

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Development Control Committee**
held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon on
Monday 10 December 2018 at 11:00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors: Jeff Haine (Chairman); Ted Fenton (Vice Chairman); Richard Bishop, Nigel Colston, Julian Cooper, Derek Cotterill, Charles Cottrell-Dormer, Maxine Crossland, Harry Eaglestone, Duncan Enright, Hilary Fenton, Steve Good, David Jackson, Peter Kelland, Nick Leverton, Elizabeth Poskitt, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett and Geoff Saul.

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 June 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andrew Beaney, Marilyn Davies, Peter Handley, Richard Langridge and Ben Woodruff.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers relating to items to be considered at the meeting.

12. PUBLIC SPEAKING AT PLANNING MEETINGS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, which advised of a review of the scheme for public participation at planning meetings and suggested some small amendments to it.

Councillor Cotterill proposed the recommendation which was duly seconded by Councillor Crossland.

Councillor Ted Fenton suggested that County Councillors should be allowed to speak. The Development Manager advised that the suggestion had been looked at two years previously at which time it had not been considered appropriate. However, if Members wished to make that change they could.

Councillor Ted Fenton added that a motion had been agreed by the County Council to allow reciprocal arrangements at its meetings and he felt that making his suggested change would enable Members to speak on matters such as applications in relation to gravel pits in their Wards.

There was general agreement on this point and Councillor Cotterill and Crossland agreed to include that County Councillors could speak, in their proposal.

Councillor Postan asked whether guidelines could be produced regarding questions of clarification and points of information. The Development Manager advised that refreshing the Good Practice Guidance was being discussed, and would cover the role and responsibilities of the Chairman.

Councillor Cooper considered that it was important that the Chairman at a meeting of an Area Planning Sub-Committee should establish with the speakers who they were representing.

RESOLVED: That the procedures and guidelines for public speaking included in the Appendix to the report be approved subject to the addition of County Councillors as a category within the section entitled 'Who is allowed to speak?'

13. PROPOSED SITE VISIT AND DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A NEW MOTOR MUSEUM AND LODGES AT ENSTONE AIRFIELD

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, which requested approval for a site visit prior to the consideration of the above application, and advised that the application would be referred to this Committee for determination.

Councillor Haine advised that consideration was being given to considering the application at a meeting of the Development Control Committee in February or March.

Councillor Cooper asked why the application was not to be considered by the Uplands Area Planning Sub-Committee and was advised by the Development Manager that it had been decided following discussions between the Leader of the Council and the Head of Paid Service. Councillor Haine added that it was a major application and that it should be considered with the wisdom of the full Development Control Committee.

Councillor Colston asked for clarification as to what month and part of month the meeting was likely to be held. He felt he needed to know as it was in his Ward and he would need to keep his diary free.

Councillor Haine suggested the third Monday in March and the Development Manager added that it would give Officers a good lead to work to.

Councillor Postan asked why the date was so far ahead and the Development Manager replied that getting the decision right was more important than the speed and that there were legal and practical issues which would have to be addressed in detail.

Councillor Kelland commented that there were two parts to the application with Motor Sport being the major part. He pointed out that Bicester airfield had been similarly converted and suggested looking at that site to see how it had worked there with respect to motor sport and the heritage aspect.

The Development Manager felt that Members were slipping into a debate before any reports had been prepared but he was happy to talk to the Agents and the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing on that point.

Councillor Kelland referred to a similar site at Goodwood and suggested that the Local Authority for that area be contacted to see how they had dealt with noise monitoring and traffic handling. The Development Manager replied that he would contact colleagues.

Councillors Leverton, Jackson and Poskitt all commented that it would not be reasonable to have the site visit on the same day as the meeting.

Councillor Haine requested Members to decide whether the site visit should take place on the day of the meeting or on the preceding Thursday. Members decided that it should be on the preceding Thursday.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted, and that a site visit be undertaken on the Thursday prior to the determination of the application by this Committee.

14. PROPOSED RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION REGARDING NEW PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, which advise it of a recent Government consultation and asked it to endorse the suggested response, which would be considered by Cabinet on Wednesday 12 December.

The Development Manager introduced the report and advised Members that Officers had a number of concerns which were included in the suggested response set out in the Appendix. He advised that any comments that Members were minded to make would be reported to Cabinet.

During the discussion that followed, Members expressed strong support for the responses set out in the Appendix and made a number of further points as set out below.

Question 1.3:

Councillor Crossland did not feel the response to be strong enough and it was agreed that the first sentence should be amended to read as follows:

“In light of the above, an assessment as to existing use proportions would be useful in ensuring a majority proportion of any qualifying ‘high street’ remains as ‘main town centre uses’”

Councillor Leverton expressed concern that if many shops changed to office use the Council would lose income and he saw no value in the proposal.

Question 1.9:

The Development Manager advised that Officers had strong concerns about this proposal. He believed that the existing planning process was a good mechanism.

Councillor Leverton considered that the most robust representation should be made.

Councillor Haine agreed and he suggested that both in the response to this question and also to Question 1.13 it should be made clear that it should not apply to sloping sites.

Question 1.17:

Councillor Crossland considered that a comment should be added to be mindful of the effects of cumulative development.

Questions 1.21 and 1.22:

Members agreed strongly with these two points.

Councillor Ted Fenton believed that it should be made clear that this District was completely different to a city and had vastly different issues. One size did not fit all.

Councillor Leverton considered that the consultation document was very poor.

Councillor Cooper requested that a copy of any response made by Cabinet should be forwarded to the local MP.

The Development Manager thanked Members for their comments which he would report to Cabinet.

RESOLVED: That the suggested response included in the Appendix to the report be endorsed, for consideration by Cabinet, together with the additional comments set out above.

15. PROPOSED RESPONSE TO MOTION REGARDING WASTE WATER

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, which commented on and suggested a way forward in respect of the motion proposed by Councillor Alex Postan and seconded by Councillor Michele Mead at the Council meeting held 24 October 2018.

Councillor Kelland commented that grease/fat traps were very efficient and he believed that they should become the norm in the future.

RESOLVED: That, in response to the motion proposed at its meeting on 24 October 2018, Council be recommended to approve the recommended amendment to standard conditions and the proposed informative set out under paragraph 3.9 of the report.

16. PROPOSED TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, which advised it of proposed planning training for Town and Parish Councils.

The Development Manager advised Members that only four Parish Councils had responded to the previous offer of planning training and he said that now that the Local Plan had been adopted it was intended to write to Parish Councils to again offer training. He asked Members to urge Parish Councils in their Wards to take up the offer and, in response to a query from the Chairman, advised that letters would be sent in the New Year.

Councillor Good said that he had sat in on one of the training sessions and wanted to congratulate the Development Manager on how useful it was.

Councillor Postan agreed with Councillor Good and added that a session had taken place the week before for four Parishes in his Ward, which had been a very good presentation.

Councillor Crossland asked whether the training sessions could be held locally rather than at Woodgreen and the Development Manager confirmed that that was the intention.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 12:40 pm

CHAIRMAN