Shilburn Road. Most seriously, JT Planning must have known that their claim in para 28 of the Planning Statement that the development met the requirements for spacing of 25 metres between the rears of new 2-storey dwellings and existing dwellings was totally false: according to the "Proposed site plan" the distances between the houses on Plots 1, 6, 8 (single storey), 9 and 13 are just 14, 4, 10, 9 and 9 metres, respectively, from the nearest existing houses. In addition, there is only 2 metres between the rears of the houses on Plots 6 to 9 and the boundaries with the houses in Dale Park. Minor errors include that the application form says (section 9) that there would be 38 car parking spaces, but the site plan shows 29; and the authors of the Design etc statement state that Allendale "has a first school" despite it having closed almost 7 years ago in November 2013 when the primary school opened on the old middle school site. Cllr Quinn proposed that the PC strongly **object** to the application, with Cllr Galley seconding this, as it is not in keeping with ANDP Policy 2: Scale of Housing Development as described on pages 11 and 12 and in the Glossary on pages 34 and 35, and this was unanimously carried by the Council.

Cllr Lee requested that Cllr Quinn's comments in full be passed on to the planning officer.

20/02050/BT – Dirt Pot Hotel, Allenheads & 20/02051/BT Allenheads

The Council discussed the proposed removal of the two telephone kiosks in Allenheads, and Cllr White said BT had confirmed that the kiosks were not being used as the fuses had been removed on account of the kiosks being too expensive to maintain. Cllr Crellin initially proposed **to object** to their removal on the grounds that people at risk of domestic abuse could make a call that cannot be monitored, with Cllr Quinn seconding this. Cllr White proposed an amendment **to object** to the removal of the Dirt Pot Hotel kiosk to ensure that one of the kiosks was maintained, with Cllr Howard seconding this. Cllr White's motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

20/02356/FUL and 20/02357/LBC – High Swinhope Shield, Allendale

Cllr Philipson proposed **no objections** to the development with Cllr Simmonds seconding this. Cllr Dunn proposed an amendment to object to the application as she said that it was not in keeping with ANDP Policy 9: Extensions to Dwellings (bullet point two) which was not carried. Cllr Philipson's original proposal was carried by the Council.

3) Declarations of Interest

There were no changes; see APC's website for full list:

<https://northumberlandparishes.uk/allendale/documents>

4) Public participation

There were eight members of the general public in attendance.

5) Minutes of the previous meetings held on 2nd July, 23rd July and 13th August 2020

Cllr Philipson proposed, and Cllr Quinn seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd July 2020 be agreed and signed as a correct record. Cllr Galley and Cllr Crellin and Cllr Quinn and Cllr White did the same for the minutes of the two planning meetings held on 23rd July and 13th August, respectively.

6) Matters Arising

Allenfields Play Area

Cllr Philipson said that he had met with the contractors earlier in the day who would be installing the fence over the next two days. He said that the field was remarkably dry with the exception of the lower part, and that he would monitor the conditions of the field so that any remedial drainage work carried out was proportionate to the conditions.

Allotments

Cllr Philipson confirmed that the Tatty Garth site that the parish council considered potentially suitable for the development of allotments had now been sold.

Village maintenance - highway improvements

Co Cllr Horncastle said that there were massive backlogs of highways work resulting from the staff absences during the global pandemic. He said that Neil Snowdon had agreed to a site visit in Allendale now that work was properly resuming once again, and that he would let us know the date of his visit in due course.

The Clerk to notify Highways that some Allen View residents were removing their garden walls in order to make way for parking their cars, and ask if some guidance could be sent on what is and what is not permitted.

Waste bins

Cllr Lee gave an update on the installation of new bins. Three new bins have so far been installed: opposite Catton Chapel; at Allen View triangle; and the site where the Catton telephone kiosk was, however, this one would be moved to the site of the old bin which was close by, as the first site had proved unpopular by some residents. Cllr Lee said that he was trying to find a way of siting two more bins along Station Road. The Clerk confirmed that the new wheelie bin and stand for Oldman Bottom had been ordered and would shortly be installed.

Footpath along from Wentworth Park on the B6295

The Clerk to ask NCC to check a section of the stone wall along the footpath off the B6295 close to Wentworth Riding, NE47 9AR, that appeared unstable and was leaning towards the property on the other side of the wall.

7) County Councillor update

Apologies

Co Cllr Horncastle apologised for not being present for parish council meetings during the lockdown. He said that all his energy had been taken up with attending the numerous county council virtual meetings, some of which were quite lengthy and with large numbers of participants. He said that some of the regular working groups had been cancelled and it was mostly the strategic ones that had continued, although he expected the Area Planning Committee to be soon up and running again.

Leader of Northumberland County Council removed from office

Co Cllr Horncastle said that atmosphere at County Council had been dreadful for staff, with all the terrible publicity around the behaviour of the Leader of Northumberland County Council, who had since been removed from office following a vote of no confidence. He said that everyone hoped that the next leader would unite the Council and their work environment would quickly improve.

Allendale First School

Co Cllr Horncastle said that he could still not yet provide any information on the sale of the school since it was commercially sensitive.

8) Allendale Market Square

Villages Sub Committee

Cllr Dunn said that work could be categorised as: **short-term** (a rolling programme of work including maintenance of trees and shrubs, benches etc); **long-term** (work that required more financial investment such as the repair and renewal of footpaths) and work that **Northumberland County Council** was responsible for (signage, drop kerbs, the Grade II listed Library railings etc). Cllrs Dunn also highlighted two

historical sites that would require more investment, Isaac's Well and the Glendinning Memorial. Cllr Lee reminded everyone that the parish council needed to ensure that Catton and Allenheads were included in the programmes of work, and he shared some of his ideas including considering providing some sort of shelter or windbreak at the bus stop in Catton.

