

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE,
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD,
ON WEDNESDAY, 18TH MARCH 2009,
STARTING AT 7 P.M.

Present:

Councillor R G Kybird, Chairman
The Mayor, Councillor J A Harding

Councillors:

G P Balaam	Mrs P P Quadling
R F Brame	M G Spencer
T J Jermy	Mrs P A Spencer
T J Lamb	S N H Wright
D G Mortimer	

388/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Committee Chairman and Deputy-Mayor, Councillor R G Kybird, declared a prejudicial interest in the following draft policy proposals, addressed under item 390/08, both as a builder and owing to his business associations with the owners of Kilverstone Estate:

TH11 - Major development locations etc
TH13 - Delivering major growth etc
TH17 – Developer contributions etc

He was not present when these specific proposals were addressed as a 'cluster', with the Mayor, Councillor J A Harding, chairing that part of the discussion.

Councillors G P Balaam and T J Jermy, for reasons already stated at the meeting when this application was first considered (minute 349/08 from the Committee's 18th February 2009 meeting referred), absented themselves for the very brief consideration of the modest amendments covered under item 392/08.

389/08 A. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs M P Chapman-Allen, S H Chapman-Allen, A Paines, Mrs T I Paines and P J Pearson.

389/08 B. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Town Clerk apologised for not including confirmation of minutes in the original agenda. That said, it was agreed to proceed with this as an additional agenda item (italicised references in the following resolution are to the respective minutes of the Council meetings at which the respective reports were received):

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings of the Committee be confirmed as true records and signed/initialled by the Chairman:

- a) 4th February 2009 (*minute 413/08a*)
- b) 18th February 2009 (*minute 413/08c*).

390/08 THETFORD AREA ACTION PLAN: PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION

A policy-by-policy appraisal ensued, resulting in the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the following comments be submitted to the Thetford Growth Point Team ahead of the comment deadline of 3rd April 2009 (the wording of the policy headings that follow being transcribed from the published summary document):

Note from Town Clerk: Owing to time remaining for further comment on and/or amendment of what follows, the comments would not be submitted until after the full Council had met on 25th March 2009.

TH1 - Thetford theme: historic past & healthy future
Policy supported

TH2 - new shops to be located at the following locations:

Support expressed for all four locations listed. However, in respect of Forest Retail Park, provision should be made for leisure only and not retail.

TH3 - Thetford town centre opportunity areas

General support for all six ideas listed. What would be welcomed in addition would be the specific redevelopment of Well Street. As regards any 'transformation' of Butten Island, the planners should first consult with Sikh Heritage Trail representatives to gain a clear understanding of what was originally conceived as the most appropriate setting for the Duleep Singh statue, something yet to be achieved in landscape terms.

TH4 - education provision in Thetford

General support expressed, given that everyone involved in this process can only be too aware that education is the key to the future prosperity of the town, but the pressing need for further consultation on where to locate educational facilities is recognised. Has, for example, the area around Caxton Way, been considered? Specific proposals for any particular site already being considered need to be subject to early consultation.

TH5 - health facilities

Need for a 'bigger picture' perspective. NHS East of England needs to be making a case for a similarly sized facility to the existing West Suffolk Hospital being sited in Thetford rather than looking to create a bigger facility in Bury St Edmunds.

TH6 - management plans for protected habitats

Thetford Town Council, as owner of Barnham Cross Common, will need to be persuaded to agree to any change to the existing scheme of management on the Site

of Special Scientific Interest, while not being averse to its being placed 'in context' as part of a broader picture.

TH7 - short-visit dog walking areas

This 'concept' deemed a total waste of time and effort, a pandering to those with limited horizons in every sense!

TH8 – allotments

Very supportive.

TH9 - new bus interchange

Whilst supportive in principle, Thetford Town Council is not expecting to have to contribute financially to capital or running costs.

TH10 - Thetford train station and surrounding area

Very supportive.

TH11 - major development locations: phasing, concept statements and master plans

Noted.

TH12 – biodiversity

Noted.

TH13 - delivering major growth in association with a new Thetford country park

Any 'Country Park' concept must result in significant provision of organised recreation and leisure facilities and must in no sense be looked on as compensating for limited green space provision within new residential areas.

TH14 - the Thetford loop

Very supportive but there may be a risk of under-playing the need for access to the Forest by means of a 'Green Bridge'. As owner of Two Mile Bottom Common, Thetford Town Council would want this presently under-managed area to form part of any vision.

TH15 - Thetford central riverside area proposals

There is concern that the importance of extending the navigability of the Little Ouse may have been lost sight of.

TH16 - former gas distribution centre on Bury Road

Very supportive, but it is noted that, until the problem caused by HGV traffic on Bury Road is removed by re-routing, the site will continue to offer only limited community development potential.

TH17 - developer contributions via a tariff

Very supportive, with the proviso that fees generated by development in Thetford are ring-fenced for infrastructural investment in Thetford! To avoid 'here we go again/told you so' syndrome, crucial that significant residential expansion does not precede infrastructural improvement. This point cannot be over-emphasised.

TH18 - management of new community infrastructure

If existing parish boundaries are to be retained, then there is a clear need for neighbouring parishes to adopt a 'whole town' perspective and contribute on an equitable basis to infrastructural funding. This again is a key point. That said, Thetford Town Council will continue to lobby for a parish boundary view, which is within the remit of the presently constituted district authority.

391/08 PLANNING APPLICATION TO NOTE ONLY

RESOLVED that receipt be noted of the following application from Breckland Council:

Application 3PL/2008/1680/Listed Building: Application by Thetford Town Council to remove partition, create new internal doorway, install two ramps & external signage at the Guildhall, Market Place

Note: This being the Dad's Army Museum scheme for the lower ground floor area.

392/08 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO CONSIDER

Note: None received at time of agenda preparation

393/08 AMENDMENT TO APPLICATION RECEIVED

Application 3PL/2009/0067/Full: Application by Flagship Housing Group for demolition of existing garages for erection of 3 houses, with 6 replacement garages & access to parking space as Garage Court at the end of Ash Close

RESOLVED that the minor amendment details be noted.

394/08 CONDITIONS SET

Application 3PL/2009/0013/Full: Application by Mr S Miah for Variation of condition on 3PL/2005/1890 re: opening hours at 33 Admirals Way

RESOLVED that the trading hours agreed by the planning authority be noted.

395/08 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BY NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL AT THETFORD LIBRARY:

Replacement of tiled area with TRESPA panels

RESOLVED that details of the proposals be noted.

396/08 NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL: FOOTWAY CONVERSION TO CYCLEWAY/FOOTWAY: Kimms Belt / London Road / St Martin's Way

RESOLVED that details of the proposals be noted.

397/08 NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL: SHARED USE FACILITY FEASIBILITY STUDY: Croxton Road

RESOLVED that details of the proposals be noted.

398/08 PREMISES LICENCE APPLICATION: Fison Way Esso Filling Station

RESOLVED that the Committee's objection to any sales of alcohol be reported.

399/08 STREET NAMING: DEVELOPMENT BY BAKER CONSTRUCTIONS ON CORNER OF NORWICH ROAD/VICARAGE ROAD

RESOLVED that *Horatio Leech Close* be now proposed as a suitable name.

400/08 TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 2009 NO.11: Land adjacent the Thetford Garden Centre and Rear of Comfrey Way

RESOLVED that the details received be noted.

Chairman