

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on
Thursday, 27 September 2007 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor JH Stewart – Chairman
Councillor RE Barrett – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Dr DR Bard, JD Batchelor, Mrs PM Bear, EW Bullman, SM Edwards,
Mrs SM Ellington, Mrs A Elsby, Mrs VG Ford, Mrs JM Guest, R Hall,
Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs SA Hatton, JA Hockney, Mrs CA Hunt, SGM Kindersley,
RMA Manning, RB Martlew, MJ Mason, DC McCraith, Mrs CAED Murfitt,
Mrs HM Smith, Mrs DSK Spink MBE, RJ Turner, Dr SEK van de Ven,
JF Williams and NIC Wright

Officers: Patrick Adams Senior Democratic Services Officer
Caroline Hunt Principal Planning Policy Officer
Keith Miles Planning Policy Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors AN Berent, NCF Bolitho, FWM Burkitt, TD Bygott, NN Cathcart, JP Chatfield, Mrs PS Corney, Mrs EM Heazell, MP Howell, PT Johnson, Mrs JE Lockwood, RM Matthews, CR Nightingale, AG Orgee, JA Quinlan, A Riley, Mrs DP Roberts, RT Summerfield and Mrs VM Trueman.

Councillor MJ Mason expressed concern about the decisions made at the meetings of Council in July and Cabinet in August and stated that he had not yet received a reply from officers to a letter he had written regarding this matter. The Planning Policy Manager explained that the powers for the adoption of the Area Action Plans laid with the Executive and not with Council. He resolved to ascertain why Councillor Mason had not received a response to his correspondence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were advised that participation in this meeting would not exclude them from discussing future planning applications for this area.

Councillor DC McCraith declared a personal interest as a County Councillor and as the Chairman of the Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes. Notwithstanding these interests he remained in the meeting and took part in the discussions and voting.

Councillor Mrs SA Hatton declared a personal interest as her son worked on the North West site. Notwithstanding this interest she remained in the meeting and took part in the discussions and voting.

Councillor Dr SEK van de Ven declared a personal interest as her husband was an employee of the University. Notwithstanding this interest she remained in the meeting and took part in the discussions and voting.

Councillor MJ Mason declared a personal interest as a member of the Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes. Notwithstanding this interest he remained in the meeting and took part in the discussions and voting.

Councillor Mrs HM Smith declared a personal interest as a member of the Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes and as a member of Kings College. Notwithstanding these interests she remained in the meeting and took part in the discussions and voting.

Councillor JF Williams declared a personal interest as a member of Clare College. Notwithstanding this interest he remained in the meeting and took part in the discussions and voting.

3. NORTH WEST CAMBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN: PREFERRED OPTIONS AND DRAFT AREA ACTION PLAN

The Planning Policy Manager explained to Council that so far four of the authority's Development Plan Documents had been found to be 'sound' and would now provide the policy framework for considering planning applications:

- Core Strategy.
- Development Control Policies.
- Northstowe Area Action Plan.
- Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer went on to explain that the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan needed to be agreed by both this authority and the Cambridge City Council. It was understood that the City Council had agreed the Plan subject to the removal of references to the orbital route in Policy NW16: Public Transport Provision, and this change was accepted by Council. It was noted that any amendments decided by this authority would need to be agreed by the City Council.

Governance of boundary area

In response to questioning the Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that the responsibility for the boundary area between the two authorities had not yet been resolved. The Planning Policy Manager added that this matter was being discussed by senior officers and executive members from both authorities.

NIAB site

In response to questioning, the Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that it would not be appropriate to delay the development proposed on the NIAB site by including it as part of this Area Action Plan.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that the Area Action Plan set up the key development principles, whilst the Master Plan developed them.

VISION, OBJECTIVES & DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Preferred Option Policy NW2: Development Principles

In response to concern regarding the sustainability of the proposed new development, the Principal Planning Policy Officer referred to paragraph d) on page 23 of the agenda, which committed the developers to building energy-efficient housing with a low carbon footprint.

HOUSING

Preferred Policy Option NW5: Housing Supply

The Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that the proposed net housing density did

not include employment development or student housing.