Tree preservation orders

The Clerk said that Matty Robson had looked at the three sycamore trees and one ash tree on Rectory Meadow at the parish council's request and advised putting tree preservation orders (TPO) on only two of the sycamore trees. The Council unanimously agreed for the Clerk to ask him to go ahead with the two TPOs.

Northern Powergrid – installation of new underground electricity cables

Cllr Hill asked if the roll out of Broadband for Allen Valleys (B4AV) was likely to be affected following on from correspondence received from Chris Laws of Northern Powergrid confirming that any viable Allendale Undergrounding scheme would not be considered until April 2023. The Clerk said that representatives of B4AV had previously agreed to share the trenches in the village to lay its optic cables. Cllr Philipson would inform B4AV's Mike Robinson of developments.

9) Annual Plan

Cllrs Dunn, Philipson and Galley to meet (virtually?) to discuss the plan of works for the parish taking into account the items recorded above under item 8) Allendale Market Square - **Villages Sub-Committee**.

10) Allen Valleys Folk Festival update

Cllr Crellin said that organisers of the folk festival should be aware of government guidance on gatherings of more than 30 people as he had been advised by a local solicitor that penalties of £10k may be imposed if these weren't followed. Cllr Hill said that businesses and venues following COVID-19 secure guidelines could host larger groups provided that the organisation takes reasonable steps to mitigate the risk of transmission in line with the guidance, and that Allendale Village Hall had recently hosted an outdoor Opera North event for 45 people. Cllr Galley said that the Allen Valleys Folk Festival Board would make a decision about the arrangements for this year's folk festival. More guidance on this topic here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household-from-4-july>

11) Climate Action Allendale

Cllr Hill informed everyone of the newly formed (non-political) group, Tynedale Transformed, that was inviting ideas to create a fairer and sustainable future from other organisations that share its vision. More information here: <https://www.tynedaletransformed.org/>

12) Local Transport Plan 2020/2021 feedback and priorities for 2021/2022

The Council agreed to discuss this item at the October meeting as the deadline for submission was not until **4th October 2020**. In the meantime, all councillors to email the Clerk with their priorities for the Local Transport Plan for 2021/2022, and these would be considered alongside the priorities listed from previous years.

13) Grant applications

The Council considered applications from **five** organisations. Cllr Simmonds proposed that the awards be granted as shown below, with Cllr Galley seconding, and this was unanimously carried by the Council.

Allendale Primary School	£250
Allendale Sports Club	£250
Allendale Youth Ambition	£250
Catton Village Hall	£1,000
Sport Tynedale	£250

14) Town Twinning

Aidan Gillespie gave an enjoyable and informative presentation on Killala in Co. Mayo, Ireland and described its similarities with Allendale, with a view to exploring the idea of town twinning with the parish council. Aidan said that he had talked to a range of local people about his idea including business owners, artists and musicians and he was encouraged to bring forward the idea and offered to help facilitate the next steps if the parish council wished. The Council welcomed Aidan's presentation and was happy for his idea to be taken forward, and welcomed the suggestion of a post-COVID trip to Killala.

15) Correspondence

Joyce Jewitt – The Council acknowledged further correspondence from Ms Jewitt in which she expressed hope to have her uncle's name added to the Lych Gate Memorial at St Cuthbert's Church in time for Remembrance Day in November 2020. The Clerk had received information about the process and timescales for getting planning permission and had informed the Council of these. Cllr Simmonds said that she was following the War Memorials Trust guidance that included, firstly, researching whether there are any records setting out the original criteria for including names on the war memorial. She said that any surviving documentation was likely to be held in the Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn. If no existing criteria was found then criteria could be adopted if the local community thought it appropriate. Cllr Simmonds said that since there was currently no overlap between the two war memorials (Allenheads War Memorial and St Cuthbert's Church Lychgate), a decision to add Mr Philipson's name to the Lychgate would set a precedent. In this situation if the Parish Council decided to add Mr Philipson's name then it would need to decide a) if it should try and find the relations of the other men to ask if they would like the same, and b) decide if it wished to limit the offer to WW2 or include WW1 as well. The next stage of the process would be to get listed building consent to make the changes to the memorial, then find a suitable wood engraver and notify the community. As the Northumberland Archives does not re-open until 17th September 2020, and even if the Parish Council decided it was appropriate to add Mr Philipson's name, Cllr Simmonds said that it was unlikely that the full process could be achieved by this year's Remembrance Day. The Clerk and Cllr Simmonds would write to Ms Jewitt to put her in the picture.

John Elliott – The Clerk to contact Allendale Estates Office to ask if the plastic (sand) bags could be removed from the area around the Blackett level tunnel.

16) External audit report 2019/2020

The Clerk said that she had now received the Audit Report from PKF Littlejohn LLP and that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) was in accordance with proper practices. The Clerk would now prepare a 'Notice of conclusion of audit' and publish this on the website.

17) Accounts for payment

Cllr Galley proposed the accounts for payment, seconded by Cllr Howard.

Treasurer's Account: bank balance as at **28th August 2020 - £47,101.35**

Business 30-Day Notice Account: bank balance as at **10th August 2020 - £ 5,235.30**

18) Matters for 1st October 2020 agenda

Local Transport Plan

Planning for the Future consultation

Allendale Bowling Green

19) Confidential agenda item (for Council only)

There were none.

20) Date of next Parish Council Zoom teleconference

The next Parish Council meeting would take place on **1st October 2020 at 7pm**. The meeting ended at 21:22