

At a meeting of the PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY 26TH JANUARY, 2010 at 5.00 p.m.

Present: -

Councillor T. Martin in the Chair

Councillors Ball, Charlton, Copeland, I. Cuthbert, Fletcher, M. Forbes, Francis, E. Gibson, G. Hall, Heron, Howe, Miller, O'Connor, Scaplehorn, Snowdon, 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, J. Scott, Tye, Wakefield and P. Watson

Minutes

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 17th December, 2009 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Report of the Meeting of the Development Control (North Sunderland) Sub-Committee held on 5th January, 2010

The report of the meeting of the Development Control (North Sunderland) Sub-Committee held on 5th January, 2010 (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 held on 5th January, 2010

The report of the meeting of the Development Control (South Sunderland) Sub-Committee held on 5th January 2010 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – 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 held on 5th January, 2010

The report of the meeting of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee held on 5th January, 2010 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Silksworth Hall Conservation Area : Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to advise Planning and Highways Committee of the responses received following consultation on the draft version of the 'Silksworth Hall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy' and to seek Committee's comments on the revised document.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mark Taylor, Senior Conservation Officer presented the report.

Councillor E. Gibson advised that there had been concerns regarding the vacant Doxford House and questioned whether any planning applications had been received.

Mr. Taylor advised that the building was Grade II listed and since it had become vacant there had been a number of interested parties. One developer had shown particular interest and it was hoped that a planning application would be submitted in the near future.

5. RESOLVED that the Committee note the responses received following consultation on the draft version of the 'Silksworth Hall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy' and endorse approval by Cabinet in February.

Marine Walk Masterplan and Seafront Regeneration Strategy

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report to advise Committee of the responses received following public consultation on the draft Marine Walk Masterplan and the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy and to seek Committee's comments on the revised Strategy and Masterplan.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. Keith Lowes, Head of Planning and Environment introduced the report and set out the main responses received during the public consultation.

Referring to Ocean Park, Councillor Copeland advised that the amusements were not well used and she queried whether there were any incentives for businesses to set up in the area and whether consideration had been given to other uses rather than amusements.

Mr Lowes advised that the Seafront Strategy suggested that the Ocean Park Area was wider than the Fairground, encompassing the Pullman Lodge and the Seaburn Centre, providing visitors with a range of leisure and complementary uses. There needed to be a careful review of what was possible in the area and development interests needed to be encouraged while ensuring they were not prejudicing what was available in the area.

Councillor Copeland advised that the Seaburn Centre was in need of refurbishment.

Councillor G. Hall welcomed the investment for Marine Walk and reminded the Committee that the Strategy would be a long term measure developing over several years, funding having been secured from the Sea Change Fund with contributions from Fulwell and St. Peters wards and public realm funding. Road safety was also an issue along the Sea front.

Councillor Howe concurred with Councillors Copeland and Hall and stated that it was important regeneration commenced as soon as possible.

Councillor Charlton advised that the regeneration proposal had come a long way since last February when the Sea Change funding of £1 million had been secured from a possible £3 million, with the Council committing a further £0.5 million. The toilet facilities were now open 52 weeks of the year and finance had been committed to improving them. There were further plans to invest £110,000 in the Seaburn Centre.

Councillor Heron stated that the Seafront regeneration was a city wide initiative and not solely a ward issue.

Councillor Wright advised that the project was an evolving one and a massive undertaking. Officers had made a good start and he commended them on the effective compromise in relation to vehicular/ pedestrian traffic.

Councillor Francis raised a number of issues. He felt that improvement to the gardens at the Seaburn Centre for the spring would result in a quick win. He stated that businesses needed to take greater responsibility in cleaning up the area around their premises and should be encouraged to do so. He also queried whether there were development pressures from landowners.

Mr. Lowes advised that the two key landowners in the area were keen to intensify the use of the land assets they had and any future attractions would have to boost the role of Seaburn.

Councillor Wood welcomed the report and agreed that the Seafront was an asset for the region as well as the city.

6. RESOLVED that the committee note the amended Marine Walk Masterplan and Seafront Regeneration Strategy.

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

(Signed) T. Martin
Chairman.