

PLANNING FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 February 2007 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Shilton (Chair); Councillors Ashford, Gill and Kirton.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Begg (Portfolio Holder Environmental Services), and Councillor Tamlin.

REPRESENTATIVES OF TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS:

Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton Joint Parish Council	Mr A Beddow
Beusale, Haseley, Honiley & Wroxall Joint Parish Council	Mr J Johnson
Bishop's Tachbrook Parish Council	Councillor C Lewis
CPRE Warwickshire	Councillor R Butler
Cubbington Parish Council	Mr M Jeffs
Cublington Parish Council	Councillor D F Morris
Hatton Parish Council	Councillor P LaBarbera
Kenilworth Chamber of Trade	Councillor A Burrows
Kenilworth Chamber of Trade	Mr J Doxey
Kenilworth Society	Mr J Holland
Kenilworth Society	Mrs J Illingworth
Kenilworth Town Council	Mrs L Carpenter
Shrewley Parish Council	Councillor G Illingworth
Shrewley Parish Council	Mr R Johnson
Warwick Society	Councillor W D Lawrie
Warwick Society	Mr R Higgins
Warwick Society	Mr J MacKay
Warwickshire Association of Local Councils	Mr J Turner
Whitnash Society	Mr A Moore
Whitnash Town Council	Mr D Stocks
	Councillor J Falp

Apologies for absence were received from Warwick District Councillors Caborn, Davis, Evans, Mrs Sawdon, Smith and the Ramblers Association, Norton Lindsey Parish Council, and Rowington Parish Council.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2006 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- (1) That the answer to question B (Seventh paragraph of page three) be replaced with the following text:

- (B) Non consultation with residents by the operator at pre submission stage did not invalidate any subsequent notification or planning application for a telecom mast. The District Council would consult neighbours separately on all such submissions. Masts of 15 metres and under were dealt with under the notification procedure which provided a 56 day period for response by the Local Planning Authority. If it did not respond within this time, the operator had the right to install the apparatus. When dealing with these notifications, the Council could consider the siting and appearance of the mast but not the principle of the development or any other related issues because this had been agreed by national legislation.

Where masts were over 15m in height, full planning permission was required. These applications were dealt with in the same way as other planning applications and all relevant material considerations could be taken into account when determining the application; and

- (2) On page nine with regard to the application address for Lidl be corrected from Wmscote Road to, Myton Road.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

Warwick District Councils' Head of Planning and Engineering, gave a presentation on the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and the options being consulted on by the West Midlands Regional Assembly.

The Regional Spatial Strategy was the statutory framework for the development in the region until at least 2021. The Regional Spatial Strategy identified the key challenges facing the region and the policies identified to tackle them. It covered a wide variety of subjects including waste and transport. The key aims of the Regional Spatial Strategy were to reverse the movement of people and jobs away from the major urban areas, tackle road congestion, and achieve a more balanced and sustainable pattern of development.

It was highlighted by the Head of Planning & Engineering that the West Midlands Regional Assembly had been invited to give the presentation but unfortunately due annual leave nobody was available.

At the conclusion of the presentation the Chair invited questions to the Head of Planning & Engineering and Head of Planning Policy and Conservation. Questions were asked by representatives of the following organisations; CPRE Warwickshire, Warwick Society, Kenilworth Society, Warwickshire & West Midlands Association of Local Councils, Kenilworth Town Council, Leamington Society and Beausale, Haseley, Honiley and Wroxhall Joint Parish Council. A question was also asked by Councillor Kirton.

PLANNING FORUM MINUTES (Continued)

The Head of Planning and Engineering and Head of Planning Policy and Conservation made the following responses:

- There was new best practice guidance from central government, which followed the approach taken by this Council in its Draft Local Development Plan, to establish a greater level of affordable housing within developments;
- There was an issue with vacant land and buildings, particularly old industrial units, which would need to be addressed, however we must not lose sight that there would be a need for 70 to 80 hectares of new employment land between now and 2026, which could be either green or brown field sites (e.g. current vacant employment land);
- Societies should take heart from the fact they were a consultee to the Regional Spatial Strategy and that it was the weight of the argument that would count and not the size of the organisation. This Council would normally consult on the content of its response to the Regional Assembly but the restrictive consultation timescale did not allow sufficient time for this. Warwick District Council was a consultee in the same way that the Societies, Parish and Town Councils were;
- The reference to road user charging was contained within the current plan as policy T8 and it was proposed to carry this forward to the new strategy. This was a specific policy for introducing charges to reduce congestion in major urban areas e.g. Birmingham;
- It was important to realise that at this early stage there were a lot of options and that it was difficult to predict accurately what would happen particularly with regard to guidance on development of either brown field or green field sites;
- In these documents it was correct that households meant dwellings and not people;
- The current projected figures for the need of dwellings were based on reasonable assumptions. Any comments on the strategy could be based on the distribution of dwellings throughout the West Midlands if there were concerns about other areas;
- The development allocation for Coventry made specific reference to it being built within the city boundaries unlike the district and boroughs within Warwickshire, where it was stated that their allocation could be constructed in neighbouring authorities;
- Coventry did have green belt within the city boundaries however the strategy did not specify which green belt areas could or could not be used for development;
- It was difficult to say if the Shires influenced the Regional Assembly or vice versa, but the process for the regional planning bodies decision was arrived at following input from the strategic authorities;
- The need to ensure that the infrastructure surrounding developments was also developed to allow for additional capacity would remain a priority and examples of this could be seen within Warwick District. There were also wider issues which brought significant contributions towards all services, which was a key point which needed to be monitored which the strategy recognised;
- The strategy consultation documentation also recognised the increased need for environmentally friendly ways for the disposal of waste;
- With regard to option three, within the consultation document, and the possible impact of development in this district from “claimed development” for the Rugby area, there was also the possibility that development for Rugby could take place in the East Midlands, however it was unclear if this option had been considered as nationally;

PLANNING FORUM MINUTES (Continued)

- In response to a question from the Kenilworth Society it was unclear how student accommodation or even if student accommodation was accounted for. The Head of Planning and Engineering promised to find the answer this and pass it to the Kenilworth Society.

At the end of the questions the Chair thanked the officers for the presentation and the members of the Forum.

5. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum would be held on Monday 24 September 2007 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 7.00 pm.

(The meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.)