

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL OFFICES HIGH STREET GREAT DUNMOW at 7.30 pm on 21 JUNE 2000

Present: Councillor Mrs J F Cheetham - Chairman.
Councillors R P Chambers, R J Copping, Mrs C D Down,
P G F Lewis, Mrs C M Little, R C Smith, R W L Stone and A R Thawley.

Also present at the invitation of the Chairman: Councillor D M Jones.

Officers in attendance: J Bosworth, Mrs L J Crowe, Mrs A Dellow,
Mrs J Postings, B D Perkins, E J Spencer and A Stewart.

15 **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

Before the start of the formal meeting, Mr Ted Ryan made a statement on behalf of the Venmore Drive Residents Action Group. The statement and the response given are appended to these Minutes.

16 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors W F Bowker, Mrs C A Cant and R A E Clifford.

17 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor R J Copping declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of his membership of the Great Dunmow Town Council, Dunmow Town Strategy Group and Dunmow Chamber of Commerce. Councillor Mrs Little declared a pecuniary interest as a Dunmow trader and Councillor Stone declared a pecuniary interest in planning application 1271/99 Wimbish.

18 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2000 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

19 **BUSINESS ARISING**

Minute 330 - Urgent Item

The Chairman reminded Members that it had been agreed that Officers would be involved in advising and commenting on technical reports associated with any future development proposals at Stansted Airport. Some discussion had already taken place.

20 **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SUB-COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meetings of the Development Control Sub-Committee held on 20 March, 10 April, 8 May and 30 May 2000 be approved and adopted.

21 **DRAFT REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR THE SOUTH EAST - PROPOSED CHANGES**

Members received a report which advised them of the Council's provisional response to the proposed changes to the draft Regional Planning Guidance for the South East. The Committee considered that the housing provision identified in the new structure plan was more than adequate for the next ten years or so. Also the case for the M11 corridor study had not been made and in any case its purpose and status was not clear. It must not be used as an excuse for further development around the Stansted Airport area.

RESOLVED that the Council's response for the proposed changes to the draft Regional Planning Guidance for the South East be endorsed.

22 **UTTLESFORD TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

Members discussed the draft Transport Strategy which had been prepared in partnership with Essex County Council. The draft strategy put forward a five year plan and would be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in the context of the available funding.

Members raised a number of detailed points. These included "rat running" on rural roads, timing of bus services, parking at Stansted Airport and road safety.

Officers considered that appropriate revisions to the text could be made to cover the main points raised.

Members also enquired about the financing of changes to the A120 junction to the Geest Banana Factory. Officers would investigate this matter and report back.

RESOLVED that the draft Transport Strategy with appropriate amendments be approved for public consultation for a six week period.

23 **MASTER PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AIRPORT RELATED HOUSING SITE AT TAKELEY/LITTLE CANFIELD AND TAKELEY**

(Councillor Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item)

Members received a report seeking approval of the Master Plans for the above two sites. The Master Plans had been prepared by Countryside Properties and had evolved through public consultation and ongoing discussions at Member/Officer/Parish Council level. The Takeley/Little Canfield site was allocated in the District Plan for 700 dwellings and the former Barker's Tanks/Land west of Hawthorn Close, Takeley Site had been allocated for 100 dwellings. The extensive public meetings had produced some thoughtful responses. There was strong feeling that there should be no building on either site until the completion of the A120 by-pass. An area excluded from the Master Plan but forming part of the District Plan allocation, referred to as McGowan land, needed careful consideration. The retention of the Spinney, south of Broadfield Road Cottages was considered to be very important.

It appeared that the local residents favoured naming the Priors Green site Warwick Green.

Members expressed particular concern regarding the provision of open space which was insufficient. Potential problems relating to the A120 were highlighted. Members considered that all development within the District Plan allocations should be developed comprehensively and access from the road layouts shown on the Master Plans. It was particularly important that individual parcels of land were not developed with independent access points onto the A120. Enforceable controls regarding construction traffic using the minor roads around the sites was essential.

Members strongly recommended that the school should be phased at the beginning of development as the Takeley school was already at capacity. Other potential problems of concern to Members related to water pressure in the area and the number of traffic lights on the A120.

A number of matters raised in relation to the Master Plans needed to be considered at the planning application stage by way of condition and legal agreements. Officers would take these into account at that stage. There were, however, a number of important points that entailed changes to the submitted Master Plans.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the Priors Green and Barkers' Tanks Master Plans be approved, in principle, as a basis for considering planning applications and Section 106 Agreements relating to the detailed developments of the sites,
- 2 the approval of the Priors Green Master Plan be subject to all future development in the development area allocated in the adopted District Plan including the McGowan Land, having vehicular access from the approved internal road network, the number of dwellings to be built on the combined areas of the submitted Master Plan and the McGowan land not exceeding 700, and provision within the local centre for a health facility,
- 3 the approval be subject to the provision of additional structural landscaping on land adjacent to Smiths Green and cycle tracks being provided in appropriate locations throughout the development,
- 4 each site should provide sufficient usable public open space and play space on and/or off sites, in general accordance with NPFA standards at locations to be determined in detail at planning application and legal agreement stage.

24 **WORKLOAD AND STAFFING IN DEVELOPMENT AND CONTROL BUSINESS CENTRE**

Members received a report detailing the current workload and staffing situation in Development Control and seeking the establishment of a new part-time post of Senior Technical Support Officer.

