

At a meeting of the PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER, 2008 at 5.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor T. Martin in the Chair

Councillors Blackburn, Fletcher, D. Forbes, M. Forbes, E. Gibson, Howe, Scaplehorn, J. Scott, Wakefield, J. Walton, Wares, 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 Chamberlin, I. Cuthbert, G. Hall, Miller, Snowdon, Tate, Tye and D. Wilson.

Minutes

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 22nd July, 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 2nd September, 2008 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

2. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

**Reports of the Meetings of the Development Control (South Sunderland)
Sub-Committees held on:**

- i) 29th July, 2008
- ii) 19th August, 2008
- iii) 2nd September, 2008

The reports of the above meetings of the Development Control (South Sunderland) Sub-Committee (copies circulated) were submitted.

(For copy reports – see original minutes).

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Reports of the meetings of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committees held on:

- i) 15th July, 2008
- ii) 29th July, 2008
- iii) 2nd September, 2008

The reports of the above meetings of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee (copies circulated) were submitted.

(For copy reports – see original minutes).

4. RESOLVED that the reports be received and noted.

Reference from Cabinet – 26th June, 2008 Sunderland City Council Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) Preferred Options : Report of Public Consultation

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) appending a report of the Director of Development and Regeneration to provide an update of comments received following the consultation exercise on the Preferred Options stage of the Core Strategy DPD, and to agree the next steps.

The report had been approved by Cabinet at its meeting held on 26th June, 2008 and referred to this Committee for advice and consideration. Members' comments would be reported directly to Council at its meeting on 24th September, 2008.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman referred to the policy relating to Biodiversity and Geodiversity and queried which sites had been identified as European designated areas of biodiversity importance. Mr. Neil Cole, Planning Policy Manager, advised that two sites on the Durham Coastline, south of the Port, had been identified to be safeguarded from

adverse impact of development. These sites were protected because they provided feeding and breeding grounds for migrating birds which were important on an international level.

5. RESOLVED that it be reported to Council that the Committee noted the representations received and responses being considered and recommend that the next steps to progress the DPD be agreed.

Reference from Cabinet – 26th June, 2008 Sunderland City Council Local Development Framework: Housing Allocations Development Plan Document (HADPD) Issues and Options: Report of Public Consultation

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) appending a report of the Director of Development and Regeneration to advise of comments received following the consultation exercise on the Issues and Options stage of the HADPD and agree the next steps.

The report had been approved by Cabinet at its meeting held on 26th June, 2008 and referred to this Committee for advice and consideration. Members' comments would be reported directly to Council at its meeting on 24th September, 2008.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman referred to the approaches the Council were taking when considering housing development and queried whether the option to set high densities in locations such as the City Centre was the preferred option.

Mr. Cole advised that in the main the aim was to provide a mix of dwelling types with the highest growth option. He emphasised that dwellings must be in a sustainable location and whatever housing type was provided in the City Centre it must meet the requirements for the future of the City.

The Chairman referred to the current economic climate and noted that in some areas of the City demolition exceeded building, he enquired how this would affect the consultation responses.

Mr. Cole stated that consultation had taken place in October 2007 when the current downturn in the economic climate was not in full force. In any housing market there would be periods of boom and bust and it was important to adhere to the plan without any knee jerk reactions.

Councillor J. Walton commented that the proposed next steps for the consultation were somewhat contradictory and that the anticipated date for next steps appeared to have slipped.

Mr. Cole advised that there had been a recent change in DPD process as a result of amendments to the relevant Planning Regulations.

In response to a question from Councillor J. Scott regarding a permanent site for gypsies and travellers, Mr. Cole advised that there was an identified need for 19 new regional sites by 2021. Opportunities have been considered for sub regional sites with neighbouring authorities, however, legally, sites cannot be shared with other authorities so there was a need to identify specific sites for Sunderland.

6. RESOLVED that it be reported to Council that the Committee noted the comments received following the consultation exercise and recommend that the next steps to progress the HADPD be agreed.

Proposed Introduction of Traffic Regulation Order on West Park, Park Lea, Durham Road (A690) and Broadmeadows

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) to inform the Committee of the objections received to the proposed introduction of waiting restrictions on West Park, Park Lea, Durham Road (A690) and Broadmeadows.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Burney Johnson, Head of Transport and Engineering, presented the report and advised that two further objections had been received since the report was published.

The first objection had been received from a resident from West Park, who raised issues regarding difficulties in negotiating parked vehicles, drainage problems and problems for emergency vehicles to gain access.

The second representation referred to the use of kerb lines to reference traffic order restrictions and the issuing of permits to circumvent waiting restrictions. The representation also contended that the Committee report had been made available late to members of the public.

Mr. Johnson addressed these issues. In relation to the referencing point, Mr. Johnson advised that by way of reference some highway authorities define the length of restrictions by using the building line. Therefore the provisions of the order would extend along a main road and around a corner, although it would be unlawful to park up to the back of the highway. When specifying a length of a restriction, Sunderland engineers draw a visual line from the building line with the reference starting from the point of intersection with the kerblines. Mr Johnson reiterated that this reference system and methodology had been recently reviewed and found to be sound and fit for purpose.

Mr Johnson advised the Committee that businesses that needed to park adjacent to a property out of necessity due to works being carried out could apply to the Council for a waiver from the restrictions. Each case would then be considered on its own merits. This was consistent with the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

The Committee was also informed that the Committee report had been published in accordance with legal requirements.

Councillor Wakefield advised the Committee that he sat on the Environmental and Planning Review Committee alongside Councillors E. Gibson, Wake and A. Wright which had formed a working group to review general parking issues in the City. He suggested that it might be useful to await the working group's findings before making a decision.

Councillor A. Wright advised that he would prefer the order to be initiated as quickly as possible to alleviate the problems outlined in the report. St Chad's Ward Councillors were in favour of the restrictions.

Councillor M. Forbes queried whether it would be possible to agree to introduce the restrictions but then review the operation of scheme if it appeared not to be working. Mr. Johnson advised that if the restrictions were introduced they would be permanent (unless formally revoked at a later date) but nevertheless they would be monitored and Officers would continue to work closely with the Portfolio holder, Ward Councillors and residents in relation to traffic matters in the local area.

7. RESOLVED that the Committee supports the proposed scheme and that the objections received during the statutory consultation process from local residents opposed to the introduction of the waiting restrictions should not be upheld.

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

(Signed) T. MARTIN,
Chairman.