

**At a meeting of the PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2008 at 5.00 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Tate in the Chair

Councillors Chamberlin, M. Forbes, G. Hall, O'Connor, J. Scott, Snowdon, Tye, Wakefield and Wood.

In the absence of the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the Committee appointed Councillor Tate to act as Chair for the Meeting

**Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Blackburn, I. Cuthbert, Fletcher, D. Forbes, E. Gibson, Miller, Scaplehorn, J. Walton, Wares, S. Watson, A. Wilson and D. Wilson.

**Minutes**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 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 28<sup>th</sup> October, 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 28<sup>th</sup> October, 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 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

### **Development Control Performance 2008/2009**

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) which advised the Committee of the performance of the Development Control Service over the first half of the financial year 2008/09 and informed the Committee of the changes to Permitted Development Rights relating to extensions and alterations to dwelling houses, introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2008.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. Mike Mattok, Development Control Manager presented the report.

Councillor Wood asked for more information regarding applications for “Certificates of Lawfulness”.

Mr. Mattok advised that a certificate of lawfulness was a process for seeking written confirmation from the Council as Local Planning Authority as to whether an existing development either has the benefit of Planning Permission or does not require Planning Permission . Mr. Mattok stated that a lawful development certificate provides the necessary proof to third parties, such as prospective purchasers that any development that has been carried out at a property is lawful.

Councillor Wood queried whether the new Permitted Development Rights would free up local authority time.

Mr. Mattok advised that there were some proposals that would now require formal planning permission that had not previously and vice versa. Formerly only Class H was subject to conditions whereas classes A,B,C,F and H are now all conditional. A notable change relates to hard surfaces at the front of houses which are now only permitted development if the area is 5 square metres or less; or if larger than 5 metres, the hard surface is made of porous materials, or provision is made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous surface within the curtilage of the property.

Mr. Lowes informed Members that the Council's 'Residential Design Guide; Household Alterations and Extension' had been put on hold subject to the details of the amendments to the General Permitted Development Order being confirmed.

Councillor Hall referred to the installation of satellite dishes and queried whether the size limits had changed. Mr. Mattok advised that the size restrictions had not changed. Single antennas on dwelling houses were permitted to be up to 100 cm in length; any second dish must be limited to 60 cm. However, the regulations now state that an antenna should be no greater than 35 litres cubic capacity.

Councillor Hall stressed the importance of making members of the public aware of the changes and queried whether the department would be carrying out a public relations exercise.

Mr. Mattok advised that the department was liaising with the press office to consider the best way to communicate the changes. An awareness raising event had also recently taken place at the Stadium of Light.

Councillor Hall requested that future performance reports to the Committee also included performance figures on appeals received and determined.

Councillor Wakefield queried how building regulations were affected by the Permitted Development Order.

Mr. Mattok advised that as Development Control and Building Control were two distinct services with separate statutory codes, members of the public needed to be clear as to the distinction if they were intending to carry out building works. It was therefore important that within the Council both sections worked closely together to ensure applications for both planning permission and building regulation approval were processed in a co-ordinated way. Mr. Lowes added that within the Directorate, both sections had been recently merged to allow for a coherent service.

The Chairman queried how the Council's Development Control Service was performing compared to other authorities.

Mr. Ken Scott, Development Manager, advised that all national targets had been exceeded with top quartile performance having been achieved. The team were now looking at ways to improve the service further and this included spending more time in discussion with developers.

The Chairman offered his congratulations to the Officers responsible for the excellent performance figures.

5. RESOLVED that the contents of the report be received and noted.

### **Castletown Masterplan**

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) to advise the Committee of the responses received following statutory public consultation on the Castletown Masterplan final draft and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and sought the Committee's comments on the amended Castletown Masterplan and Sustainability Appraisal.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Dave Giblin, Planning Implementation Manager advised Members of the main proposals contained in the Draft Masterplan and the representations received.

Councillor O'Connor commended the work that had already been carried out in the area, however he stated that there was still a lot of graffiti on the remaining houses. Councillor O'Connor also questioned what was happening with the new Grace House build.

Mr. Keith Lowes, Head of Planning and Environment advised that the Grace House build was not a Council project. Progress would be determined by the relevant stakeholder partners in relation to that project.

6. RESOLVED that the Committee note and support the amended Castletown Masterplan and Sustainability Appraisal.

### **Gateshead Local Development Framework – Issues and Options Towards the Core Strategy 2030. Response to Consultation**

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) to consider Gateshead Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy (Issues and Options).

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Members raised the following issues:-

The Chairman commented that the Coalfields area was not mentioned in Sunderland's emerging local development framework.

Mr. Lowes advised that the Regional Spatial Strategy set out the proposals in respect of the Coalfields area.

Members supported Option 'A' in terms of the Metro Centre which proposed to renew the existing facilities but without an overall increase in floorspace or car parking. They expressed concern that the Metro Centre should not be allowed to grow as this could have a potential adverse impact on the Washington area.

Councillor Wood questioned Gateshead's preferred approach in relation to the future growth of the Metro Centre.

Mr. Lowes advised that Gateshead had consulted on designating the Metro Centre and the surrounding area as a town centre with no increase in retail and leisure provision but encouraging complementary residential and commercial uses.

Councillor Snowdon supported the potential reinstatement of the Leamside Line for freight and passenger movement.

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

(Signed) R.D. TATE,  
Chairman.