

At a meeting of the PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on THURSDAY, 11TH DECEMBER, 2008 at 4.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor T. Martin in the Chair

Councillors Blackburn, D. Forbes, M. Forbes, E. Gibson, G. Hall, Scaplehorn, Snowdon, Tye, Wakefield, Wares, D. Wilson and Wood.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Chamberlin, I. Cuthbert, Fletcher, Howe, O'Connor, J. Walton, S. Watson, A. Wilson, Tate and A. Wright

Minutes

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 18th November, 2008 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Report of the Meeting of the Development Control (North Sunderland) Sub-Committee

The report of the meeting of the Development Control (North Sunderland) Sub-Committee held on 25th November, 2008 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

2. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of the Meeting of the Development Control (South Sunderland) Sub-Committee

The report of the meeting of the Development Control (South Sunderland) Sub-Committee held on 25th November, 2008 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy reports – see original minutes).

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Report of the Meeting of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee

The report of the meeting of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee held on 25th November, 2008 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Washington Village Conservation Area: Character Appraisal & Management Strategy

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek the comments of the Committee on the Strategy prior to its presentation to Cabinet to:-

- Report on the outcome of consultations on the draft version of the Character Appraisal and Management Strategy;
- Adopt the revised document as Formal Planning Guidance

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. Mark Taylor, Senior Conservation Officer, presented the report.

Councillor M. Forbes queried the extent to which Tree Preservation Orders could be used in conservation areas and was advised that within a conservation area all trees have a level of protection that is not as robust but similar to trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order. All the exemptions listed for protected trees in general apply to trees within a conservation area. There is a need to notify the Council of an intention to work on trees that have a diameter of more than 75mm measured at 1.5m above ground.

Councillor G. Hall made reference to the consultation process and queried how many members of the public had attended the public meetings.

Mr. Taylor advised that 12 people had attended and 5 had made comments. The Chairman stated that consultation events in the Washington area were usually well attended and he suggested that the small turnout could be attributed to widespread support for the Strategy. Councillor Snowdon advised that prior to the public consultation event the document had been discussed at various community groups and it was felt appropriate that a representative from each group attended the formal consultation event. Consultation, therefore, was probably more widespread than is apparent.

Councillor Wood commended the report and reiterated that more should be done to encourage public involvement in consultation.

The Chairman referred to the Townscape map in the Strategy and asked what the definition of an 'active frontage' was. Mr. Taylor advised that this referred to commercial frontage with transparent windows which enabled communication between inside and outside.

5. RESOLVED that the Committee note and support Washington Village Conservation Area: Character Appraisal & Management Strategy.

The Chairman closed the meeting having thanked everyone for their attendance.

(Signed) T. Martin
Chairman.