

OPEN SESSION: There were several members of the public present (see attached notes).

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Held on Friday 26th May at 2.15pm

PRESENT: Cllr N R G Clarke (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs B Charlton
Cllr D R Cole
Cllr D E Cracknell (for part of meeting from P/4324)
Cllr M F J Daly
Cllr B H Terry

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk (for items P/4320 and P/4321)
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk
Cllr L C Ford

P/4317 ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr N J Chard, as he was attending the District Council's Standards Committee, and Cllr N C Wood.

P/4318 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

P/4319 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2006, having been circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

With the agreement of the Committee, planning application numbers 87864 and 87878 were considered next for the benefit of members of public present.

The Town Clerk joined the Committee for the next two items.

P/4320 SOUTH EAST PLAN

The Town Clerk referred to the report circulated with the Agenda (*Annex 'A'*) and informed members that the South East Plan, which sets out the overall policy framework for land use planning in the region for the next 20 years, had been submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister and would now be tested by an independent panel. He said that, historically, the Town Council had not responded to consultation on strategic documents. However, he felt that it was important to respond to this document as the policies in it were too restrictive and would not allow for the growth required in the town to meet demands of local people for housing and employment. Hampshire County Council had forecast that the population of the town would drop over the period of the Plan.

It was noted that current policies allowed for 20 or 30 new houses, of any type, per annum in the town. As there were few sites identified for housing, this would lead to more infilling, putting pressure on the surrounding areas. In addition, if houses could not be built to meet demand, this would lead to a migration away from the town which would force house prices up, increase the age of the population and ultimately bring about a decline in the viability of the town.

Members agreed that the line of the Green Belt had been drawn too tightly around the existing urban area of Ringwood and, because of this, would only allow for backland development or use of brown sites. It was felt that the line should be drawn in accordance with the guidelines set out in PPG2 to allow for foreseeable demands for growth in particular areas, and that the boundary would need to be reviewed as part of the Local Development Framework process.

However, in the meantime, Cllr Clarke recommended the Town Council respond to the South East Plan and comment specifically on the policy relating to Green Belt, in an attempt to encourage flexibility of this policy to allow for modest growth.

RESOLVED: That the draft response (*Annex B*) circulated at the meeting be approved as the Town Council's response to the South East Plan.

P/4321

EMPLOYMENT LAND

It was noted that the Town Council had received a consultation questionnaire on the Employment Development Plan Document, which would be part of the Local Development Framework. The Town Clerk and the Chairman of the Committee had completed this questionnaire and circulated it to the Committee for discussion (*Annex C*). The main theme of the draft response was to ask the District Council to retain flexibility in its policies and not to be too prescriptive, as the future could not be guaranteed. It also pressed for development of the land at Nouale Lane, adjacent to the A31, as a high value employment site.

RESOLVED: That the completed questionnaire at Annex 'C' be used as the Council's response to the Employment Development Plan Document. However, if members wished to make any further comments prior to Friday 2nd June, these would be considered by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee.

The Town Clerk left the meeting.

P/4322

APPEALS

i) Mr & Mrs Lowe

It was noted that Mr & Mrs Lowe had lodged an Appeal against New Forest District Council's decision to refuse the application for a house on land of 90 Northfield Road (Planning Application Number 86420 refers). The Town Council had recommended that this application be granted permission as the proposal was comparable to other high density developments in the area.

ii) Mr & Mrs Tucker

It was noted that Mr & Mrs Tucker had lodged an Appeal against New Forest District Council's decision to refuse the application for one pair of semi-detached houses at the rear of 228/230 Southampton Road (Planning Application Number 85752 refers). The Town Council had recommended that this application be refused as it appeared to be a cramped and incongruous development, situated too close to 228/230 Southampton Road.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council make no further comments on the Appeals by Mr & Mrs Lowe and Mr & Mrs Tucker.

P/4323

NEW FOREST TRANSPORT FORUM

Cllr Clarke reported on the New Forest Transport Forum held on 23rd May. He said that the challenge was to meet the needs of teenagers, people in employment and the elderly. However, there would be major cost pressures on public transport in the next few years and the Forum had been looking at ways to save costs, such as by re-routing and increasing the amount of alternative methods of transport, e.g. Taxi Share, Cango and Dial-a-Ride. It was noted that the County Council was undertaking a review of community transport and would be looking at ways to make people more aware of these services and how to access them.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Clarke's report be noted.

P/4324

PLANNING APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED

Planning applications in respect of periods ending 25th April and 2nd, 9th and 16th May 2006 were considered.

Cllr Cracknell joined the meeting at 4pm, during consideration of application number 87924.

RESOLVED: That the observations as shown in Annex 'D' be submitted.

P/4325

URGENT BUSINESS

i) HAPTC AGM

The Deputy Town Clerk asked members if they wished to second a resolution, proposed by Brockenhurst Parish Council, calling for measures to be implemented to address the lack of parking provision in new developments, as a result of PPG3.

It was noted that the District Council was in the process of reviewing parking standards for new developments and therefore

RESOLVED: That the proposed resolution be not seconded.

ii) Appeal by Bikers Legal Defence Ltd

It was noted that Bikers Legal Defence Ltd had lodged an Appeal against New Forest District Council's decision to refuse the application for removal of Condition 1 of Planning Permission 78580 to allow permanent use of Unit 3A Carvers Industrial Estate, Southampton Road. The Town Council had recommended that this application be granted permission.

RESOLVED: That no comments be made on the Appeal by Bikers Legal Defence, but the fact that members would wish to speak at the Public Inquiry be noted.

iii) Signage

Cllr Mrs Charlton reported that, in her capacity as President of the Chamber of Trade, she had met with a representative of Sainsburys who was very keen to secure additional signing for the supermarket in the town. She suggested that a sign be erected in the main car park to inform visitors what was available in the town and that this could be sponsored by, say, Sainsburys and Waitrose. It was noted that this would require permission from the District Council, as the landowner.

Cllr Terry said that the whole issue of signage would be addressed through the Town Plan process and cautioned against looking at it piecemeal.

However, members did agree that there was a need to improve signage to better promote the town. It was also noted that the map outside the Visitor Information Centre did not name the High Street and the map itself needed to be enhanced.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Mrs Charlton ask Sainsburys to put forward a proposal for consideration.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 4.30pm.