

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 17<sup>th</sup> MAY 2006**

**PRESENT**

Mrs. Holmes presided over Mrs. Harrison, Messrs. Mackin, Leith, Steeples and Fisher.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Mr. Gray.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**3. PLANS FOR CONSIDERATION**

06/00599/FULL

Retention of 2 no. lights to front elevation (retrospective)  
44 High Street.

No objection to lights being installed but concerns that the style of the two lights already in place were inappropriate to the street scene in a conservation area.

06/00605/FULL

Replacement windows to front and side elevation, vertical flue extraction duct and erection of five decorative columns.  
3 And 3A Southbridge Street.

This committee had been made aware of this Application but as the pack had not arrived from the District Council they were unable to comment. The Planning Officer at the District Council is to be advised of the situation via the committee's usual returns form.

**4. DECISIONS**

Notice of refusal of Planning Permission

06/00378/FULL

Two storey side extension.  
10 Ashdown Road.

Notice of Approval of Planning Permission

06/00367/FULL

Single storey rear extension, first floor side extension and conversion of garage to living accommodation.  
27 Roosevelt Avenue.

**5. SPEED AND VOLUME CHECK – CHURCHILL WAY**

Data has been received from Bedfordshire Police regarding a request from the committee to carry out a speed and traffic volume check in Churchill Way. Mr. Mackin offered to study the results and report back accordingly.

## **6. TARMAC LTD – POTENTIAL MINERAL EXTRACTION – BROOM, BEDS**

The committee has received a 'Questions and Answers' document from Tarmac Ltd regarding the potential mineral extraction at Broom. The Senior Estates Surveyor has also offered to give a presentation to the committee if they so wish. The committee decided to accept this invitation and suggested the dates of 7<sup>th</sup> June and 5<sup>th</sup> July. Tarmac to be contacted accordingly.

## **7. CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY – MID BEDS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

The above document and a questionnaire have been received from the District Council. Mrs. Holmes offered to study the Strategy and report back to the committee before the July closing date.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Concerns had been raised that building work had started on the site at 128 Clifton Road, possibly without consent being given. The Clerk informed the committee that the Planning Enforcement Officer of the District Council had visited the site to check on the situation. It appears that permission to build a bungalow to the rear of the site (04/01297/Full) had been given in 2004, hence the commencement of work, but confusion had arisen because it was the building at the front of the site that was still awaiting a decision.

The committee received further reports that youths have been entering the proposed Tesco site in the High Street. Mr. Mackin said he will contact the Tesco Estates Department to express his concerns regarding Health and Safety and request that all entrances are made secure to avoid entry into the building.

Further complaints have been received regarding the poor quality of the grass cutting in the town. Mrs. Harrison said she had already spoken to the contractor who promised to rectify the situation at the next grass-cut.

Complaint regarding the poor condition of the pavement in the vicinity of Ivel Way and Willow Way.

A report of debris under the river bridge in Ivel Way.

The County Council's Highways Department is to be urged to carry out remedial works to the drainage gulley outside the library.

The Highways Department is to be requested to supply two recycled plastic posts in order that the street sign in Queen Elizabeth Close can be re-instated.

Notification has been received that a sign in Churchill Way needs replacing.

Anglian Water is to be requested to cut back an overgrown hedge at the bottom of Ivel Road adjacent to the pumping station.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

**Report on meeting held in the Meeting Room of the Shefford Methodist Church on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2006.**

Beechwood Homes / Consensus Planning – Vacant A T Oliver site

In general the presentation was about the site, proposed layout and number of dwellings etc.

After the presentation the participants (approx 40 residents and 3 District Councillors) moved into 2 groups around the plans and were asked to put their comments on 'post it' slips. The post-its were then gathered up and grouped according to key words. The professionals then attempted to answer the points raised.

Main concerns :

Over-development of a small site – a proposed density of 64 dpha (dwellings per hectare) – ODPM guidelines suggest 30-55 dpha.

Serious lack of sufficient parking – 11 3-bed houses, 2 studio apartments and one flat – 14 dwellings in all.

Increased vehicular activity on to the narrowest point of Clifton Road.

Inappropriate design for its location/over-bearing dominance of street scene and lack of storage bin facilities – the developers seemed unaware of the 2 bins per household system.

Potential for mis-use of the access track down side of-to rear of development site, overlooking of existing residential properties.

Mains sewerage – the sewer at that point is believed to be almost 20 feet below the road surface.

Construction traffic causing road congestion.

Overall it was felt that the developers lacked familiarity with Shefford and it's built heritage and residents voiced strong opinions on several points (as above). One of those points covered the inappropriate scale, mass and height of the proposed frontage to the development, which would be detrimental and have overbearing visual impact on the street scene and surrounding neighbourhood. There was, therefore, some consternation when one District Councillor spoke, saying that what he was about to say in some ways supported the developers arguments, by referring to the row of 3-storey town houses to the east of the development site, with the higher roof-line.

The developers have said that they expect to make their application at the end of May.