Preferred Policy Option NW6: Affordable Housing

It was clarified that this policy referred to a specific definition for the University's key workers, which differed from the government's definition for key worker housing schemes, as it restricted housing to employees of the University.

Preferred Policy Option NW7: Balanced & Sustainable Communities

Council

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET that as 50% of housing would be affordable the words "small groups or clusters" to describe the distribution of affordable housing was illogical and should be revisited.

EMPLOYMENT & UNIVERSITY USES

Preferred Policy Option NW8: Employment Uses

The Planning Policy Manager explained that, according to case law, the maximum length of the condition that could be attached to the development was 10 years.

TRAVEL

Preferred Policy Option NW11: Sustainable Travel

The provision of different numbers of parking spaces for village halls, cinemas and theatres was queried, especially as many venues were used for more than one function. The Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that the development would be governed by the parking regulations of the City Council as an urban extension to Cambridge and added that the provision of two spaces to three bedroom houses was a maximum. It was noted that adequate provision of parking would be necessary to prevent parking on verges and public open spaces. The view that stricter parking controls would lead to less car use was contested.

Preferred Policy Option NW15: Highway Provision

It was suggested that access to the proposed link road could be restricted to local residents.

Preferred Policy Option NW16: Public Transport Provision

A member expressed concern at the Atkins transport study and what was seen as an undervaluing of the Citi 7 bus route and the overvaluing of the contribution that the guided bus would have on mitigating congestion caused by this development. The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Atkins transport study stated that the guided bus would provide linkage to this development but would not directly impact on it.

The local member for Girton requested that the issue of the link from the village of Girton to Huntingdon Road be resolved. It was noted that the City Council had agreed to remove references to "orbital route" from Policy NW14 and that consequential changes were required to this policy option and supporting text, and no objection was raised to this.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Preferred Policy Option NW20: Provision of Community Services and Facilities, Arts and Culture

The Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that the Council had determined, in respect of the Northstowe Area Action Plan, that land should be provided for faith groups, but not buildings. This had been agreed by the Inspector. It was agreed this approach should be pursued at North-west Cambridge.

Preferred Policy Option NW22: Public Art

The following views were expressed regarding the provision of public art at this development

- The developer should not avoid their public art obligations by using funds allocated to public art for signage such as temporary street names.
- The views of residents should be taken into consideration before public art was commissioned and therefore some funds should be reserved for later stages of the development in order to involve the new community in the design of public art.
- The allocation of 1% of the construction cost to public art was disproportionately high when compared to the allocation to other community services.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer advised that a balance between the integration of public art into the early design and masterplanning of the document and the provision of some elements of public art once there were new residents living in the development would be compatible with the policy. She advised that the Council's recently adopted Development Control Policies DPD included reference to 1-5% of construction cost being spent on public art and so the 1% stated in the above policy was consistent with the bottom of that range in recognition of the scale of the development.

RECREATION

Preferred Policy Option NW23: Open Space and Recreation Provision

It was noted that the suggested provision of an ice rink was an aspiration and could well prove to be unviable.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Preferred Policy Option NW24: Climate Change & Sustainable Design and Construction

Council

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET that

- A) The word "relaxed" be replaced in paragraph 2 of Preferred Policy Option NW24.
- B) The need for a "Carbon Reduction Strategy" be included in the supporting paragraphs.

Preferred Policy Option NW25: Renewable Energy

It was suggested that the provision of a minimum of 20% renewable energy was unclear and the commitment to Combined Heat and Power could exclude the burning of refuse for energy.

Preferred Policy Option NW27: Foul Drainage and Sewage Disposal

The Planning Policy Manager justified the inclusion of the words "capacity of receiving watercourses" in the above policy, as this allowed flexibility.

Council

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

- A)** The Preferred Options for the development of North West Cambridge in the form of a draft Area Action Plan as set out in Volume 1 of the agenda, with the amendments identified above.
- B)** The supporting documentation recording the development of the Preferred Options as set out in Volume 2 of the agenda.
- C)** That any editing changes be delegated to the Growth and Sustainable Communities Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Executive Director.

The Meeting ended at 12.40 p.m.