The number of planning applications had increased by 19% between April 1997 and March 1999. Last year it had stabilised but in the last two months applications had increased by 43% on the same period last year. The increased interest and involvement by the public in the planning process as well as the recent increase in applications had resulted in delays in handling other work such as replying to correspondence and giving preliminary advice to potential applicants. This was occurring notwithstanding significant overtime.

Members recognised the difficulties and felt that it was inevitable that the workload would continue to increase. The Corporate Director - Development was asked to review the situation within a year.

RESOLVED that the Internal Services Sub-Committee be requested to approve a new part-time member of staff for up to 30 hours per week as set out in the report.

25 STAFFING IN THE BUILDING SURVEYING BUSINESS CENTRE

Members received a report which sought authorisation for a post of Trainee Building Surveyor to be created within the Building Surveying Business Centre and for the current workbased trainee to be directly appointed to that post. The growth in workload necessitated a review of the staffing levels whilst at the same time ensuring the continued financial success of the service. The reinstatement of a Trainee Building Surveyor post would meet the current service requirements, develop the business and help meet the need for qualified building surveyors in the future.

RESOLVED that the Internal Services Sub-Committee be requested to approve the establishment of a Trainee Building Surveyor post with immediate effect and that the existing workbased trainee be directly appointed to the post.

26 PROMOTION OF LOCAL CENTRES (GRANTS)

Members were asked to consider the bids received from local centres against the criteria which had previously been agreed and to determine how the budget should be allocated. Provision had been made in this year's budget for £20,000 for the promotion of local centres. Bids totalling £32,543 had been received from all four centres.

Following discussion regarding the detailed proposals it was agreed that the finger post signage in Great Dunmow and the windmill insurance for Thaxted did not meet the criteria. These were therefore not to be included within the agreed grant allocations. Otherwise prioritising for expenditure on the other proposals within the total grant allocation was a matter for the local communities.

RESOLVED that the following grant allocations be made:

	Great Dunmow		- £7,000
Stansted Mountfitchet	-	£6,000	
Thaxted	-	£5,000	
Saffron Walden	-	£2,000	
Total	-	£20,000	

27 GRANT AID TO BRITISH TRUST FOR CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS - TAKELEY STATION

Members were advised that the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) would no longer be operating from a base at Takeley Station and asked to authorise that the grant of £5,000 for the year 2000/01 be not reduced as a consequence. Although the withdrawal of BTCV from the base at Takeley Station was regrettable, advice had been given that this would not affect the opportunities for volunteer work within the District which BTCV would

continue to provide from its Chelmsford base. In answer to a Member's question concerning whether or not the original grant had been offered in part to secure the refurbishment of the building, the Head of Local Plan and Conservation advised he would investigate and report back.

RESOLVED that the agreed grant offer of £5,000 for 2000/01 remain unaltered, subject to BTCV signing a revised service level agreement.

28 **BIRCHANGER WOODLAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Members were requested to select a Council representative to serve on both the Birchanger Wood Trust and Birchanger Woodland Management Committee.

RESOLVED that one Councillor from Birchanger or Stansted serve on the Birchanger Woodland Trust and another Councillor from Birchanger or Stansted serve on the Birchanger Wood Management Committee, so that one Councillor for each Ward serves on one or other of the Committees.

29 **CORPORATE PLAN 1999/2000 - MONITORING REPORT**

Members were advised of the achievements for the financial year 1999/2000 in relation to the action plans in the Corporate Plan as they related to this Committee.

30 **1999/2000 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

Members received a budgetary control report setting out the provisional outturn for 1999/2000 against the 1999/2000 revised budget. Although year end adjustments were still being made this Committee's direct budgets were not expected to be significantly underspent or overspent overall.

31 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

32 **EASTERN SECTOR GREAT DUNMOW**

Members received a report on the latest situation and sought Members' views as to whether the Council's agreed earmarked funding for this scheme should be extended to the end of 2000.

RESOLVED that the Council continue to safeguard its agreed funding towards the implementation of the above scheme until the end of 2000, on the basis of a planning application being submitted in the Autumn.

Officers were asked to look at options for accommodating a library in Great Dunmow and report back to Members.

33

15 HIGH STREET GREAT DUNMOW - THE IMPLICATIONS OF UNDERTAKING REPAIRS TO GRADE II LISTED BUILDING

Members received a report on the latest situation which identified potential legal action available to the Council and the consequences in following such action. The report sought Members' instructions. Officers advised that they had met with English Heritage and the owner and this agent. Officer anticipated that an application for Listed Building consent, full schedule of repairs and a planning application would be submitted before the end of August.

RESOLVED that a decision be deferred until the next meeting of the Planning and Development Committee.

The meeting ended at 9.45 pm.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 21 JUNE 2000**PRESENTATION FROM MR TED RYAN ON BEHALF OF THE VENMORE DRIVE RESIDENTS ACTION GROUP**

"On behalf of the Venmore Drive Residents Action Group I wish to present a petition from the people of Dunmow concerning the proposed Eastern Sector Development.

We are concerned that meetings have taken place in closed session re the development that is to take place for the proposed Eastern Sector Development. Any residential development would be shortsighted and not in the interests of Great Dunmow. It would stifle future growth in the town and would affect the town adversely.

We would like you to take into account the petition of 720 signatures and our views when considering the future development of the Eastern Sector."

In reply, the Corporate Director - Development said that in principle the Council had agreed to sell the land. A decision would be made when an application was received. As yet, no application had been received. Mr Ryan's comments had been noted and he would be informed of any submitted planning application in due course.