

At a meeting of the PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 27TH OCTOBER, 2009 at 5.00 p.m.

Present: -

Councillor Miller in the Chair

Councillors Ball, Charlton, Copeland, Fletcher, M. Forbes, Francis, G. Hall, Heron, Howe, O'Connor, Scaplehorn, J. Scott, Snowdon, Wakefield, D. Wilson, Wood and A. Wright.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bell, Chamberlin, I. Cuthbert, E. Gibson, T. Martin and Tye.

Minutes

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 29th September, 2009 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

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

The report of the meeting of the Development Control (South Sunderland) Sub-Committee held on 6th October, 2009 (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 (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee

The report of the meeting of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee held on 6th October, 2009 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Sunniside (Central Sunderland) Conservation Area: Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which informed the Committee of responses received following consultation on the draft 'Sunniside Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy' and which sought Members' comments on the revised document.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mike Lowe, Principal Planner, presented the report and advised Members that the Committee's comments would be reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 4th November, 2009 when approval would be sought for a recommendation to adopt the revised Sunniside Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy as Formal Planning Guidance, to approve the extension of Sunniside Conservation Area to include additional land and buildings of historic and architectural significance and to approve the changing of the name of the extended conservation area to 'Sunniside Conservation Area'.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor G. Hall, Mr. Lowes stated that he did not believe that there was anything within the Strategy that would deter potential developers from investing in the conservation area. The Council had sought to embraced the character and architecture of the area and highlighted it as a selling point.

Councillor Mrs. Forbes stated that she was always delighted at the development of Conservation Areas but would not wish the extension of the present Central Sunderland area to divert the focus away from buildings already within the area. In particular, she referred to the buildings of Fawcett Street which had not appeared to have benefited despite having Conservation Area status for a number of years.

Councillor Copeland concurred and expressed her deep concern at the state of some of the buildings on Fawcett Street, especially those such as Pilgrims which were in Council ownership. She felt ashamed that one of the City's main streets was in such a condition.

Councillor Wood referred to the concerns raised by Councillor Forbes and Councillor Copeland and suggested that given the strength of feeling the issue regarding the condition of these particular buildings should be reported to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairman replied that if Councillor Wood felt it was appropriate he should feel free to raise the issue with the Chairman of the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Heron, Mr. Lowe advised that the Jewish school was one of three buildings left in the City that evidenced the existence of the former Jewish community in Sunderland, the others being the Ayres Quay Cemetery and the former Ryhope Road Synagogue.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor D. Wilson, Mr. Lowe informed the meeting that the Urban Design Framework for Sunnyside looked at a wider area and set down design parameters for the other parts of Villiers Street, over and above Villiers Street South which was contained within the Conservation Area.

Councillor Francis questioned the term 'conservation' and expressed the view that the refurbishment of the Old Post Office and construction of The Place did not represent conservation as he understood it. Mr. Lowe stated that conservation was about the management of change within a historic environment. It did not mean conserving every brick and window nor the creation of a pastiche. He believed that The Place and the Old Post Office represented very good examples of a contemporary response to the issue of the development of historic buildings.

4. RESOLVED that the Sunnyside Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy be endorsed and that Members' comments be reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 4th November, 2009.

Planning Policy Statement 15 (PPS) (Planning for the Historic Environment): Response to Consultation

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which informed Members of a consultation paper issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) on proposed new draft policy statement on planning for the historic environment.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mike Lowe, Principal Planner, presented the report which sought approval for the comments on the PPS, appended to the report, for submission to the CLG as the Council's formal response to the consultation.

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

5. RESOLVED that:-

- i) approval be given to the consultation response as detailed within the report; and
- ii) a copy of the report be submitted to the CLG as constituting the formal response of the City Council.

Holmeside Triangle Development Framework

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which advised the Committee of the responses received following public consultation on the Holmeside Triangle draft Development Framework and to seek Members' comments on the revised development framework.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

David Giblin, Manager – Planning Implementation, presented the report and advised Members that their comments would be reported to Cabinet on 4th November, 2009 when agreement would be sought to approve the Holmeside Triangle Development Framework as planning guidance.

Councillor Wood sought assurances that there would be no delay to or detrimental implications for the development of Park Lane arising from the Holmeside Triangle scheme and also requested a timescale in relation to the project. Mr. Giblin replied that he did not feel there would be a detrimental impact and that there were provisions in the framework requiring the Developer to have due regard to Park Lane. In relation to timescales it was expected that a planning application would be submitted during the Summer of 2010. The timescale for the completion of the development would depend on the content of the Developer's Masterplan and the area of land required by the Developer. A lot of the properties in the Triangle were in public ownership, however, if compulsory purchase orders were required it could perhaps add another 1 to 2 years to the process.

Councillor Hall added that the potential effect of the Holmeside development on The Bridges and other parts of the City Centre was a very emotive issue. Concerns had been raised in this regard in a recent study undertaken by the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee. Councillor Hall stated that these concerns remained valid.

There being no further questions for Mr. Giblin, the Chairman thanked him for his report, and it was:-

6. RESOLVED that the revised Holmeside Triangle Development Framework be endorsed and that Members' comments be reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 4th November, 2009 when agreement would be sought to

approve the Holmeside Triangle Development Framework as planning guidance.

The Chairman then closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.

(Signed) G. Miller
Chairman.