
Development Control Panel

Report of the meetings held on 15th December 2003,
19th January and 10th February 2004

Matters for Information

28. TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

The Panel has approved Tree Preservation Orders to secure the protection of -

- ◆ an oak, four white poplars and fifteen pines at Tesco's store, St. Peter's Road, Huntingdon; and
- ◆ a mature weeping willow in the garden of Vine Cottage, Main Street, Old Weston.

29. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATED POWERS IN RESPECT OF DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

As part of its annual review and in the light of operational experience over the past year, the Panel has considered several issues relating to the current scheme of delegated powers. Previous revisions to the scheme have enabled the Head of Planning Services to determine a greater volume of applications allowing the Panel to focus on those of greater significance, achieve national development control performance standards and meet targets established by the Government's best value performance indicators.

Four specific changes to the scheme of delegation also have been approved by the Panel which will operate as revised with immediate effect. These concern the proposed delegation of applications considered to be technically deficient, those which have lain dormant within the application system for a period of 12 months, a proposal to increase from £30,000 to £50,000 the value of the contribution negotiated under Section 106 Agreements which can be dealt with by the Head of Planning Services without recourse to the Members' Advisory Group and an amendment to the wording of the current scheme to clarify the circumstances under which applications are referred to the Panel.

30. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT ALCONBURY AIRFIELD

By way of confirmation, the Panel has received details of the decisions by the First Secretary of State to approve the planning applications for warehouse and ancillary development and change of use of existing buildings at Alconbury Airfield together with 52 conditions and 12 obligations attached to both consents. The Panel

also has noted that the Secretary of State for Transport has made, subject to a further 18 conditions, an appropriate Order under the Transport and Works Act 1992 to authorise the construction and operation of railway links between the airfield and the East Coast mainline.

Although disappointed with the outcome, the Panel has acknowledged that the conditions imposed will broadly deal with concerns raised by the District Council including the provision of the rail link before the development itself is occupied.

In terms of the award of costs, the Panel has been informed that both the amount and timing of any claim are difficult to predict.

31. ENFORCEMENT ACTION – 2003

A number of key objectives for Enforcement Services in 2004 have been endorsed by the Panel. These seek to regularise the level of the case load handled by the Section, increase the number of visits to new complainants, ensure a proactive approach to raise public understanding of enforcement issues using information leaflets and the Council's website and establish a comprehensive system for the monitoring of planning conditions.

These objectives will build on the achievements of the Section in 2003 which included the taking of direct action on sites in Stilton and Ellington.

32. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Over two meetings, the Panel has determined a total of twenty-two applications of which thirteen were approved, five refused, two deferred and two delegated to the Head of Planning Services to determine following further negotiation on design issues and conditions.

On the recommendation of the Section 106 Agreement Advisory Group, the Panel has approved an application for 149 dwellings at London Road, Godmanchester subject to conditions. The terms of the Section 106 Agreement will secure affordable housing, open space and play equipment and contributions for education and to the Market Town Transport Strategy. In approving the application, the Panel has confirmed that highway improvements at the junctions of the site and London Road and with London Road and the A1198 will take place.

Matters for Decision

**33. ERECTION OF 30 DWELLINGS,
LAND NORTH OF THE LORD PROTECTOR, BUTTSGROVE WAY,
HUNTINGDON**

Reproduced as an Appendix are details of an application considered by the Panel for the erection of 30 dwellings, comprising 2 and 3 bedroomed units, on land owned by the Council opposite the Lord Protector Pub, Buttsgrove Way, Huntingdon. The site is currently an open area of grassland.

As the principle of developing the site for housing is a departure from the current Development Plan, the Panel has had to consider the acceptability of the proposed development and the reasons which might lend support to the scheme. Issues relating to the loss of open space, the suitability of the land for housing, the design and layout of the proposed scheme, its impact on existing residential amenity, highway safety and other environmental concerns were discussed by the Panel. More importantly, the Panel has recognised that the development of the site is integral to the wider regeneration of the Oxmoor as part of the Government's Sustainable Communities Programme and is material within the context of the Oxmoor Action Plan which the Council has adopted as Interim Planning Guidance. Both have received widespread support following extensive consultation and involvement with the community, residents groups, the Primary Care Trust, County and Town Councils.

Having been satisfied that the loss of open space would result in improvements to the quality of others on Oxmoor and the creation of a new park at Coneygeare Road and having been assured that the development will bring needed affordable housing and regeneration benefit to Oxmoor, the Panel, in accordance with Interim Planning Guidance

RECOMMEND

- (i) that, subject to further consideration being given to the continuation of the footpath arrangement from the existing to the new development on Buttsgrove Way and to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions, the Council approve the application for the erection of 30 dwellings on a site north of the Lord Protector Pub, Buttsgrove Way, Huntingdon;**
- (ii) that the Director of Operational Services be authorised to advertise the application as a departure from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and the First Secretary of State requested to confirm the approval of the application; and**

- (iii) that the Executive Director of Central Services, in the event of approval being forthcoming from the First Secretary of State, be authorised to enter into an Agreement to secure from the developer a total contribution of £151,500 towards improvements identified in the Oxmoor Action Plan.**

J G Rignall
Chairman