

At a meeting of the PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on FRIDAY, 23RD JUNE, 2006 at 2.30 P.M.

Present:-

Councillor Porthouse in the Chair

Councillors Bates, Bell, Dixon, D. Forbes, E. Gibson, Higgins, Lawson, Paul Maddison, Mann, J.B. Scott, Sleightholme, J. Stephenson, Tate, Wares and S. Watson.

Declarations of Interest

Item 8 Reference from Cabinet – 21st June, 2006 Hetton Downs Area Action Plan: Report on Options and Issues for Consultation

The following Councillors declared personal interests in the item as Council appointed Members of the Boards of the Sunderland Housing Group as indicated:-

Councillor Wares	-	South Sunderland Housing Company Limited
Councillor Bates	-	Central Sunderland Housing Company Limited
Councillor Mann	-	North Sunderland Housing Company Limited
Councillor D. Forbes	-	Sunderland Housing Company Limited and Central Sunderland Housing Company Limited
Councillor Higgins	-	Sunderland Housing Company Limited and North Sunderland Housing Company Limited

Councillor E. Gibson declared a personal interest as her husband was a Council appointed Member of the South Sunderland Housing Company Limited.

Councillor J. Stephenson declared a personal interest as her husband was a Council appointed Member of the Washington Housing Company Limited.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Arnott, G. Hall, R. Heron, Howe, J. Scott, J. Walker and Young.

Minutes

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of this Committee held on 27th April, 2006 and of the extraordinary meeting held on 15th May, 2006 be confirmed and signed as correct records.

Reports of the Meetings of the Development Control (North Sunderland) Sub-Committee

The reports of the meetings of the Development Control (North Sunderland) Sub-Committee held on 11th May and 9th June, 2006 (copies circulated) were submitted.

(For copy reports - see original minutes).

2. RESOLVED that the reports be received and noted.

Reports of the Meetings of the Development Control (South Sunderland) Sub-Committee

The reports of the meetings of the Development Control (South Sunderland) Sub-Committee held on 11th May and 9th June, 2006 (copies circulated) were submitted.

(For copy reports - see original minutes).

3. RESOLVED that the reports be received and noted.

Reports of the Meetings of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee

The reports of the meetings of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee held on 11th May and 9th June, 2006 (copies circulated) were submitted.

(For copy reports - see original minutes).

4. RESOLVED that the reports be received and noted.

Change in the Order of Business

It was agreed that item 11 on the agenda, 'A690 Durham Road No Car Lane' be considered at this juncture.

A690 Durham Road No Car Lane

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) which sought approval to make permanent an experimental 'No Car' Lane Traffic Regulation Order on the A690 Durham Road Super Route.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Members having given consideration to objections received in respect of the proposal and the Council's responses thereto, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the view of the Director of Development and Regeneration as set out below be supported:-

- that the objections raised concerning the making of the Traffic Regulation Order permanent be overruled, and the objectors be informed accordingly;
- the City Solicitor be authorised to make the 'No Car' Lane Traffic Regulation Order on the A690 Durham Road permanent; and
- with the assistance of the Police, the effectiveness of the Permanent Order be monitored, and used as a pilot for the introduction of further such priority lanes elsewhere in the City.

Building Control Performance 2005/2006

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) which informed the Committee of the performance of the Building Control Service during 2005/2006.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

To complement the report, Ken Scott, Development Manager provided Members with a comprehensive power point presentation detailing:-

- the functions and services provided by the Section;
- how Building Control operates in England and Wales;
- the Section's response times in dealing with applications and inspections;
- human resources issues, including problems created by a national skills shortage and the investment provided in respect of training and staff development;
- the accountability of the Service via quality managed systems, performance indicators and the award of 3 Charter Marks by the Cabinet Office for excellence in Service delivery and work with the Sunderland Access Group; and
- the operation of the Partner Authority Scheme.

(For copy presentation – see original minutes).

Councillor Paul Maddison congratulated Mr. Scott on the service's response to the fire at Belford House. Mr Scott replied that he would pass the Councillor's comments to the staff concerned.

Mr. Scott having addressed questions and comments from Members, the Committee congratulated him and the Building Control Service on the report.

6. RESOLVED that the report and the appended Review of Building Control Performance document be received and noted.

Reference from Cabinet, 21st June, 2006 – Hetton Downs Area Action Plan: Report on Options and Issues for Consultation

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) appending a report of the Director of Development and Regeneration which presented the consultant's report on Options and Issues for development in the Hetton Downs area and which sought to approve the report as the basis of public consultation to identify a preferred option to be taken forward in preparation of an Area Action Plan.

The report had been approved by Cabinet at its meeting held on 21st June, 2006 and referred to this Committee for advice and consideration. Members' comments would be reported directly to Council at its meeting on 28th June, 2006.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council that the recommendations contained in the report of the Director of Development and Regeneration that the report on Options and Issues be approved as the basis of public consultation to identify a preferred option to be taken forward in the preparation of an Area Action Plan, be supported.

Farrington Row Development Framework

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) which sought comments from the Committee on:-

- (a) responses received following consultation on the Draft Farrington Row Development Framework; and
- (b) the revised Farrington Row Development Framework.

Members were advised that the Committee's comments would be reported to Cabinet for consideration on 12th July, 2006, when approval would be sought for a

recommendation that the Farringdon Row Development Framework be adopted as Interim Planning Policy.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Members having given consideration to the report, it was:-

8. RESOLVED that it be recommended to Cabinet that the adoption of the Farringdon Row Development Framework as Interim Planning Policy be supported.

Residential Design Guide

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) which sought comments from the Committee on the Revised Residential Design Guide.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Peter Lawson, Principal Planner presented the report and advised that Members' comments would be reported to the Cabinet meeting in July when approval would be sought for the adoption of the Residential Design Guide as Interim Planning Policy and as a basis for public consultation.

Mr. Lawson informed Members that the Guide had been amended and expanded in light of recent publications and research to reflect current best practice guidance and the key principles of good urban design.

Councillor Tate advised that the Environmental and Planning Review Committee as part of its study into Child Pedestrian Accidents had visited the Home Zones Scheme at Gateshead Staithes and had noted the importance of residential design in this regard.

In response to an enquiry from the Chairman, it was confirmed that local authorities could potentially refuse planning applications on the grounds of design. The adoption of the Residential Design Guide as interim planning policy will mean that it can be a material consideration in relation to applications to which it is relevant.

The Chairman requested that once approved, a copy of the Guide be circulated to all Members of the Planning and Highways Committee and Development Control Sub-Committees.

The Chairman having welcomed the Guide as an excellent step forward, it was:-

9. RESOLVED that it be reported to Cabinet that the Committee supports the adoption of the Residential Design Guide as Interim Planning Policy and as a basis for public consultation.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked Members and Officers for their attendance.

(Signed) S. PORTHOUSE,
Chairman.