

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE,  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD,  
ON WEDNESDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009,  
STARTING AT 7 P.M.

Present:

Councillor R G Kybird, Chairman  
The Mayor, Councillor Mrs P A Spencer

Councillors:

G P Balaam	D G Mortimer
R F W Brame	Mrs P P Quadling
J A Harding	B J Skull
T J Jermy	M G Spencer
T J Lamb	

242/09      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor T J Jermy declared a prejudicial interest in item 245/09e owing to the working relationship that his employer, Keystone Development Trust, had with Peddars Way Housing Association (part of the Flagship Housing Group). He was not present for the discussion or vote.

243/09      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors M Brindle, Mrs M P Chapman-Allen, S H Chapman-Allen (work-related absence), A Paines and S N H Wright.

244/09      MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Committee's meetings held on 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009, as received by Council on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2009 under minutes 228/09(a), 228/09(c) and 228/09(d) respectively, be confirmed as true records and signed/initialled by the Chairman.

245/09      PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO CONSIDER

To consider the following application(s) received from Breckland Council (note that not all the applications that follow were included in the published agenda; owing to comment deadlines set by the planning authority, it was agreed at the meeting to add them):

- (a)      Plan No. 0612      Full

Application by Mr Neil Coomber-Webb for erection of conservatory to side of property at 13 Tottington Close

Observation

No objection, subject to neighbours' having none.

(b) Plan No. 0732 Full

Application by Mr Ismail Uzun for change of use to A3 (coffee bar including extractor pipe) at The Old Angel, 3 & 4 Market Place

Observation

The Committee, whilst having no objection to the proposed change of use, asked for an explanation from the planning authority regarding the non-matching brickwork evident on the front of the right-hand unit.

(c) Plan No. 0872 Reserved Matters

Application by Kier Homes for erection of 52 houses & flats, garages & associated infrastructure on land off Brandon Road

Observation

The Committee passed the following comments:

It was concerned about the proposed layout, which would see an equipped play area, 'detached' from the residential area on the other side of Maine Street. It cited the Liberty Gardens development (off Croxton Road) as being a good example of an equipped play area sited in the heart of the community with the consequent benefit of being 'overlooked'. It had real concerns over the wisdom of what Kier Homes were proposing, which – without some extremely effective surveillance system being in place at the play area – would potentially give rise to incidents of anti-social behaviour. The Committee very much doubted whether what was proposed met the *Secure by Design* criterion.

The Committee was aware that at least one Mackenzie Road resident had visited the town council's offices, expressing concern over the noise disturbance that a play area sited in the location proposed could well give rise to.

The Committee could see the merit of having some of the accommodation units envisaged re-located to the proposed play area site, thereby enabling the play area to be relocated to the other side of Maine Street.

Any crossing point on Maine Street should be located between the entrance to The Warrener and the entrance to the main development. There should be traffic calming measures introduced in that location (i.e. raised 'table' and 20 mph speed limit).

The Committee was not persuaded by the following statement included in the Design Statement, quote: "*We have identified certain boundary walls (prominent from outside the site) where the use of flint blocks emphasises the Breckland character.*" This so-called feature appeared to be the closest the proposals came to addressing the

sentiment expressed earlier in the document, quote: *"We are acutely conscious of the significance of the site marking as it does the northwest entrance to Thetford."*

The Committee was dismayed by the choice of materials. If flint were to be used, then it must be knapped flint, laid in the traditional manner. As for roofing materials, what should be used on this site, situated as it was by the principal gateway to Norfolk, was either natural clay or natural slate and certainly not concrete!

The Brandon Road elevation needed significant improvement. There was no hint of Breckland character / local distinctiveness in the drawings submitted.

The Committee was not impressed.

(d) Plan No. 0894 Full

Application by Ms Ann-Marie Collins for garage conversion and internal alterations at 2 Admirals Way

Observation

The Committee did not share the view on parking provision included in the letter submitted by the applicant's agent. How could there said to be, quote, "no change", when a garage was being converted? Furthermore, the additional rooms envisaged would generate, in the Committee's view, an additional parking requirement. Consequently, the Committee objected to this application, summarising it as an example of overdevelopment inextricably linked to loss of parking provision.

(e) Plan No. 0921 Full

Application by Flagship Housing Group for demolition of garage court & replacement with 2 no. 2-bed dwellings, associated parking & carport at Garage Court, Mingay Road

Observation

No objection

246/09

REGIONAL HOUSING GROWTH OVER NEXT TWENTY YEARS

Further to the previous discussion at the Committee's meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 (minute 203/09 referred), it was:

RESOLVED that the following comment be submitted to the East of England Regional Assembly by its comment deadline of Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009:

*"That Thetford Town Council remains of the firm view that any housing growth must be accompanied by*

*suitable infrastructure, meeting the regeneration needs of the Thetford community.”*

247/09      THE A11 TRUNK ROAD (FIVEWAYS TO THETFORD IMPROVEMENT)

Papers relating specifically to the ‘Supplementary Side Roads Order 20’ had been received under cover of a Highways Agency letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

RESOLVED that the following comment be submitted to the Highways Agency by its comment deadline of 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009 \*:

*“That Thetford Town Council strongly supports the compelling argument put forward by the Gate Way A11 Group in support of the dualling scheme’s proceeding without further delay.”*

248/09      PROPOSED THETFORD RENEWABLE ENERGY PLANT

RESOLVED that any comments members might wish to pass result from the special briefing session with EPR, now scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009 in the King’s House Council Chamber, immediately before that evening’s meeting of the full Council.

249/09      STREET NAMING PROPOSAL: DEVELOPMENT OFF EARLS STREET

RESOLVED that no objection be expressed to *Dairy Court*.

Chairman