

**MINUTES of the meeting of Planning Committee held at
The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,
Hereford on Friday, 1st October, 2004 at 10.00 a.m.**

Present: Councillor T.W. Hunt (Chairman)
Councillor J.B. Williams (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: B.F. Ashton, H. Bramer, P.J. Dauncey, D.J. Fleet,
J.H.R. Goodwin, J.G.S. Guthrie, J.W. Hope, B. Hunt, Mrs. R.F. Lincoln,
R.M. Manning, R.I. Matthews, R. Preece, Mrs. S.J. Robertson,
D.C. Taylor and W.J. Walling

In attendance: Councillors P.J. Edwards and R.M. Wilson

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs CJ Davis, Mrs JA Hyde, Brig P Jones and Mrs JE Pemberton

22. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

Substitute	Member
Councillor H Bramer	Councillor Mrs JA Hyde
Councillor JHR Goodwin	Councillor Brig P Jones

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made:

24. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th July, 2004 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

West Midlands Regional Assembly

The Council has been invited along with the other strategic planning authorities in the region to join in a service level agreement with the West Midlands Regional Assembly. The proposed agreement covers a wide range of activities to do with regional planning providing technical advice, sub-regional planning, conformity issues and monitoring. Much of the agreement covers the sort of work undertaken for a number of years, but there is a new element. This is to do with ensuring that local authority plans and significant planning applications are assessed against and are in conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy. This "conformity" work is new and the RA proposes an allocation of £2000 to the Council for this work. A report is made to Cabinet in October on this matter.

Planning Services

There had been an encouraging response to the job adverts within the department. 6 of the 8 vacancies had been filled by external appointments and 2 internally. Following on from the recent reorganisation of Planning Services, the Southern, Central and Northern teams would each have a good blend of existing and new staff. The new structure would be circulated with the latest issue of the Planning Chairman's Group Newsletter.

Even though Planning Services had gone through a period of reorganisation and staff shortages the department had still achieved a high level of performance in processing planning applications. This was a tribute to the hard work and commitment of the staff involved.

Major Development Applications 58% 13 weeks (National target 60%)
Minor Development Applications 62% in 8 weeks (National target 65%)
Other Development Applications 71% in 8 weeks (National target 80%)

Public Speaking

In August 2004, 89 questionnaires were sent out to all of the public speakers who had registered to speak during January – June 2004 and 66% had been completed and returned to the Committee Services section. Generally the scheme had been well accepted and some of the requests made by participants could be met. Details of the questionnaire would be circulated with the Planning Chairman's Newsletter.

Wind Energy Conference

A number of Members would be attending the Wind Energy Conference on 14 October.

Visit to Walford Parish Council

The Chairman gave details of a meeting he had recently attended at Walford Parish Council where he had given a synopsis of the Planning process.

Pam Campbell

The Chairman thanked Pam Campbell for her 16-year service in Planning Services with the former Leominster District Council and Herefordshire Council and wished her well in her new job.

26. NORTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That report of the meetings held on 14 July, 11 August and 8 September 2004 be received and noted.

27. CENTRAL AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That report of the meetings held on 28 July, 25 August 2004 be received and noted.

28. SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That report of the meetings held on 4 August and 1 September 2004 be received and noted.

29. DCSE2004/2399/F - APPLICATION FOR THE RETENTION OF NEWLY FORMED ACCESS, LAND AT WELSH NEWTON, ROSS-ON-WYE, HERFORDSHIRE (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The Development Control Manager presented the report of the Head of Planning Services. He said that the application was reported to the Southern Area Planning Sub-Committee on 1st September, 2004 and that the Sub-Committee was mindful to refuse the application contrary to the officers' recommendations. The reason for refusal was that Members felt that the access was unsafe. The Head of Planning Services had examined the proposal and referred the application to the Planning Committee because he felt that the decision may not be defensible at appeal.

Having considered details of the planning application and the report of the Head of Planning Services, the Committee felt that there were insufficient grounds for the application to be refused.

RESOLVED: That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. H01 (Single access - not footway)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

2. H03 (Visibility splays)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

3. H05 (Access gates)

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

4. None of the hedgerows on the site (other than those required to be removed to provide the access and visibility splays pursuant to condition nos. 1 & 2 above) shall be removed, destroyed, felled, lopped or pruned without the prior consent in writing of the local planning authority. Details of those to be removed to form the access and visibility splays and of new planting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any works are undertaken.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the area.

