

**MINUTES of the meeting of Planning Committee held at
The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,
Hereford on Friday, 3rd October, 2003 at 10.00 a.m.**

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

Councillors: Mrs. P.A. Andrews, B.F. Ashton, P.J. Dauncey,
Mrs. C.J. Davis, D.J. Fleet, J.G.S. Guthrie, J.W. Hope, B. Hunt,
Mrs. J.A. Hyde, Brig. P. Jones CBE, 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

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors MR Cunningham and Mrs JS Pemberton

16. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

Councillor Mrs PA Andrews substituted for Councillor MR Cunningham

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2003 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman commented that there were no referred planning applications from the Area Planning Sub-Committees. He drew attention to the new reports which had replaced the minutes from the Sub-Committees to the Planning Committee. The reports had led to a much more manageable agenda and had the benefit of providing more up to date information for the Planning Committee as well as considerable savings in printing materials and costs.

As part of the on going training programme, the next seminar for Members would be held on 6 October 2003 for those who had not been able to attend the previous ones, and to help them to comply with Section 41 of the Council's Planning Code of Conduct. Further training sessions on probity and propriety issues would be held on 27 October 2003 and 17 November 2003.

The tour of implemented planning permissions had been arranged for Friday 17 October 2003 to look at interesting sites in Hereford, Leominster and Ross on Wye. There may also be a walking tour of a town centre area at another time.

The second meeting of the Planning Chairman's Group at recently been held and a newsletter would shortly be issued. It would include a few basic facts about the planning application in respect of the proposed Asda development in Hereford.

The Chairman noted with interest that in the recent planning magazine there was an article about the Department of Trade and Industry which 'attacked' the planning system for supposedly holding back big business. It also included a two-thousand word document on how plants should be distributed in open plan offices, advice on creating that all important oasis effect and how to avoid tricky and anomalous situations.

Finally the Chairman was pleased to announce that the new surgery at Kingstone had recently received a Civic Trust Award.

20. NORTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee meetings held on 23 July, 20 August and 17 September 2003 be received and adopted.

21. CENTRAL AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the Central Area Planning Sub-Committee meetings held on 11 June, 9 July, 6 August, and 3 Spetember 2003 be received and adopted.

22. SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the Southern Area Planning Sub-Committee meetings held on 18 June, 16 July, 13 August and 10 September 2003 be received and adopted.

23. THE ENGLISH HERITAGE REGISTER OF BUILDINGS AT RISK 2003

The Chief Conservation Officer presented a report about the contents of English Heritage's Register of Buildings at Risk 2003 in relation to Herefordshire and how assistance might be sought from English Heritage towards preserving the County's historic heritage. He provided the Committee with details of the Grade I and Grade II* Listed Buildings and also the Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the County that were on the list. He said that 33 of these had been included on the Register compared with twenty-six in 1999. Five properties had been deleted from the 1999 Registers and twelve new ones had been added. He advised that five of the additions were churchyard crosses, added because of the serious condition of their stonework. English Heritage hope to promote a grant scheme for the restoration of churchyard crosses.

He advised that the Council had limited resources to assist with the repair of the buildings at risk, many of which were castle ruins or similar substantial structures which could take considerable funds to stabilise and repair. English Heritage was prepared to invest in the establishment of specialist conservation posts in local authorities to help them tackle buildings at risk as part of the management of their historic building stock and to help with undertaking statutory action. He suggested that the matter should be progressed through further discussion with English Heritage to identify what

assistance it might give to the Council to help with monitoring the condition of the buildings at risk and action to help with safeguarding them.

RESOLVED: That the Regional Office of English Heritage be approached to discuss what assistance it might give this Council in order that it can monitor the condition of its historic buildings and increase its actions towards safeguarding the County's Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

24. DCMS REVIEW - PROTECTING OUR HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: MAKING THE SYSTEM WORK BETTER

The Chief Conservation Officer presented a report about the Department of Culture Media and Sport's (DCMS) consultation paper entitled 'Protecting our Historic Environment: Making the System Work Better'. He said that the consultation paper had been issued by the DCMS on 17 July and that comments were invited by 31 October 2003. He advised that the document comprised part of a review of Heritage Protection which had started in November 2002 and had been carried out in association with English Heritage. The outcome of the review would have significant implications for the work of the Planning Committee and its Officers and a number of events were to be staged during the autumn to debate the issues, details of which were awaited. He said that the review covered the designation of Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, World Heritage Sites and Conservation Areas, together with how the planning system protected them. The following objectives had been identified as part of the review:

- to simplify what are seen as complex protection systems (Simplifying);
- to increase the openness of processes which are considered inaccessible, even secretive (Openness);
- to have a more flexible regime for management (Flexibility); and
- to have a system robust enough to conserve the best and to continue to take on board changes in what people value without devaluing the purpose (Rigour).

The Principal Conservation Officer explained the principle changes, which were suggested in the consultation document and he provided the Committee with the Officers views upon these questions.

Having discussed the contents of the report, the Committee agreed with the course of action proposed by the Chief Conservation Officer.

RESOLVED That the Cabinet Member for the Environment be advised that Planning Committee's view upon the Review of Protecting the Historic Environment is that it generally supports the intentions for improvement set out in the document, namely to establish a system that is simpler, more open, flexible and rigorous than the present arrangements. Furthermore, the suggestion that a single list be established appears to be a useful approach in this regard. However, it has concerns about many of the more detailed suggestions and these are set out in the answers to the questions posed by the review document listed in Appendix1 and paragraphs 7 – 9 of the report of the Head of Planning Services.

25. PROPOSED CHANGES TO NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE 3 (PPG 3) - HOUSING

A report was presented by the Principal Strategic Planning Officer about proposed changes to National Planning Policy Guidance 3 – Housing (PPG 3) in respect of:

1. the reallocation of employment and other land to housing, and
2. Influencing the size, type and affordability of housing.

The Principal Strategic Planning Officer outlined the main issues regarding the proposed changes to PPG 3 and referred to the summary of concerns which had been prepared by the Officers in relation to Part 1 of the Re-allocation of Employment and other Land to Housing and to Part 2 Influencing the Size, Type and Affordability of Housing. The Committee discussed the main areas of concern and noted the problems facing the Council because of the extra burden that would be placed upon in relation to the proposed changes.

RESOLVED: That the observations set out in the report of the Chief Forward Planning Officer be submitted to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as the views of the Herefordshire Council on the proposed changes to PPG3.

The meeting ended at 12.16 p.m.

CHAIRMAN