5. G05 – Implementation of landscaping scheme (general)

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

Informative(s):

1. HN01 - Mud on highway

2. HN04 - Private apparatus within highway

3. HN05 - Works within the highway

4. N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission

30. TREES AND DEVELOPMENT - SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The Conservation Manager presented the report of the Head of Planning Services suggesting the approval of draft Supplementary Planning Guidance for trees on development sites and its publication for consultation purposes. He said that the need to retain important trees should be recognised at the site planning stage and that consideration should also be given to future growth requirements, especially where young trees are involved. After planning permission for development had been granted, the protection of trees during construction works was equally important and there would be instances where detailed conditions were necessary which needed to be regularly monitored. He advised that draft guidance has been produced to give advice upon how trees should be considered within the planning process and provided the Committee with details of his proposals. He concluded by saying that the proposed guidance would help with pre-planning application discussions, the details which should be included in an application and how trees should be protected during construction work.

The Committee welcomed the proposals put forward by the Conservation Manager.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet Member for the Environment be recommended to approve draft Supplementary Guidance for Trees and Development for consultation purposes and officers be authorised to carry out consultation upon this with relevant parties.

31. REVIEW OF HERITAGE PROTECTION, THE WAY FORWARD - DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE MEDIA & SPORT (AGENDA ITEM 11)

A report was presented by the Conservation Manger about proposed changes to the system for protecting the historic environment. He said that the Planning Committee on 3rd October 2003 generally supported Government's intentions to improve the system of historic environment designations set out in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) review consultation document entitled "Protecting our Historic Environment: Making the System Work Better". However, it expressed some concerns, primarily in relation to the financial and staff implications of what was proposed. He outlined the proposals put forward including short-term measures and the longer-term package of measures which required primary legislation. He also provided the Committee with an appraisal about the implications of the review. The Committee welcomed the course of action suggested by the Conservation Manager.

RESOLVED: That the changes put forward in DCMS document "Review of Heritage Protection: The Way Forward" be noted and that a further report be brought to the Committee when the White Paper anticipated on this matter emerges in 2005.

32. REVIEW OF CONSERVATION AREAS WITHIN HEREFORDSHIRE (AGENDA ITEM 12)

The Conservation Manger presented the report of the Head of Planning Services which proposed a programme for the review of Conservation Areas within the County during 2005 and 2006. He said that Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 required local planning authorities to determine Conservation Areas and that the task should be undertaken "from time to time". The review period was not specified although there was a suggestion in Government guidance that it should be in association with the review of Local Plans or Unitary Development Plans. He provided the Committee with a suggested

programme of review which took into consideration the resources of the Planning Services Department.

The Committee welcomed the proposals set out in the report of the Conservation Manager and supported his proposals for the review of Conservation Areas and related matters.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet Member for the Environment be advised that:

- (a) the Conservation Area appraisal statement for Colwall be reviewed and subsequently used as a template for appraisals of other areas;**
- (b) a programme for undertaking conservation area reviews and appraisals for 2005 and 2006 should comprise:
2005 - Almeley, Dilwyn, Ross and Kington
2006 - Bosbury, Much Marcle, Leominster Town Centre and Central Hereford; and**
- (c) the programme beyond this be set in the light of the experience gained over the first two years.**

33. REPAIR OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS WITHIN HEREFORDSHIRE (AGENDA ITEM 13)

The report of the Head of Planning Services was presented by the Conservation Manager. He said that the budget for the Council's Historic Building Grants Scheme was agreed at the beginning of each financial year. The Cabinet Member for the Environment had agreed that the budget could be used more flexibly to tackle a number of pressing building issues. For 2003/4 members approved an initial budget for Historic Buildings Grants of £25,500.00. This sum was supplemented by a further amount of £3,619.00 which was recycled grant money that has been offered and either not claimed or clawed back following the sale of property. The Conservation Manager provided the Committee with details of the properties that had benefited from grant aid together with the nature of repairs undertaken. He said that the grants had resulted in repairs valued in excess of £170,000 to be carried out, all of which were executed by local Herefordshire craftsmen with a number of materials being sourced locally. This work was important in helping to retain the local distinctiveness of the built heritage within the County, enhancing in turn both the local economy and tourism. The budget for 2004/5 was £26,140 and again some recycling was likely such that a total of £36,140 was anticipated. Of this some £4,320 has been reserved for contribution towards a project involving buildings at St Katherine's, Ledbury and £3,500 towards Urgent Works at The Summerhouse, Homme House, Much Marcle.

The Conservation Manager provided the Committee with details of the English Heritage Buildings at risk list and said that work was due to commence soon on the Saxon wall to the rear of St Owens Court which would prevent the historic monument from being overgrown in the future. Members felt that this site was little known in the County and asked the Conservation Manager to investigate whether a signpost could be erected to indicate its location to the public.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and that the suggested course of action above be approved.

34. HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHEOLOGY STRATEGY 2004 - 2007 (AGENDA ITEM 14)

The Conservation Manager presented the report of the Head of Planning Services on a proposed Archaeological Strategy for Herefordshire for the period 2004 – 2007 together with an accompanying Strategic Plan. He said that Planning Committee previously received a report on an Archaeological Strategy in June 2001. That

Strategy covered the period 2001-2005, and had resulted in a significant increase in archaeological activity over the past three years. It had revealed a high level of interest in advice and information; supporting educational, tourism and regeneration activity. The work of the Archaeology Team in relation to the aims set out in the Strategy had attracted a significant amount of external funding for a range of projects with matching additional indirect financial and other benefits accruing. He advised that it was now appropriate to consider rolling the strategy forward to cover the period 2004 – 2007. He outlined the way in which this could be achieved and provided the Committee with details of the proposed Strategic Plan. Councillor RI Matthews requested that when archaeological fieldwork was being undertaken that local Ward Councillors be kept informed. The Committee was in favour of the Strategy and the Strategic Plan.

RESOLVED: That the Committee advises the Cabinet Member for the Environment to endorse Herefordshire Archaeology Strategy 2004-2007 together with the associated Strategic Plan for that period.

35. PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (AGENDA ITEM 15)

A report was presented by the Forward Planning Manger about the new system of development planning which was being introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and to seek views on the Council's first Local Development Scheme. He said that The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act received Royal Assent in May and was now coming into force. He also said that as well as the compulsory purchase powers reported at the last meeting, new provisions and requirements for development planning were being introduced. In the report he summarised the main features of the new system and advised that one of the requirements of the Act was the preparation and publication of a statement of how the forward planning work would be organised over a three-year period. The statements or Local Development Schemes (LDS) had to be in place within six months of commencement of the Act. An LDS for Herefordshire had been prepared and he explained the main features of the new system, the procedure involved and the implications for the County. Informal consultation had taken place with the Government Office and the Planning Inspectorate about it. He said that the scheme set out the requirements arising under the Act and he explained how they would be addressed within Herefordshire.

The Committee questioned the merits of the proposals and had some reservations that regional planning would impinge upon local planning and make the system more remote from the people who were directly affected by it. The Head of Planning Services said that the reforms had been designed by Government to provide a more flexible and inclusive set of policies aimed at greater community involvement and linking with the provision of other community services.

The Cabinet Member (Environment) congratulated the Forward Planning Manager and his team for the work that they had undertaken in providing the Local Development Scheme.

RESOLVED: That the Committee endorse the Local Development Scheme and recommends that the Cabinet Member (Environment) considers submitting the Scheme to Cabinet for approval.

36. BISHOPSTONE AND DISTRICT GROUP PARISH PLAN (AGENDA ITEM 16)

The Bishopstone and District Group Parish Plan had been prepared as Interim Supplementary Planning Guidance to the emerging Herefordshire Unitary

Development Plan.

The Committee expressed its appreciation for the hard work undertaken by the local community in helping to prepare the document.

RESOLVED: That It be recommended to the Cabinet Member (Environment) that the planning elements of the Bishopstone and District Group Parish Plan be adopted as interim Supplementary Planning Guidance as an expression of local distinctiveness and community participation.

37. WEOBLEY PARISH PLAN (AGENDA ITEM 17)

The Weobley Parish Plan had been prepared as Interim Supplementary Planning Guidance to the emerging Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

The Committee expressed its appreciation for the hard work undertaken by the local community in helping to prepare the document.

RESOLVED: That It be recommended to the Cabinet Member (Environment) that the planning elements of the Weobley Parish Plan be adopted as interim Supplementary Planning Guidance as an expression of local distinctiveness and community participation.

The meeting ended at 11.35 pm

CHAIRMAN